



**UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH FLORIDA**
A PREEMINENT RESEARCH UNIVERSITY

**College of Education
Department of Leadership, Policy, and Lifelong Learning**

**MHS 6200: Assessment and Appraisal Procedures
Spring 2026**

Course Meetings: Tuesdays 5:00 – 7:45pm (Hybrid)

Course Location: EDU 415

Credits: 3 hours

Instructor Name: Deirdra Sanders-Burnett, PhD, LMHC, QS (she/her)

Office Hours: Tuesdays 3:00-4:00pm (in-person or Teams drop-in) or appointment

Office Location: Virtual

Email: deirdras@usf.edu

Course Overview

University Course Description

The study of statistical concepts, assessment instruments, and procedures relevant to school and community counseling with an emphasis on standardized test data and the use of an individual case study approach.

Course Prerequisites

Permission of the instructor is required.

Course Purpose

The focus of this class is to provide counselor trainees with a basic understanding of the nature of psychological and educational assessment, explore how assessment has influenced our lives, and examine how clinical assessment can significantly affect the individuals with whom we work. The purpose of this course is to familiarize you with an overview of psychometric instruments typically used in many counseling settings. This course will provide a means for helping you select, administer, score, interpret, and analyze test data with other clinical information.

Throughout the assessment process, cultural diversity issues will be reviewed and discussed. In addition, we will discuss the philosophical and statistical properties of measurement instruments and the advantages and limitations of assessment approaches. Finally, this course will provide you with an enhanced sensitivity to social and ethical issues in assessment.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)	CACREP 2024 Standards	Evaluation
Conceptualize foundational concepts of assessment in counseling including historical context, ethical issues, and cultural considerations	3.G.1; 3.G.2; 3.G.3; 3.G.4; 3.G.5; 3.G.6	Reading Checks
Cultivate awareness of common types of assessment and appropriate uses in counseling (e.g., behavioral, crisis, developmental, educational, career)	3.G.8, 3.G.9, 3.G.10, 3.G.11, 3.G.12, 3.G.13; 3.G.14; 3.G.15; 3.G.16	Reading Checks; Peer Assessment Demonstration; Instrument Critique and Fair
Locate and evaluate instruments based on standard assessment principles to determine appropriateness for use with diverse clients	3.G.2; 3.G.3; 3.G.4; 3.G.8, 3.G.9, 3.G.10, 3.G.11, 3.G.12, 3.G.13; 3.G.14; 3.G.15; 3.G.16	Instrument Critique and Fair
Administer instruments as intended with a critical awareness of ethical and cultural considerations	3.G.5; 3.G.6; 3.G.7	Peer Assessment Demonstration; Case Study
Interpret and report results to stakeholders therapeutically and holistically	3.G.5; 3.G.17	Peer Assessment Demonstration; Case Study

Methods of Instruction

Course Format

This course will primarily be conducted in synchronous face-to-face instruction. Instructional strategies include:

- ❖ **Weekly preparation.** All weeks will have routine reading assigned. Some weeks may also consist of virtual mini-lectures or other supplemental materials. Materials will be available on Canvas at least one week prior to the class meeting.
- ❖ **Large group class meetings (5:00-7:45pm).** Synchronous class meetings each week will utilize mini-lectures, discussions, and application exercises.

Required Course Materials

Hays, D. (2023). *Assessment in counseling: Procedures and practices* (7th ed.). American Counseling Association.

**Textbook available free online for all USF students through the USF Library*

Additional readings may be assigned periodically and will be made available to you through Canvas.

