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PSYX 587.01: School Psychology Methods

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Psyx 587 -School Psychology Methods Spring 2018

Course Information

Time: Thursdays 4:00— 5:50pm

Location: Skaggs Building, Room 387

Instructor Information

Instructor: Linda A. Maass, Ed.D

Office:

Email: lmaass@missoulaaec.com

Office phone: 406-532-4861

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Office hours: By appointment

Course Objectives

School Psychology Methods is designed to provide students with authentic clinical experiences in a school setting. The practicum provides opportunities for students to practice the skills they are learning or have learned in classes, and to begin to engage in the professional activities of a school psychologist. Students will develop a better understanding of schools, educational staff, and students, as well as the roles and functions of school psychologists.

The first-year practicum is very much an opportunity to learn about the school psychology profession. You are expected to be novices in the areas of professional practice targeted in the coursework. The practicum is intended to be a safe, positive environment under the supervision of the field supervisor and course instructor. The activities and course assignments are coordinated so that students have the opportunity to complete course assignments in the practicum site. However, opportunities for assessment will vary depending on your skill development and your field supervisor's assessment schedule and activities at the site. Please pre-plan carefully with your field supervisor to ensure that you will be able to meet the requirements.

Students will spend time with their field supervisor completing professional activities. At the beginning of the practicum, students' experiences typically consist of "shadowing" their supervising school psychologist to become familiar with the responsibilities and job description of the school psychologist. Students also immediately implement their skills in primary prevention, curriculum-based evaluations, academic interventions, and student progress monitoring. Over the course of the semester, the student is given increasing responsibilities and practice in specific skills such as conducting standardized academic assessments, conducting clinical interviews, classroom observations, and writing reports.

Practicum students are expected to be closely supervised. The appropriate degree of autonomy given to students is left to the discretion of the supervisor and instructor.

The practicum seminar is designed to accompany the field component of the School Psychology Methods by providing students with a forum to discuss critical issues of practice in a community of scholars and practitioners. We will be using the class as a site to integrate your coursework and field experiences, to examine your development as a professional, and to discuss emerging issues of practice. You will receive direct and indirect supervision of your practicum experience in this class in addition to that provided by the field-based supervisor.

Approximately 6 direct school hours and 2 hours outside of the school setting per week (supervision, report writing, etc), for a total of 120 practicum hours. This is considered the minimum number of hours and you are expected to continue your practicum, even if you have accumulated 120 hours prior to the end of the semester. Please note that your supervisor may not be in the building the entire day that you are there. Additional time at the site may be required to complete course expectations. It is occasionally necessary to temporarily withdraw students from the practicum placement if problems arise due to the students' progress or to unforeseen circumstances at the practicum site. If this should occur, I will consult immediately with the student and the field supervisor to develop a plan to reestablish the practicum as soon as is feasible.

In the practicum, students will acquire knowledge and practice of (a) methods to assess academic problems within the school and classroom setting, (b) strategies for interpreting assessment data, (c) intervention strategies for addressing academic problems (d) methods for selecting and delivering interventions, (e) evaluating the effectiveness of interventions and modifying them as needed, (f) communicating results and recommendations in writing and orally.

NASP Domains of Practice

Domain 1: Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability

Domain 2: Consultation and Collaboration

Domain 3: Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills

Domain 5: School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning

Domain 6: Preventive and Responsive Services

Domain 8: Diversity in Development and Learning

Domain 9: Research and Program Evaluation

Domain 10: Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice

Objectives

- Students will learn how to diagnose learning disorders using both special education classification systems and gain an understanding of what constitutes normal development at different ages.
- Students will learn how to administer, score, and interpret various measures of educational achievement.
- Students will learn how to integrate various components of a psychoeducational evaluation.
- Students will learn how to make specific and appropriate recommendations and/or referrals given the unique characteristics, culture, and factors related to the student.
- Students will learn to evaluate test and survey instruments for psychometric properties.
- Students will select and administer appropriate psychoeducational instruments.

- Students will learn to interpret and communicate assessment results in both written and verbal forms to school interdisciplinary team members, the student and the student's family.
- Students will learn to evaluate and utilize research to inform and guide professional practice.
- Students will use problem-solving methods to develop and implement empirically supported intervention procedures including psychoeducational interventions.
- Students will design and deliver empirically supported preventative practices at the idiographic level.
- Students will learn to select appropriate progress monitoring measure to evaluate intervention progress and outcomes.
- Students will learn to communicate and interpret intervention outcomes in both written and verbal forms in school interdisciplinary team members, the student, and the student's family.
- Students will learn to utilize special education laws and eligibility criteria for the purpose of assuring a free, appropriate public education.
- Students will learn to have an understanding of, and ability to practice within legal and ethical responsibilities related to the provision of school psychological services.
- Students will have an understanding and awareness of multicultural issues and their impact on student performance as well as the school psychologist-client relationship.
- Students will learn to understand the need for cultural competence and awareness.

