

# COUN 655 Assessment in Counseling

---

**Instructor**

Heidi L. Morton, PhD,  
NCC

**Phone**

253-879-2696

**Email**

[hmorton@pugetsound.edu](mailto:hmorton@pugetsound.edu)

**Course Description**

The critical evaluation and selection of psychological instruments is studied. Psychometric theory is emphasized and major representative instruments are surveyed.

**Methods of Instruction**

Reflective discussion, lectures, videos, project-based learning.

**Course Objectives****Office Location**

Howarth 328

**Office Hours**

M 10am, W 1pm, and by  
appointment

- Understand the history, nature, and use of assessment and testing in counseling.
- Understand basic statistical concepts related to testing and assessments.
- Build skills related to conducting culturally sensitive assessment meetings and to selecting, evaluating, administering, and interpreting commonly-used tests in counseling.

**Class Meeting Time**

Thursdays, 4-7 p.m.  
(Sept. 3- Oct. 22)

**Relationship to Program Goals**

The following program goals are addressed in this course: Critically and intentionally utilize multiple theories of counseling and human development and multiple sources of evidence to inform and develop their own practice and to promote growth and positive change; Interrogate their own biases and social location to actively pursue culturally responsive practice and to contribute collaboratively to the ongoing work of equity.

## CACREP Standards addressed in this course

F3h. a general framework for understanding differing abilities and strategies for differentiated interventions
F7a. historical perspectives concerning the nature and meaning of assessment and testing in counseling
F7b. methods of effectively preparing for and conducting initial assessment meetings
F7e. use of assessments for diagnostic and intervention planning purposes
F7f. basic concepts of standardized and non-standardized testing, norm-referenced and criterion-referenced assessments, and group and individual assessments
<b>*F7g. statistical concepts, including scales of measurement, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, shapes and types of distributions, and correlations</b>
F7h. reliability and validity in the use of assessments
F7i. use of assessments relevant to academic/educational, career, personal, and social development
F7j. use of environmental assessments and systematic behavioral observations
F7k. use of symptom checklists, and personality and psychological testing
F7l. use of assessment results to diagnose developmental, behavioral, and mental disorders
F7m. ethical and culturally relevant strategies for selecting, administering, and interpreting assessment and test results
C1e. psychological tests and assessments specific to clinical mental health counseling
G1e. assessments specific to P-12 education

\* = CACREP KPI (Key performance indicator)

### Key Performance Indicators

In COUN 655, the KPI 2.F.7.g “**statistical concepts, including scales of measurement, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, shapes and types of distributions, and correlations**” is assessed in the Test Evaluation Report. If you are not able to achieve “at standard” on this assessment, a plan of academic remediation will be developed between you, the course instructor, and the program director.

### Required Texts

Neukrug, E., & Fawcett, R. C. (2015). *Essentials of testing and assessment: A practical guide for counselors, social workers, and psychologists* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning.

### Additional Readings and Resources

AARC Standards for Multicultural Assessment (42018)

ACA Code of Ethics (2014)

ASCA Ethical Standards (2016)

Collins Library – Counseling Subject Guide <https://research.pugetsound.edu/counseling>

Contact our Liaison Librarian, Andrea Klyn: [https://research.pugetsound.edu/prf.php?account\\_id=25472](https://research.pugetsound.edu/prf.php?account_id=25472)

*see Canvas for additional readings*

## Requirements and Evaluation

It is expected that students take responsibility for timely completion of reading and written work. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that material submitted electronically has been received. Practice sessions, small group discussions and general participation are critical course components; they provide valuable professional experience and opportunities to deepen learning and synthesize course concepts. Regular attendance and on-time arrival ensures optimal learning. The instructor reserves the right to consider these variables when assigning grades.

