**Psy 333: Assessment of Individual Differences**

**Fall 2017**

# **Course Information**

* PSY 333, Section 01
* MWF 11-11:50 a.m., Social Science Lab 111

# **Professor Information**

* Professor: Dr. Taryn A. Myers
* Office: Roop 3
* Office Phone: (757) 233-8754
* E-mail: tmyers@vwc.edu
  + E-mail is the best way to reach me. I check my e-mail multiple times per day and it is sent to my smartphone. However, if your e-mail requires more than a sentence or two to answer, I will usually ask that you come see me after class, stop by during office hours, or set up an appointment to discuss the topic in more detail.
* Office Hours
  + Mondays 1-2:15 p.m.; Wednesdays & Fridays 9-9:45 a.m.
  + or by appointment
  + Please note: These office hours are tentative and may have to be changed during the course of the semester. Any changes will be announced in class, via e-mail, and/or by a sign on my office door.
* VWC number to call for class closings and delays due to inclement weather: (757) 455-5711

**Required Text**

* Neukrug, E. S., & Fawcett, R. C. (2015). *Essentials of Testing & Assessment: A Practical Guide for Counselors, Social Workers, and Psychologists (3rd ed).*
* Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard or distributed throughout the semester.
* You will also need a scientific calculator. Get one and bring it to class! You cannot use your phone for this function on the exams, so purchase and get used to your calculator now.

**Orientation**

This is a 300-level course with prerequisites of Psy 101, 102, or 201 and Junior or Senior standing, thus, a moderate level of sophistication regarding general psychology and methods for studying psychology is assumed.

**Course Objectives**

1. Understand the use and development of psychological tests.
2. Calculate and apply basic test statistics.
3. Accurately interpret output from statistical software programs.
4. Evaluate and compare the development, standardization, psychometric properties, etc., of psychological tests.
5. Understand and apply the scientific method to the development and evaluation of a psychological test.
6. Understand the administration and scoring of different assessment tests and measures used by psychologists.

**Attendance & Participation 100 points**

VWC policy requires that I monitor attendance. You are expected to attend all meetings of a class for which you are registered. Therefore, YOU will responsible for the content of ALL classes that you miss. I can guarantee that missing class will be reflected in lower scores on exams.

**You are allowed to miss 3 classes (1 week’s worth of class), whether these absences are excused or unexcused.** In other words, you don’t need to explain to me why you missed class – you get 3 missed classes, no questions asked, over the course of the semester. **For every absence beyond those 3, regardless of why you miss class, I will deduct 10 points off of your attendance and participation grade at the end of the semester.** This means that even absences that are considered “excused” for other courses – including athletic absences and family emergencies – will not be excused for this particular course if they cause you to miss more than 3 classes. Therefore, plan your “days off” accordingly, just like you would for a place of employment.

**You are also expected to come to class on time. If you are more than 15 minutes late to class, you will be marked tardy. Three tardies will equal one unexcused absence at the end of the semester and will count similarly toward deductions on your end of semester grade.**

***If you choose not to come to class, you are still responsible for all material covered in class.*** In addition, you are also responsible for any announcements made in class, which may include, but are not limited to, changes regarding the syllabus, exam dates, and office hours.

I would strongly recommend getting the contact information of a fellow student in case you miss a class and need the notes. I will not provide anyone with a copy of my personal class notes.

***The use of electronic devices, such as laptops, cell phones, tablets, and iPods, are prohibited during scheduled class time.***

The format of the class will include lecture, hands-on activities, and discussion. I encourage you to share your questions, opinions, and comments to the extent that you feel comfortable. However, this class is NOT the appropriate forum for discussing personal issues relating to the class material (i.e., your, your friend’s, or your family members’ struggles with one of the disorders we discuss, etc.). If you are experiencing these difficulties, or know someone else who is, proper referral information can be provided, but please note that I will NOT be able to serve as your therapist or provide advice beyond this referral information because of ethical guidelines set forth by the American Psychological Association.

