

CO5510 PSYCHODIAGNOSTICS
Reformed Theological Seminary

Spring 2026

2 Credit Hours

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Office Hours Upon request	

Course Description

This course is designed to provide students with theoretical categories, concepts, and methods for organizing client diagnostic material that will be useful in case conceptualization, treatment planning, the development of measurable treatment outcomes and lethality assessment. Students will gain experience in psychodiagnostics of common client disorders and behaviors such as, depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, trauma-related disorders, and relationship dysfunction.

Course Objectives (Knowledge and Skill Outcomes)

Students will demonstrate comprehension of the following:

- CO1. Case Conceptualization Skills. Essential case conceptualization and treatment planning skills (2.F.5.g, h; 5.C.1.c.; 5.C.3.a)
- CO2. Assessment for treatment planning. Intake Interview, biopsychosocial history, mental health history and psychological assessment for treatment planning (2.F.5.g,h,i; 5.C.3.a)
- CO3. Case Conceptualization Models. Principles, models, and documentation formats of biopsychosocial case conceptualization for treatment planning (2.F.5.b,g-i; 2.F.7.e; 5.C.1.c,e; 5.C.2.d.,m; 5.C.3.a-e)
- CO4. Differential Diagnosing. Diagnostic process, i.e., differential diagnosis and the use of current diagnostic classification systems, including the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) and the International Classification of Diseases (2.F.7.e,l; 5.C.1.e.; 5.C.2.b-h,m; 5.C.3.a-e)
- CO5. Treatment Plan Development. The process of developing treatment plans for common counseling issues. (2.F.5.h,i; 5.C.1.c; 5.C.2.m; 5.C.3.a,b)
- CO6. Development of Client Goals. The process of developing measurable outcomes for client goals. (2.F.5.g-i)
- CO7. Risk Assessment. Procedures for assessing risk of aggression or danger to others, self-inflicted harm, or suicide (2.F.7.c)
- CO8. Reporting Abuse. Developing procedures for reporting abuse (2.F.7.d)
- CO9. Lethality Prevention. Strategies for lethality prevention (2.F.5.i, l, m)

Methods of Instruction

This course is taught in a traditional classroom format.

Required Course Materials (Texts, Readings, and Videos):

M1. Schwitzer, A.M. & Rubin, L.C. (2015). *Diagnosis and Treatment Planning Skills, 2nd edition*. SAGE. ISBN: 978-1483349763.

M2. Wiger, D.E. (2021). *The Psychotherapy Documentation Primer, 4th edition*. Pride Publishers.

M3. Jobes, D. A. (2016). Chapter 5: CAMS Treatment Planning. In *Managing Suicidal Risk, 2nd edition*. The Guilford Press. ISBN: 978-1462526901. (eBook available through the library.)

M4. Garcia, R. (Writer), & Barclay, P. (Director). (2008). *Alex: Week One, Two, Three, and Four (Season 1, Episode 2, 7, 12, and 17)* [TV series episodes]. In P. Barclay, R. Garcia (Executive Producers), *In Treatment. Sheleg, Closest to the Hole Productions, and Leverage Management*. (<https://www.justwatch.com/us/tv-show/in-treatment/season-1>)

M5. Lee, D.L. & Tracey, T.J.G. (2008). General and multicultural case conceptualization skills: A cross-sectional analysis of psychotherapy trainees. *Psychotherapy Theory, Research, Practice, Training*, 45(4), 507-522. Doi: 10.1037/a0014336.

M6. Lee, D.L., Sheridan, D.J., Rosen, A.D., & Jones, I. (2013). Psychotherapy trainees' multicultural case conceptualization content: Thematic differences across three cases. *Psychotherapy*, 50(2), 206-212. Doi: 10.1037/a0028242

Commented [SW1]: Available as a resource in the Library.

Reference Material (needed for assignments/lectures):

*M6. American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, DSM-5-TR* Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Assoc.

*M7. Jongsma, A. E., Peterson, L. M., & Bruce, T. J. (2014). *The complete adult psychotherapy treatment planner*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

M8. Counseling Center's Elevate Training Manual (2025)

*You may borrow copies of this text available at the Counseling Center, but they cannot leave campus.

