

CNS 736: APPRAISAL PROCEDURES FOR COUNSELORS (3 credit hours)
Fall, 2023
Monday, 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Wake Forest University

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Course content:

In this course, we will study the selection, use, and interpretation of tests in counseling as an adjunct to clinical impressions. More specifically, our focus will be on the appraisal, assessment, and diagnosis of personality, emotional, intellectual, and learning characteristics and disorders of clients in schools, colleges, and community human service agencies. As part of our studies, you will gain a better understanding of psychometrics, norming practices, cultural considerations, and ethical practice as these all relate to appraisal.

Learning Outcome Objectives (Knowledge and Skills):

The learning goals below are taken from CACREP's 2024 standards. These are agreed upon by counseling professionals and counselor educators as some of the most important knowledge that graduates of CACREP-accredited clinical mental counseling and school counseling programs should possess upon graduation. These also represent competencies that you will want to continue building in preparation for your state licensure exam and for successful employment in the field. Your understanding of these knowledge areas will be assessed through this course through the following learning activities: forms analysis; personal assessments, reflection, and application; reflection on and application of case studies; administration of an instrument with a volunteer and subsequent reflection and application; a research project and presentation; and a final exam. Learning goals for CNS 736 include gaining knowledge and skill in the following areas from **Section 3** of CACREP's standards:

G. ASSESSMENT AND DIAGNOSTIC PROCESSES

G.1. historical perspectives concerning the nature and meaning of assessment and testing in counseling (**assessed by exam**)

G.2. basic concepts of standardized and non-standardized testing, norm-referenced and criterion-referenced assessments, and group and individual assessments (**assessed by exam**)

G.3. statistical concepts, including scales of measurement, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, shapes and types of distributions, and correlations **(assessed by exam)**

G.4. reliability and validity in the use of assessments **(assessed by exam)**

G.5. culturally sustaining and developmental considerations for selecting, administering, and interpreting assessments, including individual accommodations and environmental modifications results **(assessed through personal assessment, reflection, and application; through the research project; and the exam)**

G. 6. ethical and legal considerations for selecting, administering, and interpreting assessments results **(assessed through personal assessment, reflection, and application; through the research project; and in the exam)**

G.7. use of culturally sustaining and developmentally appropriate assessments for diagnostic and intervention planning purposes **(assessed through forms analysis and through personal assessment, reflection, and application)**

G.8. use of assessments in academic/educational, career, personal, and social development **(assessed in the research project)**

G.9. use of environmental assessments and systematic behavioral observations **(assessed in forms analysis)**

G.10. use of structured interviewing, symptom checklists, and personality and psychological testing **(assessed through personal assessment, reflection, and application)**

And, from **Section 5** of CACREP's standards:

C.4. intake interview, mental status evaluation, biopsychosocial history, mental health history, and psychological assessment for treatment planning and caseload management **(assessed through forms analysis and through personal assessment, reflection, and application)**

Student Learning Outcomes / Key Performance Indicators

There is one signature assignment for this course, the **Research Project**, that is to be submitted in Anthology Portfolio, an e-Portfolio, data storage, and data management program. The Research Project will be used for course grade calculations (using the grading rubric), program evaluation reporting, and student learning outcomes (SLO) / key performance indicator (KPI) monitoring. For program evaluation reporting and SLO/KPI monitoring, we use a CACREP rubric that measures student learning on a scale from 1 (harmful) to 5 (exceeds expectations). The student learning outcome on which you will be evaluated for the Research Project is VII.a.: Students demonstrate

knowledge and skills in the administration and interpretation of assessment instruments for diagnostic and intervention-planning purposes.

Based on the 2024 CACREP standards (2.E.1.a., 2.C.1.a.), our counseling program is required to report aggregated SLO/KPI ratings, as well as monitor individual student SLO/KPI progress. The expectation is that students, on average and individually, will receive average CACREP rubric ratings of 4 (meets expectations) on each SLO/KPI measure. Student ratings on SLO/KPI measures that fall below a 3 (near expectations) may result in remediation.

Methods of Instruction:

Primary methods of instruction will include, but not be limited to, lecture, class discussion, audio/video clips, feedback on required learning activities, and a final exam. Additionally, students will review and take several psychological tests as well as administer one to a volunteer. Access to these tests and instructions for how to use them will be provided by your instructor throughout the semester.