## Assignments and Exam Schedule

Week	Subject	Percentage
	Participation in class discussions, activities, and written exercises	20%
Week 2 (9/10)	Quiz 1: ethical, legal, professional, issues in assessment	10%
Week 3 (9/17)	Quiz 2: Reliability & validity	10%
Week 4 (9/24)	Quiz 3: correlation coefficient, scales of measurement, frequency distributions	10%
Week 5 (10/1)	Quiz 4: Measures of central tendency & variability	10%
Week 7 (10/15)	Group project presentations & reflections	20%
Week 8 (10/22)	<b>Test Evaluation reports due (KPI for F7g)</b>	20%

## Group Project

This assignment gives students the opportunity to become more familiar with the methods, procedures, and challenges of creating a mock assessment instrument. Completed proposals should be formatted according to the APA Publication Manual (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). The assessment project should address

- Title and purpose of the instrument
- The domain assessed- cognitive (achievement, aptitude), affective (personality, interests ), behavioral
- Administration and interpretation procedures
- How the results should be communicated to the test-taker
- How items were selected / created
- Item response format (e.g., true/false, Likert, yes/no/maybe, reading comprehension)
- A minimum of 10 items to represent the selected domain
- Methods to be employed to standardize the instrument including two sources of reliability data and three types of validity data to be used
- Mock normative sample data (e.g., age, sex, ethnicity, education, socioeconomic status, etc.)

Each **group** will create and give a 10-15 minute presentation on their test instrument during Week 7. The presentation and any related materials should be sent to the instructor.

Each **group member** will also submit a 3- to 5-page (double-spaced) personal reflection on the following:

- Which area(s) of the project did you contribute the most to?
- What do you feel you learned the most about during this process?
- What were the most challenging aspects of the group project and group process for you?
- How might you apply what you have learned through this project in future counseling jobs?

Your grade for the project will reflect both your individual and group contributions.

### **Test Evaluation Report**

For the test evaluation report, you will evaluate a commercially available test using the format that follows. Important sources for this project are the various journals that specialize in assessment and *Buros' Mental Measurements Yearbook*, which is on a shelf in the reserve area of the library; start with the most recent edition. Electronic access is also available: <http://research.pugetsound.edu/go.php?c=12256428>

School districts can also be a good source of test materials. If you wish, you may choose to review one of the tests that we cover in class. At minimum you should obtain both a copy of the **test** and a copy of the test **manual**, as well as one or two **reviews** written by test development experts. Because it can take several weeks before you have sufficient information to write the report, it is **important to begin early** to locate an appropriate test. Reports should include the items below and will be evaluated on the basis of the criteria that follow.

**Description of Test** - What type of test is this? For whom was it designed? What are the types of items and their formats? Are there subtests? Who publishes the test? Are there different forms? How long does it take to administer? What does it cost? Including something about the history of the test may be useful.

**Practical Evaluation** - What is the quality of the test materials? Are they appropriate for the intended group? What are the cultural limitations? How easy is the test to administer? Are the directions thorough and clear? Face validity?

**Technical Evaluation** - Include all available information about validity, reliability, and norms. Be specific. How adequate is this information?

**Test Summary** -What are the strengths and weaknesses of the test taken as a whole? Can you see yourself using this test – and if so, in what contexts or conditions?

**References** - Include APA-formatted citations for every information source and distinguish between secondary and primary sources.

Reports should be submitted as attachments via Canvas and labeled as follows: *Last name-First initial-Test Eval.*

### Rubric for Group Project Presentation

Criteria	Standard Exceeded	Standard Met	Standard Unmet
<b>Content</b>	Knowledgeable of content and includes an engaging introduction, detailed body and effective conclusion.	Knowledgeable of content and includes an introduction, body, and conclusion	Some content is missing or questionable, and/or intro, body, or conclusion are missing
<b>Visual Aid</b>	Visual aids complemented the presentation and is clear, colorful, engaging, and succinct.	Visual aids complemented and strengthened the presentation.	Visual aids did not effectively strengthen the presentation.
<b>Volume &amp; Clarity</b>	The people in the back can hear the presentation very clearly.	Most parts of the presentation were clearly heard by everyone in the room.	The speaker(s) frequently did not speak clearly or loudly enough to be heard by everyone.
<b>Involvement</b>	All group members made significant contributions to the presentation.	All group members were involved in the presentation to some degree.	Some group members were not involved in the presentation.
<b>Flow</b>	The presentation flowed well, with no pauses or distracting verbal fillers.	The presentation included a few pauses and verbal fillers, but they did not significantly distract.	Pauses and verbal fillers significantly distracted from the presentation.
<b>Time</b>	Presentation was given in the time allotted.	Presentation fell within a few minutes of the time allotted.	Presentation was more than four minutes over or under the time allotted.