Assignments

A1. Reading Summary and Reflections (20%). Students will write *at least* a 1-paragraph summary (at least 200 words) for each chapter that is assigned for that week (1 summary paragraph for weeks with 1 chapter/article and 2 summary paragraphs for weeks with 2 chapters). Following the summary paragraph(s), they will write a single personal reflection paragraph (at least 100 words) from the required reading for each week. (Summaries are not required for the weeks with required videos.) The summary and reflection combined should not exceed two pages double-spaced, 1 page single-spaced. Each summary-reflection is graded out of 10 points. Summary-Reflections are due by class time on designated days – see schedule below. If late, ½ a point will be deducted from the score for each day late. See rubric for grading standards.

The summary portion will be graded based on the student's ability to clearly and concisely consolidate the **main theme(s)** from the reading. This does not need to be a reiteration of specific details and definitions.

The reflection portion is meant to demonstrate the student's personal thoughts, questions, critiques, concerns, or processing of the information from the reading. It serves the purpose of materializing the concepts from the reading materials. The following prompts can facilitate reflection for this section:

- How does this reading provide me more or less clarity on case conceptualization or client record keeping?
- How do I see my role of service to the client in the logistical details presented in this reading?
- What are my reactions to the information provided in the reading?

A2. **Conceptualization Paper (30%)** Students will select one **adult** character from a movie or TV show and review them as if they were a client. Using the skills learned in class for conceptualizing cases, students will write a **paper** conceptualizing the individual depicted and describing the treatment plan that could be developed for this individual. This will not be formatted like a treatment plan or progress note. The rubric for this paper with expectations is provided in this syllabus and on canvas. It must be written in APA 7, paragraph format. If late, 1/3 letter grade will be deducted from the total score for each day late.

A3. **Clinical Project (50%)**: There will be 2 projects (mid-term and final) that will require applying knowledge of writing a treatment plan and progress notes as learned in class. The project will use the same outline/narrative format that is used for Treatment Plans and Progress Notes in Elevate. Each project will be graded separately using a rubric provided in this syllabus and on canvas.

1. Mid-term (25%):

This project will be based on an assigned case study. Students will write a complete treatment plan and 3 progress notes. This is an independent project, and students should not consult with classmates. If late, 1/3 letter grade will be deducted from the total score for each day late.

2. Final (25%):

You will need to begin working on this project at least 4 weeks (or more) before the due date!

This project will be based on one of the student's clients from the Counseling Center. To protect client anonymity, students will either use a pseudonym or use the term "client" in lieu of a name. **Do not use initials, and please provide the case number from Elevate.** I will be checking that the treatment plan is not a copy from a treatment plan written by a previous counselor.

The student will write a **new** complete treatment plan and 2 progress notes for **2 consecutive sessions** that were held at the Counseling Center. The progress notes should be true and accurate representations of what occurred in these sessions. This is an independent project, so students should not consult classmates.

If late, 1/3 letter grade will be deducted from the total score for each day late.

A4. **Course Evaluation (completion required)**. Course evaluations are crucial for assessing and improving the MAC program. Therefore, each MAC course includes an assignment to complete an anonymous online course evaluation. You will verify whether you have completed the evaluation through a quiz in Canvas. This will not count toward your grade, but it is necessary for successful completion of the course.

Course Process and Schedule

It is important that you be prepared when class begins. Assigned readings should be completed **prior to the start of class**.

See attached Course Schedule.

Policies and Important Information

Assignments: All assignments will be graded based on how well students represent their thoughts on paper, craftsmanship in writing, and organization of all written work. Written work must conform to American Psychological Association (APA) 7th edition (unless otherwise specified). Students may use one of the many APA style websites online (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/index.html).