Please also be aware that some of the topics we discuss will relate to personal issues and may foster strong opinions in each of us. We will strive to keep communication in the classroom civil and respectful. Also be aware that some of the terminology and topics discussed in the context of certain disorders may be uncomfortable, offensive, and/or objectionable to some. We will discuss these issues because of their relevance to the material that are central to this class and to our knowledge in this area.

**Blackboard**

Throughout the semester, class assignments, handouts, and general guidance about various aspects of this course may be made available on Blackboard, Virginia Wesleyan College’s on-line course management system. To log into Blackboard, you will need your VWC e-mail address and password. Once in the system, you will find a course listing for Assessment.

***It is your responsibility to check Blackboard on a regular basis in order to download copies of materials you will need to participate fully in class discussions and activities.*** Further information about the use of Blackboard in this course will be provided in class.

**Lecture Notes**

Any PowerPoint slides used in class will be made available online through Blackboard. However, *do not depend on these slides as your sole source of information!* You will need to take notes. The slides are *a loose outline* of topics we will be discussing. Again, you will be responsible for everything covered in class, not just what is on the PowerPoint slides. Slides will be available to you on the course website on Blackboard the night before class at the latest. It is highly recommended that you print the slides and bring them with you to class to serve as a guide for taking notes.

**Exams 400 points (4 at 100 points each)**

Exams will consist of two parts:

1. In class, you will complete multiple choice and short answer questions. Sometimes these short answers will require you to do basic statistical computations.
2. There will also be a take-home portion of the exam consisting of short essay questions that will be turned in with your in-class portion on the day of the exam in hard copy format.

Exams will include information from the texts and readings as well as material presented in the lectures and from class discussions. Each exam will cover three chapters. *Exams will not be cumulative!* There will be four exams worth **100 points** each. Depending on the exam, these points may vary between the in-class and take-home portions, but they will always add up to 100 points between the two portions. Students will not be allowed to collaborate on exams. *Students caught cheating on exams will be dealt with severely, according the Honor Code. Touching your phone during an in-class exam will be considered cheating and will result in a score of 0.*  Each take-exam should be done at the start of class time on the indicated day. **Late take-home exams will be docked 5 points for every hour they are late.**

**Make-up Exams**

If a student misses an exam, and has an ***adequate written excuse*** – meaning written documentation that your absence from class has been excused by a doctor, family member for a family emergency, or athletic coach – he/she may take a make-up exam. I reserve the right to decide on the adequacy of excuses. See me *immediately* if you anticipate missing an exam or missed an exam due to an emergency. Prior permission is necessary in order to make-up an exam. If an exam is missed and no make-up is taken, you will be given a zero for that exam. No make-up exams will be given for the final exam.

**Assignments 100 points (10 at 10 points each)**

There will be ten short assignments during this course. Topics will be given unannounced, in class. Most of these will be completed in class as individual or group assignments, and some will be assigned as homework assignments. Each writing assignment will be worth 10 points. ***Make-up assignments will not be accepted.*** If you miss an assignment, you get a 0 on that assignment.

**Assessment Report 100 points**

We will learn about a number of assessment instruments throughout the semester, and you will have the opportunity to administer parts of these reports to each other in class. You should plan to pair up with a fellow student and administer the tests to the same person throughout the semester. You should keep a careful record of the person’s responses. At the end of the semester, you will turn in an assessment report writing up the findings for all of the assessments you gave that person. Your report should include a description of each test, your partners’ scores, and what those scores mean. This report will be worth **100 points.** Further details will be provided for this assignment throughout the semester. The final report will be due on **Thursday, 12/14 at 11:30 a.m. Late reports will not be accepted.**

The following rubric will be used to score your assessment report. The sections listed below each correspond to sections of the template you will use for your report, which is posted on Blackboard.

