

Syllabus

MF 755 Research, Testing, and Family Assessment

Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary

Spring 2009 2-3 Units

Monday 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

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Office Hours: Mondays 2:30 - 4:00 PM, Wednesdays 2:00 - 4:00 pm, Thursdays 10:30
- 12:30 am

Course Description: This is a two or three unit graduate introductory course in research methods, psychological testing, and clinical assessment in family studies. It is designed to help students conduct assessments and use the results of research and psychological testing in practical ways in their practice as marriage, family, and child counselors. At the end of the course students will be expected to critically evaluate the use of research by others, appropriately use a variety of basic research methods to solve simple but real problems in their own practice, make appropriate referrals for psychological testing, apply the results of a psychological evaluation as described in a psychological report, and conduct appropriate assessments in their practice of Marriage, Family, and Child Counseling.

Course Objectives: At the completion of this course the student will:

1. Be able to read a scientific journal article, summarize the design and content, and critique the method used in the study.
2. Design a simple scientific study to answer a question regarding family studies, using an appropriate design and identify the appropriate statistics to analyze the data.
3. Discuss the strengths, weakness, and relationships between the sources of knowledge used in family counseling including quantitative methods, qualitative methods, case

studies, "clinical wisdom," and revelation.

4. Determine if a particular research design is consistent with ethical standards expected of counselors.
5. Make an effective referral to a psychologist for psychological evaluation.
6. Interpret and apply the information in a report of a psychological evaluation to a counseling treatment plan.
7. Conduct an intake assessment for a family, couple, and individual adult, adolescent, or child, that includes an assessment for danger of the client to self and others and results in an initial diagnosis and treatment plan.

Intentional Learning Practices: This course shall include all of the following:

1. Clear and effective oral and written communication
2. Close reading of texts
3. Social analysis
4. Theological reflection
5. Collaboration
6. Integrity and originality
7. Practical application

Related Degree Outcomes:

- 1.4 Develop relationship with a cohort of fellow learners under the auspices of MBBS
- 2.4 Analyze, synthesize, and engage contemporary church and world issues from a biblical theological perspective
- 3.2 Utilize theological and social scientific tools and practices to understand and interpret the culture of a ministry and the cultural context of the ministry
- 4.1 Articulate integrative views of humanity, theology, and counseling
- 4.4 Demonstrate practice consistent with the laws and ethics that apply to marriage, family, and child counseling
- 4.9 Develop ability to understand, utilize, and evaluate research and assessment tools

Resources: The assignments in the class are designed to be flexible, adapted to the student's needs. Jones (1994), Rose, Rose, and Russel (2008), and MBBS Guidelines for Research with Human Subjects are required of all students (unless these articles have been used in previous studies. For students with no formal research training Bernarnd (2000) and Sproull (1995) are strongly recommended. Rose and Smith (1999) are recommended for those with no experience in testing and measurement. Conoley & Werth (1995), Holman (1983) and Shore, Brice, & Love (1996) are strongly recommended. Students who do not already own software for statistical

analysis are strongly encouraged to download the plug-in EZAnalyze for Excel (available at exanalyze.com). Other sources of information (readings, tapes, web pages, etc.) may be selected by the student, focusing either on research methods or actual examples of research of interest to the student. Readings must be either from the attached bibliography, articles posted on the class web page, or be approved by the instructor.

Learning activities/assignments

1. **Ethics Paper:** A brief paper (about one page) using and citing appropriate codes of ethics (eg. CAMFT, APA, AAMFT, ACA,) and regulations (eg. BBS) describing the appropriate use of psychological testing and evaluation within the scope of practice of a Marriage and Family Therapist. **5% of grade**
2. **Project:** Each student is expected to complete a research project in his or her academic discipline. The project is to include an analysis of **real** data concerning a problem in an area of the student's interest. The final presentation of the project must be in APA format. The written report of the project shall not be more than six pages long. (Graphs and charts are not included in the six pages.) **55% of grade**

ALL PROJECTS MUST BE APPROVED BY THE INSTRUCTOR IN ADVANCE

ALL RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS MUST MEET APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS, INCLUDING MBBS GUIDELINES FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH. CONDUCT OF UNETHICAL RESEARCH MAY RESULT IN A GRADE OF 'F' FOR THE COURSE.

Students are encouraged to make efficient use of their time. It is appropriate for this project to be a pilot for a later requirement such as a thesis, dissertation, or senior paper. Students may elect to join an ongoing research project. Students may also elect to work in projects in groups. The complexity of design and size of the sample used in the project will increase with the number of students who choose to work together. Students who elect to work on a group project must negotiate a group contract with the instructor that includes: (1) Project description, and (2) Group members' assignments.

Like all research, this project is to be conducted in steps. **Each step must receive the written approval of the instructor before the submission of the next step.**

The steps shall include:

1. Introduction, literature review, and references.
2. Method, including research design, description of subjects, and method of data analysis.
3. Approval by The Academic Committee or a human subjects committee designated by the academic committee. (The proposal presented to the human subjects committee consists of the revised introduction and methods section of the project - with the methods section written in future tense.)
4. Results and discussion, including recommendations for further research.
5. Final presentation in APA format.

The final draft of the project is expected to demonstrate an introductory level of knowledge of and skills involved in the research process. The grade will be determined by the quality of the research question asked, appropriateness of research method chosen to the question, appropriate recognition of limitations of the research, clarity of presentation, appropriateness of data analysis method used, and appropriate use of APA style.

