

# Psychology 625 – Clinical Assessment

## Fall 2020

### Course Location and Time

Remote learning

Monday 11:00- 12:50PM

### Instructor Information

Instructor: Leslie Neipert, Ph.D.

Email: leslie.neipert@mso.umt.edu

Office hours: by appointment

### Course Objectives

The primary objective of this course is to provide opportunities for students to develop and refine clinical assessment skills. This will be accomplished by providing an opportunity for students to gain experience with multiple phases of clinical assessment, including goal-directed clinical interviews, review of records, selecting and administering appropriate test measures, scoring and interpreting test results, case conceptualization, and consideration of differential diagnoses when appropriate. This information will then be used to generate clinical reports, which will incorporate the presenting problems, the functional impact of the problems, behavioral observations, integration of test data with information gleaned from interviews, and client-specific recommendations for patients/referring providers.

Due to challenges associated with COVID-19, the means by which patient assessments are conducted will inevitably require deviation from the traditional in-person interaction. Therefore, this course will also provide exposure to recent regulations and guidelines concerning remote patient evaluations, instruction in methods for adapting assessment practices to a telehealth platform, and the implementation of remote assessment techniques to facilitate patient evaluations.

### Learning Outcomes

Primary learning outcomes implicate continued development of students' proficiency across a number of assessment-related, profession-wide, competencies. These include the following specific outcomes:

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of professional standards and ethical/regulatory considerations in remote assessment.
- Students will demonstrate proficiency and competency in the administration of remote assessments delivered via telehealth modalities.

- Students will demonstrate improvement in their application of skills that are crucial to clinical assessment, including interviewing, administering test batteries, conceptualizing cases, and arriving at diagnostic conclusions, when appropriate.
- Students will demonstrate improvement in their report-writing abilities, and become more proficient at considering the functional impact of a presenting problem.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically about the functional impairment that may result from a presenting problem, and will generate appropriate recommendations.

## **Course Requirements**

### **Attendance**

Due to the small, seminar style of this class, weekly attendance is expected. Each of you possesses unique strengths and perspectives that will contribute to the learning experience of the entire group. Conversely, your absence will detract from the experience of others. If you are unable to attend class, please inform me ahead of time.

### **Clinical Assessments**

Due to the alteration in assessment modality, referral sources are TBD. When referrals become available through the CPC, it will become your responsibility to find time in your schedule to complete evaluations. Occasionally, you may need to be flexible in order to accommodate a patient's availability, but you should attempt to identify a single time (or at least a single day) that will work for each of your assessments throughout the semester. Also, before finalizing an appointment, please contact me to coordinate the times so that I can join-in on the first part of your initial evaluation.

### **Group Supervision/Didactic Seminar**

Class meetings will combine didactic/skills-based learning with group supervision. The format of our meetings will likely evolve over the course of the semester as students progress into assessments. When students start engaging in assessments, meetings will roughly adhere to the following format:

- Check-in regarding all active and upcoming cases.
- Informal discussion of new referral questions. Each student will present his/her new referral questions (including primary concerns, etc.) to the group. As a group we will discuss the nature of the referral questions and consider appropriate approaches to the assessment.
- Case presentation provided by students who have most recently completed an evaluation.
  - Referral question, brief history/patient profile, test results, and clinical impressions/recommendations

- Occasionally, if referrals slow down or we have difficulty scheduling new evaluations, students will be asked to read articles on a relevant topic and discuss them as a group. The readings will be posted to moodle at least 1 week prior to our discussing them in class. Prior to meeting to discuss the articles, each student may be required to email two questions to me based on the readings that can be used to stimulate class discussion, or may be asked to construct an outline from the readings to be shared in class.

## **Course Materials**

There is no required textbook for this class. Instead, journal articles will constitute required reading and will be posted to Moodle periodically throughout the semester. Additionally, other recommended readings and/or training webinars will be posted on occasion.

## **Student Evaluation**

Grades will be based on class attendance and participation (including preparation for journal article discussions), the quality of your evaluations and reports, preparation for class discussions and thoughtful contributions, and your ability (and growth) to work effectively and professionally as a colleague. In addition, your grade will be impacted by your ability to incorporate feedback throughout the semester and to demonstrate improvement in the skills that are required to effectively conduct a clinical assessment.

## **Important Dates**

September 7                      Labor Day – No Classes, Offices Closed  
November 19-25                  Final Exams

## **Course Guidelines and Policies**

### **Academic Integrity**

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code.

### **Disability Modifications**

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or call 406.243.2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.

### **Add/Drop Deadline**

Please take note of important registration dates listed in the 2020 Fall academic calendar. September 9th is the last day to add/drop classes via Cyberbear.

**Student Feedback**

As with any graduate level course, your feedback and constructive comments for improving the course are always welcome.