\_\_\_\_\_/15 Demographics & Intake Interview

\_\_\_\_\_/10 Structured Clinical Interview for the DSM

\_\_\_\_\_/5 Severity Measure for Depression – Adult

\_\_\_\_\_/5 Beck Depression Inventory

\_\_\_\_\_/5 State-Trait Anxiety Inventory

\_\_\_\_\_/5 Sentence Completion

\_\_\_\_\_/5 Jung Typology Test

\_\_\_\_\_/5 Free Career Test

\_\_\_\_\_ 20 Repeatable Battery for the Assessment of Neuropsychological Status

\_\_\_\_\_/5 Practice Problems from the Graduate Record Exam

\_\_\_\_\_/10 Summary/ Conclusions

\_\_\_\_\_/10 Recommendations \_

**\_\_\_\_\_\_/100 points total**

**Major Group Project 200 points**

Students will work in small groups to create, administer evaluate, and describe a psychological test. Groups will administer this test to at least 30 participants along with a few other measures for purposes of testing validity, and data will be analyzed using SPSS. Students will work together to create and administer the test, as well as to analyze the data. Students may choose their groups. The project will cumulate in two large assignments, but several small assignments will have to be completed along the way.

*Steps in developing the group project.*

1. *Assessment Topic Selection.* A brief description of the construct you would like to measure and why with at least 2 relevant references will be due on **Monday, 9/11.** You can either turn this in individual or with a pre-selected group. Dr. Myers will then assign the final groups and topics by **Monday 9/18**. You will then have until **Mon 9/25** to switch groups if necessary. **(10 pts) This assignment will be deducted 1 point for every calendar day it is late.**
2. IRB Application. Each group will be required to submit an application to the Institutional Review Board for review of their research prior to conducting this study. This application will be discussed in class and posted on Blackboard. With the application, each group needs to include a copy of the questionnaire you constructed, copies of the other measures to be included for validation purposes, the demographics questions, and the informed consent form. A template for this form will be provided by Dr. Myers, and group members will just have to change the relevant information. Details will be covered extensively in class. The IRB application must be submitted to Dr. Myers via email by **Friday, 10/13 (Fall Break) via email before 11:59 p.m.** for review prior to submission to the IRB.

This assignment will be worth **50 points** for the group, with grades being assigned based on the following rubric:

* Section A (Info & Abstract) **5 points**
* Section B (Summary of Research) **15 points**
* Section C (Confidentiality) **5 points**
* Section D (Participants) **5 points**
* Section E (Informed Consent) **10 points**
* Section F (Risks & Benefits) **5 points**
* Section G (Debriefing) **5 points**

**This assignment will be deducted 5 points for every calendar day it is late**.

1. *Group Poster Presentation.* A group poster to be presented to the rest of the class at a poster presentation day on **Thursday, 12/14** during our exam period at **11:30 a.m.** You will construct posters using a style similar to those used at professional conferences. Details about formatting and presenting posters will be given by the instructor in class and via documents made available in Blackboard. Poster presentations will be graded based on the instructor’s judgment of quality and feedback gathered from the class during presentations. Posters will be due on **Friday, 12/8**, to allow for adequate time for printing. Note that there will be several work days throughout the semester to give groups the opportunity to meet together to work on these projects in consultation with Dr. Myers. You are required to come to class to check in on these work days.
   1. Introduction – Where a brief description of the questionnaire is given with references to at least 2 primary sources from the literature. What aspect of personality does your questionnaire actually measure? **(20 pts)**
   2. Method – Where you will describe how you collected your data. **(15 pts)**
   3. Results – Where you will use the revision of your questionnaire data summary from above with the table/graph. **(25 pts)**
   4. Discussion – Where you will offer comment about what your findings might mean and what researchers might want to do in the future to study this questionnaire or this aspect of personality. **(15 pts)**
   5. References – Two references should be included in APA style. **(5 pts)**
   6. Presentation Style – Ability of the group members to explain the poster and answer questions during the session **(20 points)**