3. **Referral:** Each student is expected to write a letter referring an imaginary client to a psychologist for evaluation. Instrument will be evaluated based on the student's understanding of the psychological evaluation process as indicated by the information provided to the psychologist. **20% of grade**

4. **Test Evaluation:** Each student is expected to select a psychological test and write an evaluation of it, including discussion of its reliability, validity, normative sample, and applicability to a clinical setting. **10% of grade**

5. **Reading Log:** Students are to keep a log of reading completed consisting of an APA style citation and a brief outline of the content in each reading. A minimum of 900 pages should be read for two units credit (1400 pages for 3 units). Readings must be either from the attached bibliography or be approved by the instructor. **10% of grade** Extra credit will be awarded for additional readings.

5. **Intake Assessment and Treatment Plan:** Students taking the course for three units should complete an intake assessment and treatment plan for a real case (with all identifying information removed). Assessment should be theory consistent, include family variables, and assess for danger to self, danger to others and grave disability. Students taking the course for two units may receive extra credit if they submit this assignment.

ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE REQUIRED. FAILURE TO COMPLETE ALL ASSIGNMENTS WILL RESULT IN A GRADE OF INCOMPLETE

Seminary Academic Polices: Academic Policies. MBBS academic policies (as well as other school policies) are described at <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/>. These policies provide guidance on academic integrity and plagiarism, accommodation for disabilities, incomplete course work, extensions, dates for changing registration, non-discriminatory and inclusive language, appeals, etc. Students are expected to be familiar with these policies and will be held responsible for adhering to them. If you have questions about how these policies relate to you or to a situation that you face in your studies, please speak to the professor or consult the Registrar.

Course evaluations are to be completed online and are due one week after the completion of the course. Official grades will not be posted until the student's evaluation of the course is completed.

If a student wishes to have heightened confidentiality of assignment results, the student should submit the assignment in a self-addressed envelope. The assignment will be returned in the same envelope.

Course Outline

Tentative Topics Covered	
Class Topic	Assignments & Recommended Readings
January 26	
I. Course Introduction	
II. Epistemology & Scientific Method	Rose, Rose, & Russell Rosenberg Hiebert & Meneses
III. Typical Format of a Scientific Journal Article	Bernard Cpts 1 Creswell Cpt. 1 APA (2001) Cpt 1
February 2	
IV. Literature Review and Introduction	Ethics Paper Bernard Cpt 3 Cresswell Cpts. 2-3
V. Experimental Research Designs	Bernard Cpt 4 & 5 Campbell & Stanley
February 9	
VI. Some Other Research Designs	
1. Single Subject Designs	
2. Survey Designs	Orcher Fowler, F.
VII. Designing your study	
1. Choosing a research question	Creswell Cpts 5-7
2. Operational Definitions	Bernard Cpt 2
February 16 – Presidents Day, no class	
February 23	
IX. Analyzing Data	Huff
1. Levels of Measurement	Bernard Cpts 11 Creswell Cpt 8
2. Descriptive Statistics	Bernard Cpt 14
Several excellent videos are available at ezanalyze.com and may be counted in the reading log.	

- March 9
- 3. Inferential Statistics
 - 4. Standardization, Norms, and Standard Scores
- Bernard Cpt 15

**Presentation of ideas for Student Projects
Including Introduction and Literature Review sections of Proposal**

- March 16
- 3. Data Collection
 - VIII. Ethics in Research and Assessment
- Benard Part III
Knapp & VandeCreek
cpts 12 & 16
Bersoff, Cpts 6 & 8

**Discussion of Resarch Projects
Proposals Due for Submission to Academic Committee**

- March 23
- 5. Hypothesis Testing
 - 1. Significance Levels
 - 2. Types of Errors
 - 3. Effect Size
- March 30
- X. Family Research Techniques
 - 1. Developmental Designs
 - 2. Multivariate Designs
 - XI. Qualitative Research Designs
 - XII. Publication
- April 6
- Testing and Measurement (guest speaker)
 - 1. Reliability
 - 2. Validity
 - 3. Academic Testing
 - Intelligence Tests
 - Achievement Tests

Sprenkle & Moon

Bernard Cpt. 16
Kleine
Taylor & Bogdan
Creswell Cpts 9 & 10
Bernard Cpt., 12 & 13
Creswell Cpt 11
APA (2001) Cpt. 7

Rose & Smith
Millon & Davis
Shoshana & Geiken
Carmines & Zeller
Gould

April 13

Personality Tests, etc.

1. "Objective" Personality Tests
2. "Projective" Personality Tests
3. Neuropsychological Testing

April 20

Family Assessment

Referral

Test Evaluation

Conoley et al. Sect. 1

Minuchian, et al.

Cpt. 1

April 27

Computer Party, bring your data, lap top, and hopeful attitude! ☺

Reading Log

Intake Assessment &

Treatment Plan

May 4

Graduating Student Presentations*

May 11

Remaining Student Presentations*

**Students are to submit their the written report of their project
when they orally present their project to the class.**

Bibliography

The following books, articles, tapes, and web sites are approved for credit in the class. There are many other excellent sources of information regarding research in family studies. However, students must receive instructor's approval to use any resources not listed in this bibliography.

American Psychological Association. (1984). *Ethical principles in the conduct of research with human participants*. Washington, D.C.: APA.

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- Hiebert, P. G. & Meneses E. H. (1995). Introduction. In *Incarnational ministry: Planting churches in band, tribal, peasant, and urban societies* (pp. 9-19). Grand Rapids: Baker.

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www.cdc.gov/nchstp/hiv_aids/software/ex-text.htm. Is a site that has two free software packages for text analysis (CDC EX-TEXT and AnSWR).

Software:

Filemaker Pro by Clairs for both MacIntosh and Windows

QSR NUID.IST 4 by Sage

SPSS by SPSS Inc. 233 S. Wacker Drive, 11th floor, Chicago, IL 60606-6307. Phone 800-543-2185 (buy the graduate student pack at a college bookstore, it is both cheaper and better).