

CO5560 Assessment and Testing Reformed Theological Seminary

Summer 2026
3 credits hours

Katie Majeste, PhD, LPC-S

Class meeting time
See course schedule

Contact Information

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Office Hours
Upon Request

Course Description

This course teaches the use and application of tests and measurements in diagnosis and assessment of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and familial characteristics and functioning. Test content, validity, reliability, purpose, limitations, ethics, and administration are compared and evaluated. Stress is placed on the interpretation of test results to the client population.

Course Objectives (Knowledge and Skill Outcomes)

After successful completion of the course, students will demonstrate comprehension of the following (applicable CACREP standard in parenthesis):

- CO1.** Historical perspectives – Students will understand historical perspectives concerning the nature and meaning of assessment and testing in counseling. (2.F.7.a, 5.C.3.a)
- CO2.** Initial Assessment – Students will understand methods for effectively preparing for and conducting initial assessment meetings. (2.F.7.b, 5.C.3.a)
- CO3.** Assessing Risk – Students will understand procedures for assessing risk of harm to self or others. (2.F.7.c, 5.C.3.a)
- CO4.** Trauma and Abuse – Students will understand trauma-informed care practices and procedures for identifying and reporting abuse. (2.F.7.d)
- CO5.** Diagnosis – Students will understand how to use assessments for diagnostic and treatment planning. Students will understand strategies for selecting, administering, interpreting, and using assessment and evaluation instruments and techniques in counseling (2.F.7.e,i)
- CO6.** Statistical Concepts – Students will understand statistical concepts and psychometric statistics including standardized and non-standardized testing, normed referenced and criterion referenced assessments, types of assessment scores, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, standard errors, test norms, types of distributions, and correlations. (2.F.7.f,g)
- CO7.** Reliability and Validity – Students will understand concepts of reliability (including methods of establishing stability, internal and equivalence reliability) and validity (including evidence for establishing content, construct, and empirical validity). (2.F.7.h)
- CO8.** Behavioral Assessment – Students will understand appraisal methods including environmental assessment, performance assessment, individual and group test and inventory methods, and behavioral observations. (2.F.7.j, 2.F.8.c)

- CO9.** Clinical Assessment – Students will be able to recognize and describe the commonly used ability, intellectual, and personality tests and the appropriate uses of these tests. Students will have the skills necessary to evaluate a clinical test and determine if appropriate procedures were used in development and presentation of the test for use in a particular population. (2.F.4.i; 2.F.7.i,k; 2.F.8.c, 5.C.1.e)
- CO10.** Ethics and Culture – Students will be familiar with social and cultural factors related to clinical assessment. Students will be able to understand and recognize the ethical issues related to selection, administration, interpretation and reporting of assessment instruments and techniques. (2.F.7.m)

Assignments (Student Performance Evaluation Criteria)

The program assesses its progress toward MAC program objectives using key performance indicators (KPIs). The KPIs addressed in this course are in parenthesis.

A1. Group Presentation (30%): In small groups, students will be assigned assessment tools commonly used in the field to present to the class. The presentation should be approximately 30 minutes in length and should closely follow the outline “Evaluating Psychological Tests” found in Appendix A of this syllabus. Please note that a majority of the presentation should demonstrate the application of the assessment. Students will provide each class member with the assessment. Students will explain to the class how to score and interpret their results. At the end of the presentation, students should conduct a brief role-play that explains how and why to use the assessment with a client. All group members are expected to present equally during the presentation. All assessments/tests will be assigned by the instructor. A copy of the presentation outline and a reference list in APA format must be uploaded to Canvas as a “Discussion” prior to the beginning of the class in which the presentation is made. Grades will be determined by ratings from the instructor (see Appendix B), your classmates’ groups, and yourself. To rate yourself and classmates, please fill out the group member evaluation form (see Appendix C).

A2. Clinical Assessment Report (35%) (KPI #1): Students will conduct an intake assessment, mental status examination, administer the Cross-Cutting Symptom Measure and the Personality Inventory for DSM-5-Brief Form (PID5-BF) to an individual with whom there is not a power differential. Scan the completed “Volunteer Informed Consent for Assessment” form (see Appendix D) and upload it to Canvas to the Clinical Assessment Report assignment. Students must not report the results to the individual they are assessing. Students will interpret assessments in the form of a professional report (see below) and upload it to Canvas to the Clinical Assessment Report assignment. Students will provide a presentation of the Clinical Assessment Report to the class which should be approximately 30 minutes in length. Grades will be based upon the Assessment Report Rubrics (see Appendix E). The assessment must be written in APA style. The following sections must be included in the report:

- Reason for referral

- Background and History (psychosocial history, medical/counseling background, substance use and abuse, educational and vocational history, and other pertinent information)
- Evaluation Procedures
- Behavioral Observations (including mental status examination)
- Assessment Results (Cross-Cutting Symptom Measure and the Personality Inventory for DSM-5-Brief Form (PID5-BF), and diagnostic impressions)
- Recommendations
- Summary

Students will practice communicating assessment results during class presentations.