Additional Materials

- ❖ Access to a YouTube/Zoom/Teams account for recording counseling demonstrations
- ❖ Device with recording, storage, and sharing capabilities
- ❖ Liability insurance: must maintain throughout CE program and provided complimentary with professional organization membership

Helpful Resources

- ❖ USF Library Guide on Tests and Measurement: <https://guides.lib.usf.edu/testsmeasurements>
- ❖ Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (AARC) Resources: <https://aarc-counseling.org/resources/>
- ❖ Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (AARC) Standards: <https://aarc-counseling.org/standards/>

Canvas & Communication

We will use Canvas as a learning management tool throughout the course. You may access our course via <https://usflearn.instructure.com/>. Within Canvas, you will be able to view announcements, locate class materials, and submit all assignments. If you have technical difficulties in Canvas, you can find access to the Canvas guides and video resources in the “Canvas Help” page on the homepage of your Canvas course. You can also contact the help desk by phone 813-974-1222 or email help@usf.edu or visit <https://www.usf.edu/it/about-us/helpdesk.aspx>

All course communication will be via email or the course Canvas site. It is expected that you check email and Canvas regularly to remain up to date on relevant course information and changes (as needed). I am most accessible via email deirdras@usf.edu and strive to respond within 24-48 hours with the exception of weekends and university breaks.

Student Evaluation Criteria

Grading Scale	Min (%)	Max (%)
A	94	100
A-	90	93
B+	87	89
B	84	86
B-	80	83
C+	77	79
C	70	76
D	60	69
F	0	59

Note: You must obtain a final grade of “B” or higher in order to progress in your Counselor Education program of study. Students who complete the course “B-” or lower will need to repeat the course.

Due Dates & Late Bank

You are responsible for submitting assignments on or before due dates (listed below). If you are concerned about your ability to consistently complete quality work as described in the schedule, make an appointment with me to discuss how to support your learning in our course.

However, should you find yourself needing extra time for an assignment, all students begin the course with a **no-fault “late bank” of 10 total days for the entire course**. You may use them all at once for one assignment, or you may choose to divide days up across assignments. Although I will still strive to provide timely feedback, using the late bank may delay grading and impact your future assignments. Late bank days cannot be utilized beyond the last day of the term (May 8), and students should prepare accordingly to the best of their ability.

Except with prior arrangements or evidence of extenuating circumstances, after your late bank is exhausted, I will adjust late assignments as follows: 25% reduction up to one week late and 50% reduction up to two weeks late. I will not accept assignments more than two weeks past the deadline without documentation of a major extenuating circumstance.

Assignment	Points	Due
Reading Checks	30	Weekly
Instrument Fair	25	March 10
Peer Assessment Demonstration	20	April 14
Case Study	25	April 28

Professionalism & Student Responsibility

As graduate-level student counselors, I expect you to take responsibility for engaging in this course in a meaningful way. This may occur by:

- ❖ Attending class routinely on time with minimal distractions to learning
- ❖ Carefully preparing for class through assigned readings and learning materials
- ❖ Reflecting on your own learning and seeking support when needed
- ❖ Demonstrating professional dispositions through interactions with peers and instructor
- ❖ Engaging in discussion and respecting the ideas and opinions of others
- ❖ Seeking feedback on assignments and activities and utilizing, as appropriate
- ❖ Maintaining academic integrity as outlined by university policy

Should you experience unprecedented stress, strain, or hardship that interferes with your ability to engage meaningfully, please communicate with me early, so I may understand how to support you. If at any point I see that you are not meeting these professional expectations (without communication from you), I may request that meet to ensure your overall success.

Assignment Snapshots

All assignments will be submitted electronically through Canvas unless otherwise noted. **Note:** These descriptions do NOT include all assignment information. **See Canvas for detailed instructions and associated rubrics.**

Reading Checks - 30 Points

Each week, you will prepare for class by reading chapters of our textbook and/or reviewing additional provided supplementary material. In order to demonstrate an understanding of the routine readings, you will engage in a weekly “reading check” assignment. Reading checks may vary between a multiple-choice quiz, open-response question, and/or video prompt. There are 12 weeks of reading assignments, and each reading check is worth three (3) points. You may

choose to “drop” your two lowest reading checks or not complete two weeks of reading checks at your discretion. However, it is still expected that you will complete all routine readings and class preparation activities to be able to engage with in-class activities and discussions. *Acceptable AI Use: None*

Instrument Critique and Fair - 25 Points

To determine the appropriateness of instruments for diverse populations, you will select and review a counseling assessment of your choice. Instruments must represent one of the following: personality, educational/achievement, clinical/behavioral, intelligence, interpersonal, or addictions/substance use. No two students can choose the same instrument, and instruments are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. You will review your chosen instrument using multiple research sources and compile your findings on a poster. You will print your poster and present it to your peers during an in-class Instrument Fair. *Acceptable AI Use: Supplemental resource for proofreading and editing.*