The poster will be worth **140 points total**, with 100 of those points being judged by Dr. Myers using the metric above, **30 points** being awarded by your group members for participation in the project, and **10 points** being awarded based on your other students’ ratings of your groups’ work. **Late posters will be deducted 10 points for each calendar day they are late.**

The following rubric will be used to score your posters:

\_\_\_\_\_/20 Introduction

\_\_\_\_\_/15 Method

\_\_\_\_\_/25 Results (including illustrations of data)

\_\_\_\_\_/15 Discussion

\_\_\_\_\_/5 References

\_\_\_\_\_/20 Presentation Style

\_\_\_\_\_/30 Individual Grade by Group members (average of scores)

\_\_\_\_\_/10 Judging Scores .

\_\_\_\_\_/100 TOTAL; Letter Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Posters that receive a grade of B or higher will be nominated for inclusion in the Academic Fair held in late April/early May next semester. Participation is not required for the course, but is an excellent extracurricular activity to add to a resume or curriculum vita.

**Grading**

Your final grade will be determined by your performance on the exams, assignments, and projects:

Attendance & Participation 100

Exams (4 at 100 points each) 400

Assignments (10 at 10 points each) 100

Assessment Report 100

Group Project 200

Total 900

Grades will be based on the following distribution:

Points Percentages Grade

846-900 94-100% A

810-845 90-93% A-

783-809 87-89% B+

756-782 84-86% B

720-755 80-83% B-

693-719 77-79% C+

Points Percentages Grade

666-692 74-76% C

630-665 70-73% C-

603-629 67-69% D+

576-602 64-66% D

540-575 60-63% D-

0-539 < 60% F

**Incompletes**

Incompletes will be arranged for severe emergencies only. Arrangements for incompletes MUST be made with me before prior to the end of the semester. A formal contract must be agreed upon and signed.

**Extra Credit**

Extra credit may be available throughout the semester for activities on campus relevant to psychology. Dr. Myers will announce these opportunities in class. Throughout the semester, we will be discussing many findings from psychological research. But what might not be obvious is the fact that much of this research was conducted at colleges and universities like Virginia Wesleyan College, with participants much like yourself. The descriptions of psychological research that appear in textbooks necessarily omit a great deal of information about what participants actually do in these studies, and what the experience is really like.

Serving as a research participant gives you a unique, behind-the-scenes look at how research is conducted. Accordingly, I am giving you the option to earn credit points in this course from research experience. Research experience points may be earned either through participation in research studies (conducted by student researchers in the Department of Psychology) or by writing brief reviews of research articles. Regardless of which option you choose, the goal is to supplement the broad coverage of many topics in class with experiences that will deepen your understanding of psychological research.

**Other extra credit opportunities will also be announced as they arise throughout the semester.**

Option 1

You may earn extra credit points (1 per online study, 2 per in person study) by participating in research studies that will be advertised throughout the semester. If you choose to participate in research studies, note that these are REAL studies that are being conducted by REAL researchers (for example, faculty projects and student research). You should take your participation seriously – you are helping to promote a better understanding of human thought, emotion, and behavior. (Who knows – you may even participate in a study that gets published in a psychology journal and discussed in the next generation of textbooks.) Opportunities for participation will be announced in class or via email as they arise. There is no cap on the number of studies in which you can participate, but each study can only count for one of your psychology courses, so be strategic about which class you put down.

Option 2

If you would like to earn extra credit but do not wish to participate in research, you can write a short paper (no longer than 4 pages typed, double-spaced) which reviews, connects, and draws conclusions about three recent research articles on one topic about which you have a particular interest which is covered in class or in the text. “Recent” will be arbitrarily defined as since 2010. The articles should be empirical in nature and revolve around the same topic. Topics should be approved in advance by Dr. Myers.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Virginia Wesleyan College is committed to giving all students the opportunity of academic success. If you are a student who is requesting accommodations based on the academic impact of a disability, speak to me about your accommodations letter and your specific needs. If you do not have an accommodations letter for this course, you will need to visit or call for an appointment with Disability Support Specialist Crit Muniz at (757) 233-8898 to coordinate reasonable accommodations. He is located in the Learning Center, Clarke Hall, 2nd floor.