A3. Active Participation and Attendance (5%) Students are expected to attend the full class and participate in a professional manner in which interpersonal interactions are respectful to others. Self-awareness (e.g., self-assessment, self-care, openness to feedback) will also be needed to actively participate in class. Class participation is defined as provoking thought and furthering discussions. Points may be lost for attendance and nonparticipation such as seeking attention or diverting discussion onto irrelevant tangents or into one's own agenda.

A4. Complete Required Reading and Videos (30%): Write 1-page summaries or outlines demonstrating engagement with the reading assignments and video-watching assignments and upload the summaries to Canvas.

A5. Course Evaluation (0% of grade but required for course completion): 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 Canvas quiz. This will not count toward your grade but is necessary for successful completion of the course.

Methods of Instruction

This course will be taught in the following format: traditional classroom environment.

Required Materials (Texts, Readings, and Videos)

M1. Neukrug, E.S. & Fawcett, R.C. (2015). *Essentials of testing and assessment: A practical guide for counselors, social workers, and psychologists. (3rd ed.)*. Thomson: Brooks/Cole. ISBN-13: 978-1285454245

M2. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2014). *Trauma-Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services*. Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series 57. HHS Publication No. (SMA) 13-4801. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

M3. Assigned *Manuals* and articles.

M4. Videos: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL0gxHK7kV54IAD748V3EOLwOZwWAz4fyc>

Recommended Materials:

- M5.** Shea, Sean Christopher. (2016). *Psychiatric Interviewing: The Art of Understanding* (3rd ed.). Elsevier. ISBN-13: 978-1437716986
- M6.** Zimmerman, M. (2022). *Interview guide for evaluating DSM-5-TR psychiatric disorders and the mental status examination*, Psych Products Press. ISBN: 978-0-9633821-2-2
- M7.** Sommers-Flanagan, J. & Sommers-Flanagan, R. (2016). *Clinical Interviewing* (6th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons. ISBN-13: 978-1119215585
- M8.** Jobes, D. A. (2016). *Managing suicidal risk: A collaborative approach* (2nd ed.). New York: NY: Guilford Press. ISBN-13: 978-1462526901

Course Process and Schedule

See separate Course Schedule.

Note: Course syllabi are intended to provide students with basic information concerning the course. The syllabus can be viewed as a 'blueprint' for the course; changes in the syllabus can be made and students will be informed of any substantive changes concerning examinations, assignments, and grading or attendance policies.

Policies and Important Information

Written Work Format. All written work must conform to current American Psychological Association (APA) style (7th ed.) unless otherwise specified. If a student does not have a copy of the APA manual, one should be purchased, or students may use one of the many APA style websites available online (e.g. https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html). Assessment will include how well students represent their thoughts on paper, craftsmanship in writing, and organization of all written work.

MAC Program Disability Policy. If you have a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects your academic performance) and would like to receive academic accommodations, please inform your instructor prior to the start of this course. You must provide a letter from the Dean of Students that verifies your disabled status. The instructor and student will discuss the available accommodations for the course. If the student with a disability does not disclose that s/he has a disability, then the student is agreeing to take full responsibility for any related consequences that may occur.

Access to Research Database. RTS provides Jackson MAC students access to the Ebsco host 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/>

Submission of work. All assignments should be submitted on the Canvas course webpage.

Late work. All assignments are due as scheduled regardless of attendance unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor. Assignments turned in late will be deducted 1/3 letter grade for each late day.

Return of work. All work will be returned to students via Canvas. Additionally, if students would like additional feedback, they may set up time before or after class to meet with the professor.

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)

Attendance Policy. Regular attendance is expected and required. Excessive absences (more than 1 class meeting) 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 the missed class from a classmate.

Class Participation. Students are expected to participate in all components of the class. Each student is expected to read all the assigned materials in advance for each class and have prepared written comments and questions for class discussion. Contributions should reflect knowledge of the reading assignments or other sources.

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.

