

PSY 561 – Advanced Assessment in Educational Settings

Western Kentucky University

Tuesday-Thursdays 9:35-10:55 GRH 3006

Fall, 2020

Professor

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GRH 3013

745-4410 (Office)

Office Hours: As posted/by appointment

Course Description:

Interpretation and integration of assessment information for use in educational settings. Includes tests, behavior rating scales, ecological analysis, systematic observations, and functional behavioral assessment.

Prerequisites: Psy 560 and permission of instructor

Course Objectives and NASP Standard(s):

1. To develop a problem-solving orientation to addressing referral questions, conducting assessments, and developing interventions while emphasizing sensitivity to diversity (NASP 2.1, 2.8);
2. To learn multiple methods of individual assessment including environmental analysis, systematic behavioral observations, and functional behavioral assessment (NASP 2.1, 2.2) ;
3. To learn to link assessment and intervention (2.3, 2.4);
4. To learn effective means to consult and collaborate with teachers related to behavioral concerns and intervention recommendations (2.2, 2.4); and
5. To learn effective means of interpreting and communicating assessment information, both orally and in written reports, to other professionals and parents (2.1).

Professional Expectations:

School psychologists must be responsible, autonomous professionals with applied skills. As graduate students, you will be expected to demonstrate responsible, autonomous, and professional behaviors. This includes keeping up with the reading assignments, participating in class discussions, attending all classes, turning in assignments on time, dressing appropriately for professional activities, and keeping appointments. If you have to miss a class for illness, it is your responsibility to obtain the information and announcements.

You will gain experiences in school settings (through the PSY 662 practicum) and you will be privy to confidential information in these settings. Do not repeat any confidential information outside our classroom discussions (even if you don't use names). Conduct yourself in a professional manner: dress the part, be courteous, anticipate problems, and keep me informed of your activities. It is incumbent upon you to keep the good will of the schools and parents since future professional collaboration depends upon it.

Students are expected to make trips to off-campus sites in partial fulfillment of the requirements of this course. (Obviously, the impact of Covid may change this.) The schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor or in the event of extenuating circumstances. Additional readings may be assigned to supplement the lectures and discussions.

Required Text & Readings:

- Steege, M. W., Pratt, J. L., Wickerd, G., Guare, R., & Watson, T. S. (2019). *Conducting school-based functional behavioral assessments: A practitioner's guide* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Lane, L. L., Menzies, H. M., Bruhn, A. L., & Crnabori, M. (2011). *Managing challenging behaviors in schools: Research-based strategies that work*. (Chapters 2 & 3). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Reschly, A. L., Appleton, J. J., & Pohl, A. (2014). Best practices in fostering student engagement. In P. Harrison & J. Grimes (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology: Student-level services* (pp. 37-50). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Journal Articles for Student Presentations:

- Fee, A., Schieber, E., Noble, N., & Valdovinos, M. G. (2016). Agreement between questions about behavior function, the Motivation Assessment Scale, Functional Assessment Interview, and Brief Functional Analysis of Children's Challenging Behavior. *Behavior Analysis: Research and Practice*, 16, 94-102.
- Hagan-Burke, S., Gilmour, M. W., Gerow, S., & Crowder, W. C. (2015). Identifying academic demands that occasion problem behaviors for students with behavior disorders: Illustrations at the elementary school level. *Behavior Modification*, 39, 215-241.
- Hanley, G. P., Jin, C. S., Vanselow, N. R., & Hanratty, L. A. (2014). Producing meaningful improvements in problem behavior of children with autism via synthesized analyses and treatments. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 47, 16-36.
- Kestner, K. M., Peterson, S. M., Eldridge, R. R., & Peterson, L. D. (2018). Considerations of baseline classroom conditions in conducting functional behavior assessments in school settings. *Behavior Analysis in Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40617-018-0269-1>
- Lloyd, B. P., Randall, K. R., Weaver, E. S., Staubitz, J. L., & Parikh, N. (2020). An initial evaluation of a concurrent operant analysis framework to identify reinforcers for work completion. *Behavior Disorders*, 45, 85-102.
- Lloyd, B. P., Weaver, E. S., & Staubitz, J. L. (2017). Classroom-based strategies to incorporate hypothesis testing in functional behavior assessments. *Beyond Behavior*, 26, 48-56.
- Roscoe, E. M., Schlichenmeyer, K. J., & Dube, W. V. (2015). Functional analysis of problem behavior: A systematic approach for identifying idiosyncratic variables. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 48, 289-314.

- Sanford, A. K., & Horner, R. H. (2012). Effects of matching instruction difficulty to reading level for students with escape-maintained problem behavior. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 15, 79-89.
- Sarno, J. M., Sterling, H. E., Mueller, M. M., Dufrene, B., Tingstrom, D. H., & Olmi, D. J. (2011). Escape-to-attention as a potential variable for maintaining problem behavior in the school setting. *School Psychology Review*, 40, 57-71.