Required Text:

Hays, D., G. (2017). *Assessment in counseling* (6th ed.). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Student Performance Evaluation Criteria:

Summary of grade weights by assignment:

Learning Activity	Points	Percent of Grade	Applicable Grading Rubric
Personal Assessment, Reflection, & Application	20	20%	Reflection Paper/Journal
Analysis of Intake & Assessment Forms	5	5%	Reflection Paper/Journal
Case Study: Trauma & Abuse	10	10%	Written assignment
Case Study: Risk Assessment	10	10%	Reflection Paper/Journal

Administer the Self-Directed Search (SDS)	15	15%	Reflection Paper/Journal
Research Project	20	20%	Written assignment, submitted via Anthology
Research Project Presentation	5	5%	Presentation
Final exam	15	15%	NA
Totals	100	100%	

(Additional detail about each of these learning activities is provided further below)

Grading Scale

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	70-76
F	0-69

Late Assignments Policy:

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date on which they are due. Unless prior arrangements have been made with the course instructor, late assignments will receive a 10% grade deduction for each day beyond the due date. Generally, all assignments will be submitted electronically via Canvas unless otherwise noted.

Disability Accommodation Policy and Procedure:

Wake Forest University recognizes its responsibility for creating an institutional climate in which students with differing needs and abilities can thrive. If you have a disability that may require an accommodation for taking this course, please contact the Center for Learning Access and Student Success (CLASS) within the first two weeks of the

semester at 118 Reynolda Hall, WFU, Winston-Salem, NC, 27109. Phone: 336-758-5929. Email: class@wfu.edu.

Emergency Contingency Plan:

If the University is closed for an emergency, students will be able and expected to keep up with their coursework and all documents will be made available online in Canvas. It is suggested that all materials be downloaded. Student work can be submitted via Canvas or email in the event of a University-wide emergency closure. If Internet access is limited, work can be submitted via postal mail to the instructor's home address (to be provided if needed). If there is a continued need to cancel class, the due dates for assignments may be pushed back.

Academic Polices and Honor Code:

Every student is required to practice and adhere to the principle of academic integrity while undertaking studies with Wake Forest University. Maintaining academic integrity is considered an essential academic standard of every graduate course and program. The University does not tolerate academic dishonesty. The graduate faculty at Wake Forest has adopted a formal honor code to provide guidance for student conduct with respect to academic pursuits. This policy may be accessed on the Graduate School website at: <http://graduate.wfu.edu/docs/academics/HonorCode.pdf>.

Academic dishonesty may be an academic issue or a disciplinary issue, or both, depending on its pervasiveness and/or severity. Any student engaged in academic dishonesty may face reprimand, disciplinary warning, a lowered or failing grade(s), and/or probation or suspension from the course, academic program, or University; or expulsion from the University.

The list that follows includes examples, although not all-inclusive, of academic dishonesty:

- Purchase of term papers turned in as one's own or writing the term paper(s) for another student.
- Submission of same term paper to another class without permission.
- Providing another student answers during an exam.
- Use of notes or book during exam when prohibited.
- Collaboration on homework or take-home exams when instruction called for independent work.
- Providing test question(s) to student(s) in another section of the class.
- Falsifying records or the fabrication of information and/or citation in an academic exercise.
- Violation of computer policies.
- **Plagiarism:** appropriating or passing off as one's work the writings, ideas, etc. of another, i.e.: copying without giving credit due, forgery, literary theft, and expropriation of some other's work. Plagiarism also includes electronic information of all types, *including using Artificial Intelligence (AI)*.

- Assisting someone in doing any of the above.

For the complete academic honesty policy and tips to avoid plagiarism, please see your student handbook.