Course Policies and Procedures

Academic Honesty and Integrity

As students entering the field of school psychology, there is an expectation of a high standard of academic integrity. Students are expected to perform to the utmost of their ability in an honest and ethical manner. The University of Montana [Student Conduct Code](#) (SCC) should be reviewed, especially in regards to plagiarism. It is the policy of the SPSY program that plagiarism will result in an "F" for the course in which the academic violation occurs as well as grounds for consideration of dismissal from the program.

Professionalism

I expect all students to behave with the highest standard of professionalism, both during class and in your practicum site. As a school psychologist in-training, you represent the university as well as the field. Keep in mind that how you behave makes an impression of you as a professional.

Disability Accommodations

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.

Attendance and Active Engagement

Attendance is highly encouraged since student's course grades are partially determined by participation in class discussions and activities. Moreover, missing a class can substantially affect students' depth of understanding. Please inform the instructor prior to class if a late arrival or early departure from class is absolutely necessary. An excused absence will be granted only in a documented emergency situation.

Religious Observance

Please notify me in advance if you will be absent from class for religious observances.

Incompletes, Make-Up Procedures, & Late Assignments

Incompletes will be given under limited circumstances (e.g., personal situations, illness). Make-up procedures must be arranged immediately with me. Assignments should be submitted to me on the due date. Late assignments reflect poorly on you as a professional, and 10% of points will be deducted per day.

Electronic Devices

Electronic devices (such as cell phones, I-pods, mp3s, etc.) must be turned off and put away before class. The use of computers during class to take notes or to use electronic articles and Power Points is encouraged. However, the use of computers for personal reasons during class is inappropriate and disrespectful to other students and to me. I will speak with you if I feel that your use of computers is detracting from your learning and use discretion in reducing grades for those students who are using computers in a disrespectful manner when class is in session.

Commitment to Multiculturalism

I am committed to creating an environment in which individuals' diversity and opinions are respected. I strive to integrate multicultural and diversity issues in my courses in ways that is relevant to course content and process. I hope students will contribute their unique perspectives to this effort by considering and raising issues related to multiculturalism and diversity—and respecting others' outlooks throughout this course.

"People First" Language

Students are expected to use appropriate, "people first" language in class discussions and written work. People with disabilities are just that: people who happen to have physical, sensory, behavioral, or intellectual disabilities. Please avoid phrases like "the handicapped," "autistic kids," "severely retarded," or other statements that highlight the disability rather than the individual. Instead, speak and write in a way that puts "people first," for example, "the student with a severe disability," "the program for students with behavior disorders." This small change emphasizes the humanity and individuality of the person and clarifies that disability is only one of many characteristics (and not necessarily the most important!) that people can possess.

Required Texts

Jacob, S., Decker, D. & Hartshorne, T.S. (2010). *Ethics and Law for School Psychologists* (6th Ed.) Hoboken, N.J. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Best Practices in School Psychology: Data-based and collaborative decision making (2014). Harrison, P. L. & Thomas, A. (Eds.). Bethesda MD: National Association of School Psychologists (NASP).
Chapters:

- 21. Mazza Best Practices in Clinical Interviewing Parents, Teachers, & Students
- 28. Walrath, Willis, & Dumont Best Practices in Writing Assessment Reports

Best Practices in School Psychology: Student level services (2014). Harrison, P. L. & Thomas, A. (Eds.).

Bethesda MD: National Association of School Psychologists (NASP).

Chapters:

- 1. Martinez Best Practices in Instructional Strategies for Reading in General Education •
- 4. Shapiro & Guard Best Practices in Setting Progress Monitoring Goals for Academic Skill

Improvement

- 7. Joseph Best Practices on Interventions for Students with Reading Problems
- 8. Daly, O'Connor, & Young Best Practices in Oral Reading Fluency Interventions
- 20. Murphy Best Practices in Solution-focused, Student-Driven Interviews

Best Practices in School Psychology: Foundations (2014). Harrison, P. L. & Thomas, A. (Eds.).

Bethesda MD: National Association of School Psychologists (NASP).

Chapters:

- 13. Proctor & Meyers Best Practices in Primary Prevention in Diverse Schools and Communities
- 6. Carvalho, Dennison, & Estrella Best Practices in Assessment of English Language Learners
- 5. Ortiz Best Practices in Nondiscriminatory Assessment
- 7. Vanderwood & Socie Best Practices in Assessing and Improving English Language Learners' Literacy Performance
- 10. Mule, Briggs, & Song Best Practices in Working with Children from Economically Disadvantaged Backgrounds
- 32. Jacob Best Practices in Ethical School Psychological Practice
- 33. Klose & Lasser Best Practices in Ethical School Psychological Practice
- 35. Pfohl & Jarmuz-Smith Best Practices in Using Technology

Other Course Readings

Bolt, S. E., & Roach, A. T. (2009). Testing accommodations for students with disabilities Inclusive assessment and accountability: A guide to accommodations for students with diverse needs. New York: Guilford Press.

