

American University of Beirut
Department of Psychology
Psychological Assessment
Psyc 354 – Fall 2017

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Pre-requisites

Graduate status in the psychology department.

Description

This is introductory course on psychological and neuropsychological assessment. It is designed to familiarize you with the domains of functioning typically assessed by psychologists, including developmental, neuropsychological, psychoeducational, and forensic/psychiatric assessments, across the lifespan (infants, children, adolescents, adults and elderly). This course will provide a strong foundation in new theories of psychometrics, sources of bias and ethical conduct, and the process of psychological assessment for diagnostic and treatment purposes, of neurodevelopmental and acquired disorders.

Student Learning Outcomes

As a result of the activities and study in this course, you will:

- Have a strong foundation in modern theory of validity and reliability, as well as classical test theory (trinitarian view of validity and reliability).
- Appreciate the threats to valid assessment and be able to appropriately minimize or avoid such threats when they arise (e.g., clinician biases, tests with poor psychometric properties, behavioral obstacles during assessment).
- Evaluate the psychometric properties of psychological assessment measures.
- Understand the different applications of testing in clinical contexts including neuropsychological, psychoeducational, forensic, psychiatric, personality, etc, and to a lesser extent non-clinical contexts including career and occupational.
- Know how to choose appropriate procedures/batteries for different types of assessment, including the right clinical interview, behavioral assessment, testing, and rating scales.
- Understand basic neurocognitive markers of disorders and how they are manifested in assessments.
- Observe and practice testing procedures.
- Become familiar with the basics of synthesizing results of assessment procedures into case conceptualization, diagnosis, and evidence-based recommendations.
- Demonstrate basic writing skills in documenting findings of psychological assessments.
- Demonstrate basic clinical skills in communicating and explaining findings to patients/clients, teachers, physicians, other psychologists.
- Enhance your capacity to engage in constructive discussions, agreements and disagreements and further your practice with such skills.
- Continue to practice and develop your oral presentation and information sharing skills.

Teaching Methodology

The course will mainly be presented in the form of a lecture and seminar. Readings will be assigned in advance, and students are expected to read the material before class, and come prepared with informed questions and points of discussion. The lecture is facilitated by the instructor, but also relies on student input, and is interactive and hands-on. To ensure that the students have read the assigned material, they will

be asked questions during class, and their critical responses count towards their participation grade. Written assignments are also required (see below).

Communication

The classroom is the primary method that I use for communicating with the class. Therefore, you are fully responsible to follow instructions and assignments given in class, and to be aware of announcements and changes communicated in the class. Email and Moodle will be the secondary method of communicating. I will use it to post grades, readings, announcements, and to email the class, so please make sure to follow it regularly. You are also welcome to email me on pz05@aub.edu.lb or take an appointment for office hours.

In class, I may sometimes call upon students to share their opinion, or ask students to practice a learned skill in front of the class. This may be beyond the comfort zone of some students. Summoning you is meant to be helpful and supportive. If you have anxiety about participating or performing, please contact me on the first day of class so we can find a solution on how you can participate comfortably. On the other hand, if you are generally expressive and talkative, please make sure that you are mindful of the time and space for others' contributions.

Academic Integrity

Psychology relies on a solid code of professional conduct that stresses beneficence, nonmalificence, fidelity, responsibility, integrity, justice, and respect (APA, 2003). Students are encouraged to behave in a manner that promotes these values in our classroom. Students are expected to be honest and to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity in their academic work and assignments. Students cheating or plagiarizing will receive a zero for that test or paper and the office of the Dean may/will be notified. I will apply and strictly enforce the student code of conduct in the AUB handbook.

Students with Disabilities

AUB strives to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers due to a disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please inform me during the first week of class so that we can privately discuss options. In order to help establish reasonable accommodations and facilitate a smooth accommodations process, you are encouraged to also contact the Accessible Education Office: accessibility@aub.edu.lb; +961-1-350000, x3246; West Hall, 314.

Required and Supplemental Reading Material

Booklet available.

Resources

Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing <http://teststandards.org/>

National Council of Measurement in Education <http://www.ncme.org/NCME>

APA Testing Information Clearinghouse <http://www.apa.org/science/programs/testing/test-clearinghouse.aspx>

For your papers, you will need to use **APA style 6th edition**:

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

This website also has some (but not all) guidelines: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

Learning Tasks and Grading

Grading and Evaluation

<u>Tasks</u>	<u>Grade Weight</u>
Engagement and Participation	15%
Psychometric Report	15%
Testing Practice	15%
Interview Practice	15%
Assessment Report	20%
Final Exam	20%
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Total	100%

Students will be evaluated on:

- Their level of participation, engagement and enthusiasm, which is demonstrated through their willingness to come to class prepared, on time, ask text-informed questions, communicate with the instructor outside of class hours, integrate the learned material, and follow assignment instructions properly.
- Their understanding of course material which is demonstrated through verbal and written work, and through their presentations in class.
- Their ability to write about the subject matter with the appropriate command of language skills, proper terminology, and correct use of APA style.

Absenteeism Policies and Procedures

There are no make-ups for missed exams and assignments. A student *may* be excused in exceptional cases and upon the discretion of the Department, and only if the student presents a valid documented excuse to the instructor and the chairperson and of the department within 72 hours. Papers submitted beyond their deadline for valid reasons, will be deducted 5 points from the overall grade for each day that they are late. Therefore, late submissions will hurt your grade and lead to a zero. (Internet and printer problems, and wrong attachments, are not valid reasons for not submitting on time). If the student is absent on a day that an assignment is due or quiz is administered, they are still responsible for those duties. Absences will need to be substantiated by appropriate documentation.

Tentative Course Schedule

The tentative schedule is posted on Moodle. Students are responsible to stay up to date with the schedule, and possible changes.