Additional suggested (not required) readings and resources:

- ✓ Alberto, P. A., & Troutman, A. C. (2013). *Applied behavior analysis for teachers* (9th ed.). Pearson.
- ✓ Crone, D. A., Hawken, L. S., & Horner, R. H. (2015). *Building positive behavior support systems in schools: Functional behavioral assessment*. Guilford Press.
- ✓ Farmer, R. L., & Floyd, R. G. (2016). An evidence-driven, solution-focused approach to functional behavior assessment report writing. *Psychology in the Schools*, 53, 1018-1031.
- ✓ Ferguson, T. D., Briesch, A. M., Volpe, R. J., & Daniels, B. (2012). The influence of observation length on the dependability of data. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 27, 187-197.
- ✓ Hanley, G. P. (2012). Functional assessment of problem behavior: Dispelling myths, overcoming implementation obstacles, and developing new lore. *Behavior Analysis in Practice*, 5, 54-72.
- ✓ Luiselli, J. K., & Cameron, M. J. (1998). *Antecedent control: Innovative approaches to behavioral support*. Brookes Publishing.
- ✓ Steege, M. W., & Scheib, M. A. (2014). Best practices in conducting functional behavioral assessments. In P. Harrison & A. Thomas (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology: Data-based and collaborative decision making* (pp. 273-286). National Association of School Psychologist.
- ✓ Tiger, J. H., Miller, S. J., Mevers, J. L., Mintz, J. C., Scheithauer, M. C., & Alvarez, J. (2013). On the representativeness of behavior observation samples in classrooms. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 46, 424-435.

Course Outline: (topics and dates covering the topics are subject to change)

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Course Topics:</u>
Aug. 25	Introduction to the course, the problem-solving model, and data-based assessment and decision making.
Aug. 27	Environmental analysis of the classroom. (Lane et al., 2011, chapters 2 & 3)
Sept. 1	Environmental analysis. Start systematic behavioral observations (Steege et al., 2019 textbook, Chapter 8).
Sept. 3	Conducting systematic behavioral observations.
Sept. 8	Conducting systematic behavioral observations continued.
Sept. 10	Additional issues in conducting systematic behavioral observations (Resources: Ferguson et al., 2012; Tiger et al., 2013).
Sept. 15	Exam I

Sept. 17	Exam review. Introduction to functional behavioral assessment (Steege et al., 2019 textbook, Chapter 1).
Sept. 22	Functional behavioral assessment (Steege et al., Chapter 2). (Environmental analysis assignment due.)
Sept. 24	Functional behavioral assessment (Steege et al., Chapters 3 & 4).
Sept. 29	FBA methods (Steege et al., Chapters 7 & 9).
Oct. 1	FBA methods continued
Oct. 6	Positive Behavior Supports based on the FBA (Steege et al., Chapter 10). (Classroom observation assignment due.)
Oct. 8	Positive Behavior Supports continued (Steege et al., Chapters 11 & 12).
Oct. 13	Student presentations on FBA articles
Oct. 15	Student presentations on FBA articles
Oct. 20	Student presentations on FBA articles
Oct. 22	Functional behavioral assessment: Interventions and reports (Farmer & Floyd, 2016; Steege et al., Chapter 13).
Oct. 27	FBA or BEA applied to academic skills.
Oct. 29	Discussion of FBA cases/First draft of FBA reports due.
Nov. 3	No class – election day
Nov. 5 & 10:	FBA special topics: structural analysis, enhancing the effectiveness of positive reinforcement, integrity of interventions, function-based antecedent interventions, function-based extinction procedures, function-based reinforcement procedures.
Nov. 12	FBA case presentations
Nov. 17	FBA case presentations
Nov. 19	FBA case presentations
Nov. 24	Thanksgiving/fall break week
Dec. 1	Academic engagement (Reschly et al., 2014)
Dec. 3	Academic engagement
Dec. 10:	Final Exam

Course Grading: (Point values may change.)

Possible points are as follows:

Exam I	35
Final exam	40
Quizzes over readings	30
Environmental analysis	50
Classroom observations	50
FBA article presentation	25
FBA presentation (40) / report (40)	80
Professional behaviors	15

Assignment of grades will be based on percent of points earned with *approximate* cut-offs at 90%, 80%, etc.