Peer Assessment Demonstration - 20 Points

To familiarize yourself with the assessment process, you will self-administer a series of counseling assessments. You will complete the Brief Symptom Inventory, AUDIT, ACE Questionnaire, and the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory. You can access each of these assessments on Canvas. After completing the assessments, you will share your results with a peer. You and your peer will record a demonstration of them communicating your results to you. The demonstration will be between 20-30 minutes long. *Acceptable AI Use: None*

Case Study - 25 Points

To practice interpreting and communicating assessment results, you will complete a comprehensive case study on a K-12 child. You will identify a child who will be the focus of your case study and administer 2 assessments, 2 interviews, and 2 observations. You may also choose to incorporate other sources of data into your final case report. You will collect all required and supplemental information and compile a final report that presents the results of the formal and informal assessments, reports the findings in an integrated conceptualization, and provides recommendations for the child’s growth and development. **Note:** Due to the multiple components required in this assignment, I encourage to you begin identifying a child early in the semester. However, you may NOT begin collecting data on your case study child until you have received caregiver consent and submitted a copy of the consent form to me. *Acceptable AI Use: Supplemental resource for proofreading and editing.*

Name & Pronouns

Please let me know the name and pronouns I should use when I address you. I will be glad to honor your request.

Observation of Religious Days

I have made an effort not to schedule classes or assignments due on any major religious holidays; however, I realize the limits of my awareness and appreciate the opportunity to learn more. If you plan to observe a religious holy day that coincides with a class day or assignment due date, please let me know in advance in order to make appropriate accommodations.

Accessibility & Inclusion

Please let me know of any disabilities or hardships that may impact your learning. I will attempt to adjust our learning to make the experience accessible for all. Should you feel you may need additional accommodations outside of what I can provide, please contact Students Accessibility Services (SAS) by phone (813-974-4309) email (sas-info@usf.edu) or visit <https://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/student-accessibility/>

Absences and Late Arrivals

Our time together is limited, and it is essential that you attend class *on time* every week. If you know you will be arriving to class late, please communicate with me beforehand, if possible.

Arriving more than 15 minutes late (without prior instructor approval) on three occasions will be considered an unexcused absence.

Should illness, family obligation, or emergency arise, **you are able to miss one class without penalty.** If you believe you need to miss more than one class period, please reach out to me to discuss how we can appropriately support your learning in this course. If you obtain two class absences without teacher approval, I will deduct five points from your final grade. Except in the most extenuating of circumstances, those who miss more than two class periods will need to repeat the course.

Respect, Privacy, and Confidentiality

The experiential nature of this program requires a certain level of personal communication as well as personal self-development and self-disclosure. Throughout your time in the program, you have the right to decide what and how you share with your peers and faculty, both inside and outside of class activities. At the same time, I hope you will remember that individuals grow the most when uncomfortable to some degree. I encourage you to strive to push through the discomfort you experience while knowing that you may always decide when and how to limit yourself.

Through our course, it is likely that student colleagues may say things that are personal and intended to be kept private. Although group and classroom activities do not carry the same *legal* right to confidentiality and privilege as professional counseling, members of our learning community have an obligation to maintain privacy regarding peers' communications. We expect you to demonstrate respect and integrity by treating your colleagues' disclosures as confidential. Even in professional counseling practice, there are limits to confidentiality. If you are concerned regarding the nature of a peer's disclosures, please let me know.

Writing Quality & APA Format

All written work is expected to be mechanically and grammatically correct and formatted in accordance with APA style (7th ed.). Evaluation of all written work will reflect the quality of the writing as well as the inclusion of all required content. When using materials or ideas from outside sources, you must cite and reference using APA format. All assignments must be typed and submitted electronically via Canvas unless noted otherwise.

Plagiarism Detection

In this course, Turnitin will be utilized to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of websites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you will be expected to submit all assignments in electronic format to Canvas. After the assignment is processed, as instructor I receive a report from [turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process visit <http://www.turnitin.com>.