Brenner, E. (2003). Consumer-focused psychological assessment. *Professional Psychology-Research and Practice*, 34, 240-247. doi: 10.1037/0735-7028.34.3.240

Burns, M. K., Jacob, S., & Wagner, A. R. (2008). Ethical and legal issues associated with using responseto-intervention to assess learning disabilities. *Journal of School Psychology*, 46, 263-279. doi: 10.1016/j.jsp.2007.06.001

Kamphaus, R. W., & Frick, P. J. (2005). Report writing Clinical assessment of child and adolescent personality and behavior. New York: Springer.

McConaughy, S.H. (2005). Parent Interviews. In McConaughy (Ed.), Clinical Interviews for Children and Adolescents. New York: The Guilford Press.

McConaughy, S.H. (2005). Teacher Interviews. In McConaughy (Ed.), Clinical Interviews for Children and Adolescents. New York: The Guilford Press.

Rhodes, R. L. (2005). The interview process: Practical guidelines. In R. L. Rhodes, S. H. Ochoa & S. O. Ortiz (Eds.), Assessing culturally and linguistically diverse students: A practical guide. New York: The Guilford Press.

Tharinger, D. J., Finn, S. E., Hersh, B., Wilkinson, A., Christopher, G. B., & Tran, A. (2008). Assessment feedback with parents and preadolescent children: A collaborative approach. Professional

Course Requirements

Your performance in the field will be evaluated conjointly by your field supervisor, and the instructor of the course.

1. Practicum Goals, Self-Assessment, and Professional Development Plan (10 points)

At the beginning of the semester, you will prepare a statement of the specific learning goals (and documentation or a plan of how to achieve these goals) you have for your practicum. These goals and plan will be discussed at the first individual conference. We will refer to these objectives throughout the semester to assist in the supervision of your experience.

You will reflect about your experience at your practicum site at the middle and end of the semester. You will reflect on your experiences with assessment, intervention and consultation as outlined on the Reflections on Practicum Experience guideline (see Appendix). Your reflections will be used by your university-based supervisors as feedback about your development as a professional. Specific topics that need further development will be identified for discussion in practicum seminar.

Finally, you will complete practicum hour logs to document your training experience. You will obtain your on-site supervisor's signature. The logs will be returned to you for inclusion in your professional portfolio.

2. Curriculum-based Evaluation Case Report (100 Points) & Presentation (30 points)

At your practicum site you will complete a curriculum-based evaluation (CBE) for a student identified as being in need of additional academic support (ideally related to reading deficits). Students will secure a child/adolescent (ages 6-17) via parent consent for the purpose of administering assessments. This will involve identifying a target area of need, conducting a problem analysis, setting an appropriate goal, selecting a potentially highly effective intervention, implementing the intervention, monitoring progress, and evaluating the effects of the intervention. The plan must incorporate best practices in school-based intervention by including an appropriate goal, address issues of social validity, treatment integrity, and generalization and maintenance, a plan for progress monitoring, and outcome

evaluation plan. Further information will be provided on how to complete this assignment and a rubric is provided in the appendix.

I expect that you will meet individually by appointment with me and your practicum supervisor to clarify or gain more insight into the activities as needed. Activities to be completed at your practicum site will be pre-approved by your practicum site supervisors in conjunction with the university practicum supervisor.

3. Comprehensive Psychoeducational Report (60 points)

You will be required to write 1 comprehensive psychoeducational report. The purpose of this task is to prepare you to write like a psychologist. You will be given a case with background information, classroom observations, cognitive abilities and academic achievement test results and other information. You will integrate that information obtained from the academic achievement test with the other data. More information will be provided in writing and in class.

4. Clinical Evaluation (30 points)

You will use the Practicum Student Performance Evaluation Form-Supervisor to obtain evaluative feedback from your on-site supervisor and discuss that information with your university-based supervisor. A copy will be provided to you for discussion and to retain in your professional portfolio.

You will use the Practicum Student Performance Evaluation Form—Consumer of Services, to obtain evaluative feedback from a consumer of your services during the semester. This person may be a general or special education teacher, a principal, a parent(s), etc., and should be someone who has had the most experience with you in your role as a school psychologist.

Activity Points

Activity	Points
Practicum Goals, Self-Assessment & Professional Plan	10
Curriculum-based Evaluation Case Report	100
Curriculum-based Evaluation Case Presentation	30
Comprehensive Psychological Evaluation	60
Clinical Evaluation	30
TOTAL	230

Other Course Activities

Activity Log

Documenting your practicum experience is important in planning your professional development as well as for applying for professional credentials. You should regularly keep a log of your hours (including supervision hours), activities, cases, workshops, client characteristics (e.g., age, disability, referral type), assessment tools used, and interventions conducted.