### Rubric for Group Project Personal Reflection

Criteria	Standard Exceeded	Standard Met	Standard Unmet
<b>Responsiveness</b>	The student responded to all reflection questions and shared additional insights.	The student responded to all reflection questions.	The student did not respond to all reflection questions or some questions were insufficiently covered.
<b>Content</b>	Reflections clearly demonstrated a high degree of synthesis of course concepts and deep personal reflection.	Reflections clearly demonstrated synthesis of course concepts and personal reflection.	Demonstration of synthesis of course content was lacking; personal reflection was unclear, shallow, or missing.

## Rubric for Test Report

Standard Exceeded	Standard Met	Standard Unmet
Test is described clearly and with adequate detail.	Test is described generally well, but some information is missing or not clear.	Test is described in a vague or unclear manner.
The practical qualities of the test are clearly identified and carefully evaluated.	The practical qualities of the test are identified and evaluated, but there is some missing information or implications that are not clearly stated.	The practical qualities of the test are not mentioned or the discussion is superficial.
The technical qualities of the test are clearly identified and carefully evaluated.	The technical qualities of the test, including reliability and validity, are identified and evaluated, but there is some missing information or implications that are not clearly stated.	The technical qualities of the test, including reliability and validity, are not mentioned or the discussion is superficial.
Findings are summarized clearly and thoroughly.	Findings are summarized but there are some confusing or missing details.	Findings are not summarized or summarized in a superficial manner.
Paper is well organized according to prescribed format.	There are minor flaws in the organization.	There are significant flaws in organization.
Paper conforms well to APA format standards with minor or no exceptions.	Paper generally conforms to APA format standards.	There are major variations from APA format standards.
Writing is professional and polished. Errors are infrequent and tone is formal and scholarly.	Writing could be improved. There are frequent and/or significant errors.	Writing is not up to standard for graduate-level work. Mechanical errors are frequent and distracting.

---

### UNIVERSITY OF PUGET SOUND STATEMENTS AND POLICIES

#### **University Mission Statement**

The University of Puget Sound has a commitment to enduring understandings for student learning which are reflected in the university statement. “The mission of the university is to develop in its students capacities for critical analysis, aesthetic appreciation, sound judgment, and apt expression that will sustain a lifetime of intellectual curiosity, active inquiry, and reasoned independence. A Puget Sound education, both academic and co-curricular, encourages a rich knowledge of self and others; an appreciation of commonality and difference; the full, open, and civil discussion of ideas; thoughtful moral discourse; and the integration of learning, preparing the university's graduates to meet the highest tests of democratic citizenship. Such an education seeks to liberate each person's fullest intellectual and human potential to assist in the unfolding of creative and useful lives.”

## **Classroom Emergency Response Guidance**

Please review university emergency preparedness response procedures and a training video posted at [www.pugetsound.edu/emergency/](http://www.pugetsound.edu/emergency/). There is a link on the university home page. Familiarize yourself with hall exit doors and the designated gathering area for your class and laboratory buildings.

If building evacuation becomes necessary (e.g. earthquake), meet your instructor at the designated gathering area so she/he can account for your presence. Then wait for further instructions. Do not return to the building or classroom until advised by a university emergency response representative.

If confronted by an act of violence, be prepared to make quick decisions to protect your safety. Flee the area by running away from the source of danger if you can safely do so. If this is not possible, shelter in place by securing classroom or lab doors and windows, closing blinds, and turning off room lights. Lie on the floor away from doors and windows. Place cell phones or pagers on vibrate so that you can receive messages quietly. Wait for further instructions.

## **Student Accessibility and Accommodation**

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your coursework, please contact Peggy Perno, Director of Student Accessibility and Accommodation, 105 Howarth, 253.879.3399. She will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

## **University Diversity Statement**

The university is committed to building a learning community based on a respect and appreciation for all persons.

### **We Acknowledge**

- the richness of commonalities and differences we share as a university community.
- the intrinsic worth of all who work and study here.
- that education is enhanced by investigation of and reflection upon multiple perspectives.