Use of Artificial Intelligence. You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. You may use AI programs (e.g. ChatGPT) to help generate ideas and brainstorm. However, be aware that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. If you include material generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material (with due consideration for the quality of the reference, which may be poor). Any plagiarism or other form of cheating will be dealt with severely under relevant RTS policies. Of course, there are many cases where I may not be able to tell if you cheated or not. Note however that, for any reason, including doubts about whether the paper was written with external help, any student can be required to come in for an oral examination on their paper. In such a case, a grade for the oral examination will replace that for the paper.

Submission of work: All assignments should be submitted via CANVAS. Assignments in the form of in-class work may be added to this syllabus.

Late work: All assignments are due as scheduled regardless of attendance, and all assignments must be completed in full for successful course completion unless prior arrangements are made in writing with the instructor.

Disability Accommodation Policy. If you require a special adaptation or accommodation to participate fully in this course, please contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss your request. You must provide a letter from the Dean of Students that verifies your disabled status. Last minute special requests will be subject to the same late assignment policy as other students.

Access to Research Database. RTS provides MAC students with access to the Ebscohost Psychology & Behavioral Science Collection of full text journal articles. You can access this collection from computers in the library, or from your home computer by following the link below and logging in with a username and password to be provided in class. <http://search.ebscohost.com/>

Grading Scale:

A (97-100)	B- (86-87)	D+ (75-77)
A- (94-96)	C+ (83-85)	D (72-74)
B+ (91-93)	C (80-82)	D- (70-71)
B (88-90)	C- (78-79)	F (Below 70)

Attendance Policy: Regular attendance is required. Excessive absences (more than 2 class meetings) will result in the loss of points equal to one letter grade per absence. If serious illness or an emergency prevents a student from attending any class, please notify the instructor before the class begins. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain any materials handed out or presented during a missed class.

Scoring Rubric: A1. Reading Summary and Reflections

Component	Expectation	Points Awarded
Summary Content	Clear and concise summary of the main themes of the reading. Accurate to the content of the chapter. If the summary is vague or general to the point of being unidentifiable with the chapter, points will be deducted.	<u> </u> / 4 max pts
Reflection	Demonstration of personal thoughts, questions, critiques, concerns or processing of the information from the reading. If you demonstrate any intentional thought toward the reading, full marks will be given. One sentence or a single question is insufficient.	<u> </u> / 4 max pts
Length Criteria	Minimum of 200 words for each chapter being summarized and minimum of 100 words for personal reflection. Less than this, and points will be deducted. If it exceeds 2 pages, points will be deducted.	<u> </u> / 2 max pt
TOTAL POINTS		Total Points: <u> </u> / 10 pts

Scoring Rubric: A2. Conceptualization Paper

Students will select an **adult** character from a movie or TV show and review them as if they were a client. Using the skills learned in class for conceptualizing cases, students will write a 4-8 page **paper** conceptualizing the individual depicted and describing the treatment plan that could be developed for this individual. This will not be formatted like a treatment plan or progress note. It must be written in APA 7, paragraph format. The rubric for this paper is provided in this syllabus and on canvas. If late, 1/3 letter grade will be deducted from the total score for each day late.

Component	Expectation	Points Awarded
Introduction	A 1-2 paragraph introduction that 1) specifies the main topics that will be covered and 2) hints at what you want the reader to know after completing your paper.	<u> </u> / 10 max pts
Clinical Evaluation/Assessment	Summarize clinically relevant information that you observe about this character <u>and</u> identify what additional information you would want to gather from them if you were in the early sessions with them as your client.	<u> </u> / 15 max pts
Identified Problem and Proposed Diagnosis	If the individual was coming to counseling, describe the problem the client would be presenting in session and how you interpret this problem. In the description, identify the diagnosis you would document for this client or the diagnosis you would want to assess further before assigning to the "client". Explain your reasoning for this diagnosis by providing evidence of diagnostic criteria that are met.	<u> </u> / 20 max pts
Goals and Objectives	Based on your interpretation of what you think would be the client's presenting problem, describe two overall goals you would set for the client moving forward. Identify at least two objectives for each goal that you would set to move toward these goals. Explain your reasons for setting these goals and objectives. Demonstrate understanding of guidelines for goals and objectives taught in class.	<u> </u> / 20 max pts
Treatment and Interventions	Identify and describe the theoretical orientation you would take in your conceptualization of the client and explain at least three interventions you would use in your work with them.	<u> </u> / 20 max pts
Conclusion	A 1-2 paragraph (<i>minimum</i>) conclusion that: (1) summarizes the overall paper and (2) shares final insights/comments about the observations of the case.	<u> </u> / 10 max pts
Paper Format & Writing Quality	A well-written paper that meets graduate-level expectations (spelling, grammar, APA 7 format, title page, etc.). Appropriate APA style headings used throughout to guide reader. Paper is a minimum of 4 pages and maximum of 8 (not including title / reference pages). * <i>No abstract is needed for this paper.</i> *	<u> </u> / 5 max pts
TOTAL POINTS		Total Points: <u> </u> / 100 pts