Other Academic Policies:

For further information on all academic policies, including the policies for adding and dropping a course, requesting a grade of incomplete, academic probation, termination of enrolment, reinstatement, and student and faculty expectations, see the Wake Forest Student Handbook: <http://college.wfu.edu/counseling/forms/forms-for-current-students/>

Pro Humanitate - As a part of the Wake Forest community, the faculty and staff of the Department of Counseling fully embrace the concept of Pro Humanitate. In each of our classes (graduate, undergraduate, face-to-face and virtual), we strive to affirm every person and every identity including but not limited to gender identity, affectional orientation, language, national origin, color, race, disability, sex, religion, creed, and ancestry. We embrace the development of critical thinkers that consistently aspire to become culturally responsive and encourage you to challenge your own biases while developing the necessary skills to enter your chosen profession. Further, the faculty and staff will promote the Realizing Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (R.I.D.E.) (<https://ride.wfu.edu/introduction-to-ride/>) framework in our teaching, research, supervision and advising. We hope that you will join us along this journey, with a commitment to advocacy and social justice in both your personal and professional lives. Pro Humanitate, to better the lives of all humans!

Additional detail about course learning activities/assignments

Attendance & Participation:

This class is a learning community and therefore depends on everyone to reach its full potential. Missing class is discouraged, more than two absences will result in a failing grade for the course except for extraordinary circumstances. Please be mindful of your arrival/departure times as well as your attention while in class. Attendance means being present physically, mentally, and interpersonally.

In addition to general engagement in each class, each student will be responsible for facilitating one **15-minute class discussion** related to one chapter of the assigned textbook reading. This is not a formal presentation of the material, nor are additional learning tools (e.g., PowerPoint, video) required. All students are encouraged to bring questions from the readings to each class period for discussion. General Q&A is welcomed, as this can help to increase your understanding and application of assigned reading.

While students do not receive an official grade for their participation in this course, regular and active participation is expected.

Personal Assessment, Reflection, & Application (20%):

Students will complete four psychological tests/instruments over the course of the semester. This is a common practice in graduate appraisal courses, as this offers firsthand experience with various instruments and will demonstrate some of their strengths and limitations. It will also help students gain an understanding of the client's perspective as a test taker.

The instruments are:

- The Self-Directed Search (SDS)
- The Hamilton Depression & Anxiety Rating Scales
- The Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory (SASSI)
- The Experiences in Close Relationships Scale - Revised (ECR-R)

In addition to completing the instruments, students will also write brief reflection papers that answer the following questions:

- 1) What did you personally perceive as a strength of the test and why?
- 2) What do you personally perceive as a weakness of the test and why?
- 3) What seem to be psychometric, ethical, legal, cultural, and/or practical aspects of the test that would make it challenging to use with some or all clients?
- 4) How might you as a professional counselor use the test to assist you with case conceptualization and treatment planning with a client?
- 5) Why would or wouldn't you use the test to evaluate your client's progress over time?

Students are not required to share their personal assessment results but may reference them in their reflection paper if they choose to do so. In the event that participating in these activities causes distress, students are encouraged to communicate this with their instructor and seek personal counseling to address their individual needs.

Reflection papers will be submitted electronically via Canvas and should be approximately 1 page in length, with single spaced, 12-point font, and 1-inch margins. Altogether, your test reflections will count for a combined **20%** of your final course grade using the Reflection Paper/Journal rubric.

Intake & Assessment Forms Analysis (10%):

Students will evaluate various pieces of clinical documentation to determine how well they reflect the ethical, legal, cultural, and practical factors discussed in this course. Students will obtain **intake** forms from their practicum/internship sites or may use forms from other sources in the community. The instructor will provide examples of the **mental status exam, mental status history, biopsychosocial assessment, environmental assessment, and systematic behavioral observation.**

For the evaluation, students will identify 10+ characteristics that make each form *effective* and 10+ characteristics that make them *ineffective*. These should be organized as **detailed bullet point lists**.

For each type of documentation, students will also answer the following questions:

- 1) *In what ways do you see this type of assessment aiding in your work as a professional counselor?*
- 2) *In what ways might your delivery of this type of assessment be challenging?*
- 3) *How might a client experience this type of assessment in a positive way?*
- 4) *How might a client experience this type of assessment in a negative way?*

Students will submit one summary document via Canvas that includes their bullet points and answers to the above questions for each of the pieces of documentation reviewed. Answers should be approximately .5 – 1 page in length each, with single-spaced, 12-point font and 1-inch margins.

This assignment is worth **10%** of your final course grade and will be graded using the Reflection Paper/Journal rubric.