### **We Aspire**

- to create respect for and appreciation of all persons as a key characteristic of our campus community.
- to increase the diversity of all parts of our University community through commitment to diversity in our recruitment and retention efforts.
- to foster a spirit of openness to active engagement among all members of our campus community.

### **We Act**

- to achieve an environment that welcomes and supports diversity.
- to ensure full educational opportunity for all who teach and learn here.
- to prepare effectively citizen-leaders for a pluralistic world.

## **Student Bereavement Policy**

Upon approval from the Dean of Students' Office, students who experience a death in the family, including parent, grandparent, sibling, or persons living in the same household, are allowed three consecutive weekdays of excused absences, as negotiated with the Dean of Students. For more information, please see the Academic Handbook.

## **Copyright and Fair Use**

Course materials are subject to the copyright law of the United States (Title 17 U.S. Code). They are for educational purposes only and limited to students enrolled in the course. Further reproduction or distribution is prohibited.

## **Academic Integrity**

The University of Puget Sound is a community of faculty, students, and staff engaged in the exchange of ideas contributing to intellectual growth and development. Essential to the mission of the academic community is a shared commitment to scholarly values, intellectual integrity, and respect for the ideas and work of others. At Puget Sound, we share an assumption of academic integrity at all levels. Please review the University's Academic Integrity Policy at <http://www.pugetsound.edu/student-life/student-resources/student-handbook/academic-handbook/academic-integrity/>.

## **Student Religious Accommodations**

The university provides reasonable religious accommodations for academic courses and programs, and the university policy is found at <https://www.pugetsound.edu/about/offices-services/human-resources/policies/campus-policies/student-religious-accommodations-in-academic-courses-or-programs/>

## **Names and Pronouns**

I want to call you by what you consider your name, no matter what the official roster might tell me. Similarly, I want to use pronouns appropriate to your gender. Please inform me if you want me to refer to you differently than the official record.



## Course Schedule

Week	Subject	Readings/Assignments	CACREP Standards
Week 1 9/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History of testing and assessment</li> <li>• Legal, ethical, and professional issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neukrug &amp; Fawcett, ch. 1 &amp; 2</li> </ul>	F7a F7m
Week 2 9/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The assessment report process</li> <li>• Diagnosis in the assessment process</li> <li>• Validity &amp; reliability</li> <li>• Cross-cultural fairness</li> <li>• Correlation coefficient</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neukrug &amp; Fawcett, ch. 3, 4, 5</li> <li>• AARC Standards for Multicultural Assessment (2018)</li> <li>• <b>Quiz 1:</b> ethical, legal, professional, issues in assessment</li> </ul>	F7b F7e F7h F7m
Week 3 9/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scales of measurement</li> <li>• Measures of central tendency</li> <li>• Measures of variability</li> <li>• Distributions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neukrug &amp; Fawcett, ch. 6 &amp; 7</li> <li>• <b>Quiz 2:</b> Reliability &amp; validity</li> <li>• <b>Due:</b> email me your proposed test for Test Evaluation Report</li> </ul>	F7f F7g F7h
Week 4 9/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of educational ability</li> <li>• Intelligence testing &amp; neuropsychological assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neukrug &amp; Fawcett, ch.8 &amp; 9</li> <li>• <b>Quiz 3:</b> correlation coefficient, scales of measurement, frequency distributions</li> </ul>	F3h F7i F7l C1e G1e
Week 5 10/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Career and occupational assessment</li> <li>• Personality assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neukrug &amp; Fawcett, ch. 10 &amp; 11</li> <li>• <b>Quiz 4:</b> Measures of central tendency &amp; variability</li> </ul>	F7i F7k C1e G1e
Week 6 10/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal assessments</li> <li>• Group project time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neukrug &amp; Fawcett, ch. 12</li> </ul>	F7i F7j
Week 7 10/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal assessments</li> <li>• Group Project Presentations</li> <li>• Course review and reflections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Due:</b> Group project presentations &amp; reflections</li> </ul>	all in course
Week 8 10/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (no COUN 655; COUN 656 begins meeting today)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Due:</b> Test Evaluation reports</li> </ul>	all in course