Use of Generative AI Tools

Generative AI tools refer to any artificial intelligence-powered software, program, or application that can generate content, including but not limited to text, visuals, music, and other creative outputs. Examples of these tools include AI text generators, AI content rewriters, AI graphic generators, etc. In this course, the use of generative AI tools is permitted only for the purpose listed in the assignment description. However, students must responsibly use these tools, adhering to the guidelines outlined in this policy. Students are responsible for appropriately using generative AI tools in their work. This includes:

- ❖ Citing all AI-generated content used in their submissions. [See the USF Library Resources on proper citations.](#)
- ❖ Demonstrating a deep understanding of the subject matter, not solely relying on AI-generated content. Cross-referencing claims and statements with original sources and providing appropriate citations are expected.
- ❖ Using AI tools as a supplemental resource (i.e., as an editor), not as the primary means of completing assignments.
- ❖ Understanding that generative AI tools, while powerful, are not infallible and can produce misinformation or inaccurate results. Students are responsible for the accuracy of their submissions and must cross-verify the information produced by these tools with reliable sources.

Misuse of AI tools, including the use of AI that undermines the student learning objectives of the course or assignment, failing to cite AI-generated content, relying too heavily on AI for work completion, or submitting inaccurate information generated by AI tools, will be subject to academic penalties. Consequences may range from a reduction in an individual assignment grade to larger academic sanctions per USF policy, depending on the severity of the violation.

Student Feedback

All classes at USF make use of an online system for you to provide feedback to the University regarding this course and my instruction. These surveys will be made available to you at the end of the semester, and the University will notify you by email when the response window opens. I highly value your participation in these evaluations as they inform how I will prepare for this course and others in the future.

If you do not feel satisfied with your learning in this course, I encourage you to speak with me directly. I hope we can work towards a collaborative understanding to help you feel supported through this process. If you meet with me and do not receive a resolution or if you do not feel comfortable speaking with me about this matter, you may consult with LPLL Department Head, Dr. Vonzell Agosto (vagosto@usf.edu).

University Policies and Resources

USF Core Syllabus Policies

USF has a set of central policies related to student recording class sessions, academic integrity and grievances, student accessibility services, academic disruption, religious observances, academic continuity, food insecurity, and sexual harassment that apply to all courses at USF. Be sure to review these online:

usf.edu/provost/faculty-success/resources-policies-forms/core-syllabus-policy-statements.aspx

Wellness

Your health is a priority at USF. We encourage members of our community to look out for each other and to reach out for help if someone is in need. If you or someone you know is in distress, please make a referral at www.usf.edu/sos. Student Outreach & Support will contact and provide helpful resources to the student in distress. A 24-hour licensed mental healthcare professional, offered through the counseling center, is available by phone at 813-974-2831, option 3. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, please dial 911.

Title IX Policy

Title IX provides federal protections for discrimination based on sex, which includes discrimination based on pregnancy, sexual harassment, and interpersonal violence. In an effort to provide support and equal access, USF has designated all faculty (TA, Adjunct, etc.) as Responsible Employees, who are required to report any disclosures of sexual harassment, sexual violence, relationship violence, or stalking. The Title IX Office makes every effort, when safe to do so, to reach out and provide resources and accommodations, and to discuss possible options for resolution. Anyone wishing to make a Title IX report or seeking accommodations may do so online, in person, via phone, or email to the Title IX Office. For information about Title IX or for a full list of resources, visit: <https://www.usf.edu/title-ix/gethelp/resources.aspx>

If you are unsure what to do, please contact the Center for Victim Advocacy – a confidential resource that empowers survivors of crime, violence, or abuse by promoting the restoration of decision-making, by advocating for their rights, and by offering support and resources. Please contact them at 813-974-5756 or va@admin.usf.edu or visit

<https://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/victim-advocacy/contact-us/index.aspx>

Academic Support Services

The USF Office of Student Success coordinates and promotes university-wide efforts to enhance undergraduate and graduate student success. For a comprehensive list of academic support services available to all USF students, visit <https://www.usf.edu/student-success/undergrads/> or the Office of Graduate Studies at <https://www.usf.edu/graduate-studies/students/>