Case Study - Trauma & Abuse Reporting (10%):

Students will review a case vignette of a clinical situation that would require trauma assessment, an ethical decision-making process, and the possibility of reporting abuse. In a brief reflection paper, students will answer the following questions:

- 1) This counselor uses conversation and observation as ways of assessing for trauma. In what ways is the child in the case study being traumatized?
- 2) Upon observing the child in the session and hearing her story, what should be a counselor's next steps in terms of ethical decision-making? Include in your answer:
 - a. Who and what would we consult in our decision-making process?
 - b. Do we allow the child to leave our office, and upon what factors do we base that decision?
 - c. Do we tell the child and/or the parent that we must report our concerns of child abuse to Child Protective Services?
- 3) Upon making a decision to report, what would be our next steps?
 - a. Who would we call?
 - b. What would we say?
 - c. What happens next for the child?
 - d. How would we need to handle documentation?
- 4) Would you have reported the first mention/evidence of bruising rather than waiting until additional concern? Why/why not?

Students are encouraged to do additional research on trauma and abuse reporting, including researching the steps for reporting suspected child abuse in their home state.

Students may make presumptions or expand on the case study with subtle details that could add clarity and assist in answering the questions.

Papers will be submitted via Canvas and should be approximately 1 page, with single spaced, 12-point font, and 1-inch margins. This assignment is worth **10%** of your final course grade and graded using the Reflection Paper/Journal rubric.

Case Study - Risk Assessment (10%):

Students will watch the video case vignette about “Glenn” and complete a brief reflection paper evaluating the counselor’s risk assessment process. What was effective about the counselor’s risk assessment? What was ineffective? Information from Chapter 7 in the textbook should be used to support this evaluation.

- 1) In what ways might suicide assessment be difficult for you as the counselor? Or if not difficult, in what ways would suicide assessment not be difficult for you?
- 2) How might you sustain and even grow the therapeutic alliance between you and a client even while conducting a suicide assessment?
- 3) What would you consider to be therapeutic next steps for Glenn? That is, how might his suicide prevention become part of his treatment plan?

The reflection paper should be 1 page, single-spaced, with 12-point font and 1-inch margins. This assignment will be uploaded to Canvas and is worth **10%** of the final course grade according to the Reflection Paper/Journal rubric.

Administer the Self-Directed Search (15%):

Students will administer the SDS to a volunteer and reflect in writing on the experience. This volunteer should not be a classmate or counseling professional but may be a friend or family member. Students may also invite a client from their clinical sites to participate, if appropriate and with supervisor approval.

Following the administration experience, students will complete a brief written questionnaire on Canvas that reviews the experience, including the volunteer’s reactions and student reflections. Students will also be asked how they might incorporate SDS results into a hypothetical treatment plan. This assignment is an opportunity to gain experience administering and interpreting an assessment in a realistic manner while practicing rapport building skills.

This assignment is worth **15%** of the final course grade and will be graded using the Reflection Paper/Journal rubric.

Research Project Paper (20%):

Students will choose a clinical assessment instrument/test/screening tool and research its background, development, clinical applications, and limitations. Students are encouraged to choose something that pertains to their professional interests and goals; however, students may not choose one of the instruments they take for this course (e.g., SDS, Hamilton, etc.) and only one student may research a particular instrument.

In a comprehensive written report, students will include the following information about the instrument:

- 1) background development and normative sample
- 2) psychometric properties
- 3) cultural considerations (with specific examples)
- 4) ethical considerations (with specific examples)
- 5) practical contribution to diagnosis and treatment planning (with specific examples)
- 6) potential usefulness to you as a counselor (i.e., why you would/n't use this)

Students must include a minimum of 7 scholarly sources in this report, including peer-reviewed journal articles, Mental Measurements Yearbook entries, the course textbook, or other sources. Students are also encouraged to interview practitioners who use the instrument in their work, which will count as one of the seven references.

The research report paper should be a minimum of seven (7) double-spaced pages (excluding title and references) with 12-point font and 1-inch margins. Writing should adhere to APA Style, 7th Edition. Students will upload their completed papers to Anthology via the link in Canvas. This is worth 20% of the final course grade and will be graded using the Written Assignment Rubric.

