Assessment I: Personality and Cognitive Testing (76600.29111)
Professor Steve Tuber
Fall 2017, Thursdays 9:45 – 11:50 PM, Room 8/132 NAC email:
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Course Description and Overarching Goals
This is the first semester of a three-semester-long approach to the psychological understanding of adult and child patients through psychological testing. By the end of the course sequence you would have: (1) an enriched appreciation for the complexity of the human character and the ways in which psychological test material may help inform our understanding of its nuances (2) learned common psychological assessment tools (3) Understood legal and ethical issues in testing (4) become able to interpret results from these instruments and (5) become able to write an integrative report of test findings in a non-jargon, phenomenologically useful way. The methods of clinical inference and the purpose of synthesizing the inferences into a coherent portrait of someone will hopefully be of use to you throughout your professional career. It is certainly, both historically and heuristically, a hallmark of a clinical psychologist's training.

The present course will focus on the administration and scoring of a number of psychological tests, as well as on the interpretation of adult case material. During the first two thirds of the semester, I will focus on the clinical meanings and unique contributions of each test to the test battery. The four teaching assistants for the course (Naomi Dambreville, and Moshe Marcus) will meet with you in smaller, lab groups to go over test administration and scoring. By the end of this semester you will be expected to: competently administer and score the standard battery of tests listed below on two adult student volunteers, including the writing up of two verbatim transcripts of the testings; describe in detail your behavioral observations of the testing process; and begin to be able to form hypotheses regarding the personality functioning of a subject described in class derived from test material. The successful student will thus have a working knowledge of how these tests are conceptualized so as to be able to comprehend the major theories of what underlies these tests. The successful student will be able to apply this working knowledge to examples of patients in a series of assignments. The successful student will also be able to evaluate vignettes of patients suffering from psychological pain in light of their knowledge of the aforementioned tests, and to synthesize the data presented in the tests in order to provide analysis of causes for the patient’s difficulties.

During the first month of the semester, you will also need to memorize the instructions for administering the following tests:

WAIS-IV
Bender-Gestalt Test
Rorschach
Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)
House-Tree-Person Test (HTP)
Sentence Completion Test (SCT)
Animal Preference Test (APT)
**Under no circumstances** should these tests be given to friends, family, or anyone else you know, not even for "practice." Your TA’s will review your mastery of the administration of these tests and “certify” that you are ready to test volunteers within the first 4-6 weeks of the semester.

**Grading**
30% testing administration; 10% class participation and 60% take-home final. Participation is evaluated on quality (not quantity) of contribution to the class discourse. This does not mean talking a lot; quality of participation includes facilitation of group discussion, questioning, and integrating others’ ideas and comments.

Grading will reflect the following scale:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outstanding work</th>
<th>Quality Work</th>
<th>Competent work</th>
<th>Not yet Competent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A or A-</td>
<td>B+, B or B-</td>
<td>C+ - F</td>
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**Books:**


**Attendance:**

Please note that participation is assessed separately from attendance. Participation refers to active involvement in classroom discussions. In addition, attendance in class is required. Because this course meets once weekly for 2 hours, missing one class is the equivalent of missing a full week of course work. Attending all classes is essential for being successful in this course, and therefore absences will not be excused for just any illness or scheduling conflict – there needs to be a major crisis for an absence to be excusable. Discuss with me any anticipated events or religious holidays that conflict with
the course schedule, and alternative arrangements must be worked out in advance. Please note that more than two unexcused absences will be grounds for a failing grade.

**Plagiarism and Cheating:**
Plagiarism is the use or presentation of ideas, words, or work that is not one’s own and that is not common knowledge, without granting credit to the originator. Plagiarism is a practice that is not only unacceptable, but which is to be condemned in the strongest terms possible on the basis of moral, educational and legal grounds. Under University policy, plagiarism may be punishable by a range of penalties from a failing grade in the assignment or course to dismissal from the college. All students are required to read the Program Handbook on avoiding plagiarism.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to the following: falsification of statements or data; listing sources that have not been used; having another individual write your paper or do your assignments; writing a paper or creating work for another student to use without proper attribution; purchase of paper or research work for one’s examination (except when expressly permitted by the instructor, depending on the nature of the examination) or knowingly providing such assistance to aid other students.

**Students with Disabilities:**
The University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. The University will adhere to all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student’s responsibility to register with Student Support Services (SSS) as early as possible and to provide faculty members with the formal communication from SSS for suitable accommodations. All accommodations must be approved through SSS.

**Week by Week Syllabus:**

**Weeks 1 & 2: Why test?** (1) Principles, Controversies, Pragmatics, and a Historical Perspective on the assessment process through psychological testing methods. (2) Race, SES and Gender and the assessment process

**Readings:**
(2) Lerner book, 3-13 & 61-67; 
(8) Tuber book, Chapters 1-3. 
(9) Tuber, Boesch, Gagnon and Harrison, *Sex and gender distinctions and the Rorschach Inkblot Method.* 
(10) Presley et al, Clinical Utility of the Rorschach with African Americans, JPA, 2001

**Objectives:**
(1) To provide a conceptual base for the use of psychological testing
(2) To place the testing process in historical context
(3) To address the roles of race, class and gender in the assessment process
Week 3: The WAIS-IV: Clinical Implications – how can a test of cognitive performance be linked more thoroughly with the overall assessment of personality


Objectives: (1) To review the importance of each subtest to the overall assessment of cognitive functioning (2) To provide a means for linking cognitive performance to the larger assessment of psychological functioning.

Weeks 4 & 5: The SCT, APT, & HTP Tests – using the mid-range of projective test methods, the Sentence Completion, Animal Preference and House Tree Person tasks, to further assess the quality of affective and cognitive performance.

Readings: Exercises to be distributed in class and Tuber book, chapter 9.

Objectives: (1) To demonstrate the utility of these three “mid-level” projective measures (2) To coordinate these type of findings with the rest of the clinical battery of tests.

Weeks 6 & 7: The TAT – the use of clinical narratives under “morbid” conditions to aid in the assessment process.


Objectives: (1) To present an analysis of the TAT procedure (2) To link this procedure to a broader understanding of narrative processes in health and pathology.

Weeks 8, 9 & 10: Rorschach scoring and administration – studying the Rorschach from developmental, cognitive and dynamic frameworks to further enhance the assessment process.


Objectives: (1) To teach both the Klopfer and Exner scoring methods, with the Klopfer methodology used as a conceptual base and the Exner methodology as the procedural base for utilizing the Rorschach method. (2) To integrate scoring with clinical process via multiple case examples and (3) To begin the process of helping students translate test data to phenomenologically meaningful written observations about patients.

Weeks 11-15 Case One: Interpretation of assigned protocol.
Objectives: (1) To use the test report as a concrete means of operationalizing what was learned throughout the semester through a literate, experience-near integration of test data.

Written Assignments

Each student will administer two complete batteries to undergraduate student volunteers. The reports you will write will include a long behavioral description of the process of the testing and a verbatim transcript of the test results, including a scored Rorschach and WAIS. Hand in the protocols and observations to your T.A. The assignment is due as soon after you complete the test administrations as possible but they both have to be done before the last day of class – no exceptions!

Once we have completed Case One in class, you will be responsible for handing in a 3-5 page summary of the test findings. This is to be given to me by Dec. 15th. I don’t accept late papers.