Scoring Rubric: A3. Clinical Projects

Component	Expectation	Points Awarded
Client Problem Statement	A concise statement of the client's description or conceptualization of their problem.	____ / 5 max pts
Diagnosis	Application of the student's learning from the Psychopathology course. A diagnosis of mental disorder(s) that correctly described the cluster of symptoms experienced by the client. To get full marks, include a clear list of the cluster of symptoms that the client experiences in order to qualify for this diagnosis and examples of the symptoms as they've presented or been reported.	____ / 10 max pts
Problem Definition	A concise statement of the counselor's conceptualization of the client's problem(s). The statement must be expressed tentatively, in behavioral terms, and in terms that conceptualize the problem(s) as reducible (as opposed to a dichotomous conceptualization). To get full marks, include "as evidenced by" content to the statement.	____ / 10 max pts
Goals	For each problem definition, at least one goal is defined in terms of reducing the problem. Demonstrate understanding of guidelines for goals and objectives taught in class.	____ / 15 max pts
Objectives	For each goal, at least three objectives are defined. Objectives must be expressed in terms of changes to be made by the client that may advance the client towards the goal. Demonstrate understanding of guidelines for goals and objectives taught in class.	____ / 15 max pts
Interventions	For each objective, at least three interventions the counselor plans to use that afford the client the opportunity to achieve the objective. Interventions should not be one-time events, nor may they be references to entire psychotherapy modalities (e.g. CBT).	____ / 15 max pts
Progress Notes	Complete a full progress note template for each session, and be sure to provide a concise description of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current functioning, symptoms, or impairments 2. Content: major events and/or themes discussed in the session 3. Interventions used by the counselor (should correspond to content section) 4. Client's progress toward treatment plan 	____ / 25 max pts
Format & Writing Quality	The outline and format matches what you have learned from Elevate. The language used reflects class instruction for clinical, professional documentation.	____ / 5 max pts
TOTAL POINTS		Total Points: _____ / 100 pts

Student Learning Outcome Table

The table below shows how the objectives of this course will be met, and how they relate to CACREP Standards. Details about specific course objectives, assignments, and evaluation methods can be found in later sections of this syllabus.

CACREP Standard	Course Objective	Material(s)	Assignment(s)	Lecture(s)
2.F.5.g, h 5.C.1.c, 5.C.3.a	CO1. Case Conceptualization Skills	M1. Schitzer M2. Wiger M9. Jongsma	A1. Summaries A2. Conceptualization Paper A3. Clinical Project	L1-5, 7-9, 12-13
2.F.5.g,h,i. 5.C.3.a	CO2. Assessment for Treatment Planning	M1. Schitzer M2. Wiger	A1. Summaries A2. Conceptualization Paper A3. Clinical Project	L1-3, 7, 11
2.F.5.b,g,h,i 2.F.7.e 5.C.1.c,e 5.C.2.d,m 5.C.3.a-e	CO3. Case Conceptualization Models	M1. Schitzer M2. Wiger M9. Jongsma	A1. Summaries A2. Conceptualization Paper A3. Clinical Project	L1-5, 7-9, 12-13
2.F.7.e,l 5.C.1.e. 5.C.2.b-h,m 5.C.3.a-e	CO4. Differential Diagnosing	M1. Schitzer M2. Wiger M8. DSM 5	A2. Conceptualization Paper A3. Clinical Project	L2, 7, 12
2.F.5.g-i, 5.C.1.C 5.C.2.m 5.C.3.a,b	CO5. Treatment Plan Development	M1. Schitzer M2. Wiger M9. Jongsma	A1. Summaries A2. Conceptualization Paper A3. Clinical Project	L1-5, 7-9, 12-13
2.F.5.g,h,i	CO6. Development of Client Goals	M1. Schitzer M2. Wiger M9. Jongsma	A1. Summaries A2. Conceptualization Paper A3. Clinical Project	L2-3, 7, 13
2.F.7.c	CO7. Risk Assessment	M7. Jobes	A3. Clinical Project	L11
2.F.7.d	CO8. Reporting Abuse	M10. Handbook	A3. Clinical Project	L11
2.F.5.i,l,m	CO9. Lethality Prevention	M7. Jobes	A3. Clinical Project	L11