Research Project Presentation (5%):

On an assigned date, students will also present their instrument to the class through sharing their summary findings and answering questions. Presentations should be approximately 10 minutes in length, with an additional 5 minutes for questions. Students should come prepared with handouts, copies of the instrument, and discussion questions or activities. Digital copies are acceptable. Presentations should summarize information contained in the research paper, especially the practical considerations (e.g., cost, accessibility, required training) to help classmates determine whether it is a good fit for their work.

The presentation portion of this project is worth 5% of the course grade and will be graded using the Presentation Rubric. Note: Students will be assigned to presentation dates according to their instrument's relevance to weekly course content and chapter schedule.

Final Exam (15%):

The timed final exam will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and fill-in-the-blank questions directly from the textbook and covering the entire course. It is open book/notes and will be completed on Canvas during the assigned availability window. Students will be given an Exam Guide early in the semester to help organize content and aid in studying.

The final exam is worth **15%** of your final course grade.

Tentative schedule: CNS 736 Appraisal Procedures for Counseling Fall 2023

This schedule may be amended with advance notice if needed. In-class activities may also change according to student learning needs/interests.

Note: Refer often to the ***“Reading & Exam Study Guide”*** in Canvas to focus your reading

August 28 Welcome! Week 1

- Introductions
- What are your interests in appraisals (a.k.a. “assessment”)?
- *Practical Points* document
- CACREP standards about assessment
- Syllabus Q&A
- Class discussion sign-ups
- *Reading and Exam Study Guide*

September 4 Introduction to Assessment Week 2

Reading for today:

Chapter 1: Use of Assessment in Counseling

Chapter 2: The Assessment Process

Today’s discussion:

- How do you conduct a thorough intake, build rapport, and use basic counseling skills at the same time?
- In what ways might assessment occur across the counseling relationship or process? What is its value?

Homework:

- Read the Mental Measurements Yearbook (MMY) entry for the SDS
- Complete the Self-Directed Search (SDS) & Reflection Paper

September 11 **Assessment Ethics & Legal Issues** **Week 3**

DUE: SDS Reflection Paper

Reading for today:

Chapter 3: Ethical, Legal, & Professional Considerations in Assessment

Student Discussion Facilitator:

Today's discussion:

- Small group processing, large group discussion of: What ethical, legal, and professional considerations are you aware of at your internship site?
- What does the ACA Code of Ethics say about assessment?

Homework: Gather intake forms for class analysis

September 18 **Multicultural Considerations** **Week 4**

Reading for today:

Chapter 4: Multicultural Considerations in Assessment

Student Discussion Facilitator:

Today's discussion:

- What are some cultural considerations that pertain to the SDS?
- What are some ethical matters that pertain to the SDS?
- How does multicultural competence affect assessment?
- What cultural considerations are reflected at your internship sites, especially in terms of assessment in all its forms?

1 Instrument Presentation:

2 Instrument Presentation:

Homework: Intake & Assessment Forms Analysis

September 25 **Communicating Assessment Results** **Week 5**

DUE: Intake & Assessment Forms Analysis

Reading for today:

Chapter 15: Communication of Assessment Results

Student Discussion Facilitator:

Today's discussion:

- Small group role play): How do you answer your client's hard questions about assessment results? How do you attend effectively to both positive and challenging assessment results?

3 Instrument Presentation:

Homework: Read MMY & complete Hamilton Depression & Anxiety Inventories

October 2 **Measurement Concepts** **Week 6**

DUE: Hamilton Depression & Anxiety Inventory Reflection Paper

Reading for today:

Chapter 5: Measurement Concepts

Student Discussion Facilitator:

Today's discussion:

- What does it mean for a test to be psychometrically sound? (i.e., reliability, validity, frequencies, etc.)
- Are the Hamiltons psychometrically sound? How do you know?

Homework: Review MMY entry and administer the SDS to volunteer

October 9 **Understanding & Transforming Raw Scores** **Week 7**

Reading for today:

Chapter 6: Understanding & Transforming Raw Scores

Student Discussion Facilitator:

Today's discussion:

- How do you make sense of client test data in a way they (and you) understand?