Campus Free Expression: It is fundamental to the University of South Florida's mission to support an environment where divergent ideas, theories, and philosophies can be openly exchanged and critically evaluated. Consistent with these principles, this course may involve discussion of ideas that you find uncomfortable, disagreeable, or even offensive. In our classroom, ideas are

intended to be presented in an objective manner and not as an endorsement of what you should personally believe. Objective means that the idea(s) presented can be tested by critical peer review and rigorous debate, and that the idea(s) is supported by credible research. Not all ideas can be supported by objective methods or criteria. Regardless, you may decide that certain ideas are worthy of your personal belief. In this course, you may be asked to engage with complex ideas and demonstrate an understanding of the ideas. Understanding an idea does not mean that you are required to believe it or agree with it.

<https://www.usf.edu/provost/faculty-success/resources-policies-forms/index.aspx>

Counseling Center

The Counseling Center offers comprehensive psychological services designed to enhance the personal, social, educational, and career development of University students. All registered USF students who have paid the Tampa campus student health fee are eligible for Counseling Center services for the semester in which they are registered. Counseling Center services are available Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The Counseling Center is open year-round, except for university holidays. The Center is located on the second floor of the Student Services building (SVC 2124). For more information, call 974-2831, or visit the website at: www.usf.edu/counsel

Office of Multicultural Affairs

The Office of Multicultural Affairs coordinates educational, cultural, and social programs to foster experiences that create interculturally mature global citizens who are prepared to thrive in diverse environments. While promoting intercultural dialogue, awareness, advocacy, and respect for diversity, OMA helps students understand and appreciate a multitude of identities. Through programming, training, and direct connections with our staff and services, OMA creates an inclusive environment enabling students to become conscientious global citizens. For more information and services, contact OMA via phone at 813-974-5111 or visit their website at <https://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/multicultural-affairs/about-oma/contact-us.aspx>

Writing Studio

The Writing Studio is a free resource for USF undergraduate and graduate students. At the Writing Studio, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you, at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, email writingstudio@usf.edu or visit <https://www.usf.edu/undergrad/academic-success-center/writing-studio/>

Course Schedule

Reminder: This schedule shows overarching class topics and major assignment due dates. You are responsible for reviewing the weekly class outlines on Canvas for required readings and class preparation activities.

Date	Class Focus	Assignments Due
Week 1: 1/13	Introduction to the Assessment Course	Assessment Pre-Test
Week 2: 1/20	Purpose and History of Assessment	Routine Readings and Reading Check
Week 3: 1/27	Foundations and Values of Assessment	Routine Readings and Reading Check
Happy National School Counseling Week! (February 3-7, 2025)		
Week 4: 2/3	Making Meaning of Scores: Data Distribution and Scales	Routine Readings and Reading Check
Week 5: 2/10	Making Meaning of Scores: Reliability	Complete Assessments for Partner Identify Instrument for Critique Routine Readings and Reading Check
Week 6: 2/17	Making Meaning of Scores: Validity	Routine Readings and Reading Check
Week 7: 2/24	Communicating Assessment Results	Routine Readings and Reading Check
Week 8: 3/3	Optional Class: Instrument Project Working Session	Routine Readings and Reading Check
Week 9: 3/10	Instrument Fair	Instrument Critique Poster
Week 10: 3/17	No Class - Spring Break	
Week 11: 3/24	Initial Assessment & Diagnosis	Routine Readings and Reading Check
Week 12: 3/31	Assessment of Intelligence & Personality	Routine Readings and Reading Check
Week 13: 4/7	Assessment of Aptitude & Achievement	Routine Readings and Reading Check
Week 14: 4/14	Assessment of Career Development & Wellness	Routine Readings and Reading Check Peer Assessment Demonstration
Week 15: 4/21	Assessment of Risk & Interpersonal Relationships Last Class	Routine Readings and Reading Check
Final: 4/28	No Class	Submit Case Study

Course calendar is tentative. The instructor reserves the right to alter to address class needs. Students will be notified of any changes.