SYSTEM

MAC Student Learning Outcomes

Course: CO5510 Psychodiagnostics

Professor: Katie Majeste

Campus: Jackson

Date: Spring 2026

MAC Student Learning Outcomes		Rubric	Mini-Justification
<i>In order to measure the success of the MAC curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MAC outcomes.</i>			
Professional Counseling Orientation & Ethical Practice	Understands and applies the basic knowledge needed to be an effective counselor including: the history and philosophy of counseling, ethical standards of practice, personal career development, advocacy for clients, consultation & collaboration, and a Reformed, biblical and theological framework for counseling.	Strong	Adds to the basic knowledge, ethical standards for practice, and a Reformed, biblical and theological framework for counseling.
Social & Cultural Diversity	Understands and demonstrates how living in a cultural/global society affects clients who are seeking counseling and clinical mental health services, as well as the effects of sin such as racism, discrimination, sexism, and oppression on one's own life and career and those of the client.	Moderate	Application is made to diverse populations in case conceptualization material and case studies.
Human Growth & Development	Understands and applies knowledge of various theories of individual and family development, and factors affecting human development. To include biological, neurological, physiological, systemic, and environmental factors, addiction, and effects of crisis, disasters, and traumas.	Minimal	Client developmental stage is considered in case conceptualization.
Career Development	Understands and applies theories and models of career development, counseling, and decision making.	None	None
Counseling & Helping Relationships	Understands and applies theories and models of counseling, strategies for understanding and practicing consultation, and developing relevant counseling treatment and intervention plans.	Strong	A framework for case conceptualization and skills for counseling treatment and intervention plans are learned and practiced
Group Counseling & Group Work	Understands and applies theories and models of group counseling and group work, dynamics of the group process and development, and therapeutic factors that contribute to group effectiveness.	None	None
Assessment & Testing	Understands and applies clinical knowledge effectively, including various models and approaches to clinical evaluation and their appropriate uses. To include diagnostic interviews, mental status examinations, symptom inventories, and psychoeducational and personality assessments, and is sensitive to the complications of diagnosis and interpretation of formal and informal evaluation.	Moderate	Procedures for the initial assessment of clients is learned.
Research & Program Evaluation	Demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate research through a biblical worldview and integrate it into counseling practice. Understands the process of program evaluation and its integration into the practice of counseling and clinical mental health counseling.	Minimal	Research regarding case conceptualization and treatment planning is reviewed.

MAC Student Learning Outcomes		Rubric	Mini-Justification
<p><i>In order to measure the success of the MAC curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MAC outcomes.</i></p>			
Clinical Mental Health Counseling	Demonstrates the knowledge and skills necessary to address a wide variety of circumstances within the context of clinical mental health counseling.	Strong	Critical skills necessary for functioning as a clinical mental health counselor are gained.
Integration (Biblical/Theological)	Knowledge of and integration of Reformed, biblical and theological concepts with counseling practices.	Minimal	Case conceptualization categories are considered in light of Reformed, biblical and theological concepts.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the triune God.	Moderate	Applying appropriate care for clients demonstrates a love for the triune God.