Homework: Write SDS Administration Reflection

October 16 **Career, Interest, & Values Assessment** **Week 8**

DUE: SDS Administration Reflection Paper

Reading for today:

Chapter 11: Career & Life-Planning Assessment

Student Discussion Facilitator:

Chapter 12: Measures of Interests and Values

Student Discussion Facilitator:

Today's discussion:

- How is assessment useful in career counseling? How do you distinguish between career counseling and general counseling?
- How do you integrate your counseling skills into career counseling?
- How might the results of career, interests, and values tests positively and negatively affect your clients?
- What are some ethical and cultural matters that pertain to career, interests, and values assessment?

4 Instrument Presentation:

5 Instrument Presentation:

Homework: Risk Assessment Video Reflection: Case of Glenn

October 23 **Initial Assessments**

Week 9

DUE: Risk Assessment Video Reflection: Case of Glenn

Reading for today:

Chapter 7: Initial Assessment in Counseling

Student Discussion Facilitator:

Discussion for today:

- Q&A from your review of Mental Status Exam and Suicide Assessment videos
- What were your impressions of these assessments?
- Discuss and role play: How do you conduct an effective suicide assessment?

6 Student Presentation:

Homework: Read MMY entry and complete the SASSI

October 30 **Substance Use & Mental Health Assessments** **Week 10**

DUE: SASSI Reflection Paper**Reading for today:**

Chapter 8: Substance Use & Mental Health Assessment

Student Discussion Facilitator:

Discussion for today:

- What is the SASSI? Is it psychometrically sound? How do you know? Show SASSI video
- What is the CAGE, the AUDIT, and the MAST?
- What are some ethical matters that pertain to addictions counseling?
- What are some cultural considerations that pertain to addictions counseling?
- How might clients be positively and negatively affected by substance use/addictions assessment results?

7 Instrument Presentation:**8 Instrument Presentation:**

November 6 **Intelligence & Ability Assessment** **Week 11**

Reading for today:

Chapter 9: Assessment of Intelligence

Student Discussion Facilitator:

Chapter 10: Ability Testing: Academic Aptitude & Achievement

Student Discussion Facilitator:

Today's discussion:

- What do School Counselors and Clinical Mental Health Counselors need to know about intelligence tests and ability tests?
- How might the results of intelligence and ability tests positively and negatively affect your clients?
- What are some ethical matters that pertain to the assessment of intelligence and ability?
- What are some cultural considerations with the assessment of intelligence and ability?
- How do you competently understand a psychological report?
- How do you partner with other clinicians and professionals to provide best possible care for your client?

9 Instrument Presentation:**10 Instrument Presentation:**

Homework:

- Read Experiences in Close Relationships Scale (ECR) article
- Take the ECR

November 13

Personality Assessment**Week 12****DUE:** ECR Reflection Paper**Reading for today:**

Chapter 13: Assessment of Personality

*Student Discussion Facilitator:***Today's discussion:**

- Group discussion of the ECR
- Small group role play (using ECR results): How do you answer your client's hard questions about assessment results? How do you attend effectively to both positive and challenging assessment results?

11 Instrument Presentation:**12 Instrument Presentation:****Homework:** Trauma & Abuse Report Case Study

November 20

Relationship Assessment**Week 13****DUE:** Trauma & Abuse Report Case Study**Reading for today:**

Chapter 14: Assessment of Interpersonal Relationships

*Student Discussion Facilitator:***Today's discussion:**

- How might general knowledge of assessment in family and couples counseling benefit you in your work as a counselor?
- How might couples and families be positively and negatively affected by assessment results?
- What are some ethical matters that pertain to family and couples and counseling?
- What are some cultural considerations that pertain to family and couples and counseling?

13 Instrument Presentation:**14 Instrument Presentation:**

Homework: Begin studying for Final Exam

November 27 **Exam Review, & Course Wrap-Up** **Week 14**

Any remaining students will present their research projects (**limited to 4**)

We will review material for the Final Exam and share final thoughts about the material, course, teaching methods, etc.

15 Instrument Presentation:

16 Instrument Presentation:

Homework: Study for Final Exam

December 4 **Exam day:**

You do not have to come to campus to take your final exam, as it will be administered online via Canvas. More details will be shared in class regarding when the exam will be available and how much time you will have to take the exam.