Exams/Quizzes: Exams and quizzes have several purposes such as providing you with external motivation to read and review the material, giving you feedback on your understanding of the material, and giving me feedback on what material was understood. The quizzes will be multiple-choice questions and can be on any day covering the assigned readings for that day. The exams will largely consist of short answer and essay questions. The exams will be designed to assess your knowledge of objective information from readings and lectures as well as require you to integrate and apply information you have learned. The final exam will mainly cover the portion of the class since the second exam. (NASP 2.8)

Environmental Analysis (NASP 2.1, 3.1): Assuming you will be allowed out in the schools for your practicum, you will conduct an analysis of a “real” public school classroom in terms of a variety of environmental variables. Details of this assignment will be presented in class.

Classroom Observations (NASP 2.1, 3.1): Assuming you will be allowed out in the schools for your practicum, you will conduct systematic classroom observations of a student in a public school classroom. (The student is not to be identified in any manner before, during, or after your observation.) Details of this assignment will be presented in class.

Article Presentations (NASP 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4): It is important for school psychologists to stay current with the literature, long after graduating. This assignment provides an opportunity to read, present (discuss), and critique a journal article on a topic related to the content of this class. I’m expecting a professionally led discussion of each article. Articles will be randomly assigned to the class participants. Each of you will lead a 15-20 minute presentation/discussion with the rest of the class on the article.

Functional Behavioral Assessment and Positive Behavior Support Assignment (NASP 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1): You will be conducting a functional behavioral assessment on a “real” client (student) while out on practicum (unless Covid restrictions interfere). A written FBA report and Positive Behavior Support plan, and revisions thereof, are required and the final product will be given to your supervising practicum school psychologist. You will present your case to the rest of the class in a professional, “peer review” manner. Your presentation should emphasize your collaboration and consultation efforts in obtaining assessment information and developing interventions. More

information on this assignment will be presented during class time. This assignment will be revised if you are unable to be in the schools.

Professional Behaviors: Professional behaviors include such things as attendance, timeliness, participation in class, courtesy toward others, keeping appointments, NOT using or looking at your cell phone in class, etc. Professional behavior points will be given based on my subjective evaluation of you at the end of the semester.

Suggestions for doing well in this course:

As a graduate student learning theoretical information, research strategies, and applied skills, you will need to be actively involved in your learning of the material (vs. reading an article or chapter just to cram for a quiz or an exam). It is essential to have the readings read ahead of class time. Write down any issues or questions that occur to you as you read the material and bring them up in class. You must ask questions to clarify any material not fully understood. (I cannot always tell from your expressions whether you are "getting" it or not.) It is far better to ask a "stupid" question now than to make a mistake as a professional. I expect all students to participate in class discussions.

I have extremely high expectations for each of you. I want you to be the best school psychologists this University has produced. Be an active learner in this process. I encourage and seek your participation, input, and feedback into all aspects of the course.

Finally, let me give you a few specific suggestions for doing well in my course:

1) I like to see students who manage their responsibilities. As a professional, the job needs to get done regardless of whether your dog is sick or *The Bachelor* will be on TV. Likewise, as a graduate student, it will be your responsibility to complete all course and professional obligations when they are due. In a sense, excuses are irrelevant. The work needs to get done. On the other hand, many things in life are indeed more important than coursework. Keep me informed of such incidents.

2) I appreciate promptness. This applies to arriving to class on time, class assignments, and professional appointments. As school psychologists, you will be attending approximately 1,542 meetings per year (rough guess). Promptness is not only valued and appreciated by others, it is an important time management issue. Frequently being late demonstrates little respect for others' time and schedules.

3) I greatly appreciate students who want to learn. Putting forth effort pleases employers and it pleases me as well. Don't just put in the minimal amount of work and effort required - strive to learn and do as well as you can. For the last 25+ years, whenever someone from a school district calls me about a graduate student seeking a job, those doing the hiring have never asked about a grade in a course. However, they do ask about your work ethic, attitude, and ability to interact with others.

Required WKU Syllabus Information

Face Coverings

Out of respect for the health and safety of the WKU community and in adherence with CDC guidelines, the University requires that a cloth face covering (reusable or disposable) that covers both the nose and mouth must be worn at all times when in public areas within all buildings. Students must properly wear face coverings while in class regardless of the room size or the nature of the classroom activities. Students who fail to wear a face covering as required will be in violation of the WKU Student Code of Conduct and will be asked to comply or will face disciplinary action, including possible dismissal from the University. Accommodations to face coverings must be determined by the Student Accessibility Resource Center and documented before a student may attend class.

Accommodations

In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, Room 1074. The SARC can be reached by phone number at 270-745-5004 [270-745-3030 TTY] or via email at sarc.connect@wku.edu. Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

Title IX/Discrimination & Harassment Statement

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy (#0.2070) and Discrimination and Harassment Policy (#0.2040). Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator, Andrea Anderson, 270-745-5398 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121. Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are "Responsible Employees" of the University and MUST report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU's Counseling and Testing Center at 270-745-3159.