**Counseling Center**

The nature of psychology describes some very personal human experiences. Therefore, from time to time, the topics in this course may touch on personal issues for you, especially topics related to mental health, relationships, and/or stress-related experiences. In addition, college in general is an exciting but often challenging time for most students, and there can be lots of ups and downs. Please don’t try to manage these problems and issues alone. I encourage you to seek confidential support from the counseling center when you need it. Contact: Bill Brown, 455-5730, [bbrown@vwc.edu](mailto:bbrown@vwc.edu) or Heidi Khatibi, 455-3131, [hkhatibi@vwc.edu](mailto:hkhatibi@vwc.edu) .

**Academic Honesty**

Honesty is one of the most valuable assets that a member of an academic community possesses. In recognition of this fact, Virginia Wesleyan has enacted an honor code which is available to you in your student handbook. I adhere to this code explicitly and follow its recommended procedures. If I discover you have plagiarized an assignment in any way, I reserve the right to give you a 0 on that assignment. If you repeat this offense or have previously plagiarized in a different class, I reserve the right to fail you for the entire course and/or take your case to the Honor Board.

**Lecture and Reading Outline**

The outline on the next page can be only a rough guide, since dates for particular lecture topics can only be approximate and since material may be added or deleted. The dates and material for the exams will be as listed, unless changes are absolutely necessary.

**Psy 333 Assessment of Individual Differences**

**Tentative Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings**

Note: GP = Group Project, BB = Blackboard, Assignments in ***bold italics*** are related to the Major Group Project.

**Date** **Topic** **Readings Due**

8/28 Class Introduction

8/30 Intro to Assessment Chapter 1

9/1 Ethical & Legal Issues Chapter 2

**9/4 NO CLASS – LABOR DAY**

9/6 Validity & Reliability Chapter 5

9/8 Validity & Reliability

9/11 Validity & Reliability ***GP Topic***

9/13 Validity & Reliability

**9/15 Exam 1 Exam 1 Take Home**

9/18 Raw Scores Chapter 6

9/20 Raw Scores

9/22 Raw Scores

9/25 Scores & Data Interpretation Chapter 7

9/27 Scores & Data Interpretation

9/29 Scores & Data Interpretation

10/2 Educational Assessments Chapter 8

10/4 Educational Assessments

10/6 Educational Assessments

**10/9 Exam 2 Exam 2 Take Home**

10/11 Group Project Work Day

10/13 **NO CLASS – FALL BREAK *GP IRB via email***

10/16 Career AssessmentsChapter 10

10/18 Intelligence & Neuropsych Assessments Chapter 9 **BB Assn Ch. 8**

10/20 Intelligence & Neuropsych Assessments

10/23 Intelligence & Neuropsych Assessments

10/25 Intelligence & Neuropsych Assessments

10/27 Intelligence & Neuropsych Assessments

10/30 Personality Assessments Chapter 11

11/1 Personality Assessments

11/3 Personality Assessments

11/6 Personality Assessments

11/8 Personality Assessments

**11/10 Exam 3 Exam 3 Take Home**

11/13 Informal Assessment Chapter 12

11/15 Informal Assessment

**11/17** **NO CLASS – DR. MYERS PRESENTING AT ABCT**

11/20 Group Project Work Day

**11/22 NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**11/24 NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK**

11/27 Diagnostic Assessment Chapter 3

11/29 Diagnostic Assessment

12/2 The Assessment Report Chapter 4

12/4 The Assessment Report

**12/6 Exam 4 Exam 4 Take Home**

12/8 Group Project Work Day ***GP Poster Due by 11:59 p.m.***

**12/14 Poster Presentations at 11:30 a.m.** **Assessment Report**

\*\* Note: The last day to drop a course without record is 9/1, and the last day to drop a course without receiving an automatic “WF” is 11/10.