Course Objective	Reading(s)*	Lecture(s)	Assignment(s)	CACREP Standard(s)
CO1 Historical Perspectives	M1(1)	L1	A4, A5, A6	2.F.7.a; 5.C.3.a
CO2 Initial Assessment	M1(4)	L2	A2, A3, A4, A5, A6	2.F.7.b; 5.C.3.a
CO3 Assessing Risk	M1(3); M2(1,4)	L2	A2, A3, A4, A5, A6	2.F.7.c; 5.C.3.a
CO4 Trauma and Abuse	M2(1,4)	L2	A4, A5, A6	2.F.7.d
CO5 Diagnosis	M1(3)	L2	A2, A3, A4, A5, A6	2.F.7.e,l
CO6 Statistical Concepts	M1(6-7)	L2-4	A1, A4, A5, A6	2.F.7.f,g
CO7 Reliability and Validity	M1(5)	L2-4	A1, A4, A5, A6	2.F.7.h
CO8 Behavioral Assessment	M1(12); M4	L4	A2, A3, A4, A5, A6	2.F.7.j, 2.F.8.c
CO9 Clinical Assessment	M1(8-11), M4	L4	A2, A3, A4, A5, A6	2.F.4.i; 2.F.7.i,k; 2.F.8.c; 5.C.1.e
C10 Ethics and Culture	M1(2, Appendix B)	L2	A4, A5, A6	2.F.7.m

* Textbook chapters are denoted in parenthesis

Course Objectives Related to MAC* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: CO5560 ASSESSMENT & TESTING

Professor: Dr. Katie Majeste

Campus: Jackson

Date: Summer 2026

<u>MAC* Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
<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>		Strong Moderate Minimal None	
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.	Moderate	Students will review the ethics of testing and assessment through lecture and examination.
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.	Minimal	A review of the validity and reliability of various assessments across cultures, and the caution necessary in this area is included.
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	Some assessments for children and adolescents are included in this course.
Career Development	Understands and applies theories and models of career development, counseling, and decision making.	Moderate	Assessments in career counseling are included.
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.	Minimal	Use of assessment in diagnosis and treatment planning is included.

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	
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.	Strong	This course was designed to be the primary course meeting this student learning outcome.
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	The use of assessments
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.	Moderate	The use of assessments in the diagnosis, treatment planning, and intervention for CMHC counselors is included.
Integration (Biblical/Theological)	Knowledge of and integration of Reformed, biblical, and theological concepts with counseling practices.	None	
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the triune God.	Minimal	This class requires students humble themselves and cease to rely solely on their "gut" when assessing their clients.

APPENDIX A – Evaluating Psychological Tests

****NOTE: This is a sample outline only, more/less information may be needed depending on the test*

Author(s): _____

- I. Purpose: What was it designed to measure and how can it be used? Describe the practical application of the instrument.
 - A. Treatment planning
 - B. Intervention
 - C. Outcome measure
- II. Standardization
 - A. Norm Group
 - B. Population/Age. What is the age range?
 - C. Multicultural Norms
 - D. Additional Norms Established
- III. Administration/Setting
 - A. What type of setting is it used in?
 - B. How long does it take to administer?
 - C. Is it a self-administered questionnaire?
 - D. Can it be adapted for use in interview studies?
 - E. Is it administered individually and/or in a group?
 - F. Can it be computer administered?
 - G. Can it be completed on-line via the internet?
 - H. Length
 - I. Qualification Level: A, B, C
- IV. Theoretical Background: What are the theoretical constructs being measured?
- V. Scales/Description
 - A. How many items are there?
 - B. How many factors/subscales are there?
 - C. What do the subscales measure?
- VI. Scoring
 - A. How is it scored (hand scored or computer scored)?
 - B. Range of Scores
 - C. What do the scores mean?
- VII. Reliability
 - A. List all types of reliability tested (e.g., test-retest, Cronbach's Alpha, etc.).
 - B. If applicable, include reliability estimates for each subscale and total scale
- VIII. Validity
 2. List types of validity that were tested (e.g., Content, Criterion, Construct, etc.)
- IX. Strengths
- X. Weaknesses
- XI. Additional Information
 - A. Alternate forms: Are there other versions or forms available (e.g., short-forms)?
 - B. Cost: What is included in the cost (e.g., manual, scoring forms/software)?
 - C. Publisher, date published, and how to obtain the instrument
 - D. Journal: List the reference if published in a journal

APPENDIX B – The Instructor’s Rating of the Overall Presentation

Instrument Reviewed: _____

_____ (2pts) Thorough review of the assessment tool – purpose of the test or how it can be used as a counseling tool; theoretical background if applicable

_____ (3 pts) Standardization, administration/setting, scoring procedures

_____ (2 pts) Scales/description

_____ (20 pts) Psychometric properties (reliability & validity)

_____ (20 pts) Explained and applied assessment tool in an effective manner with the class

_____ (20 pts) Individual Presentation and Group Collaboration (professional presentation)

_____ (50 pts) TOTAL SCORE FOR GROUP PRESENTATION

APPENDIX C – Group Member Evaluation Form

Please rate your group member’s participation in your group presentation.

Group Member: _____

No Contribution						Appropriate Contribution			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Group Member: _____

No Contribution						Appropriate Contribution			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Group Member: _____

No Contribution						Appropriate Contribution			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Group Member: _____

No Contribution						Appropriate Contribution			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please rate your level of participation in your group presentation.

Your name: _____

No Contribution						Appropriate Contribution			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

APPENDIX D - Volunteer Informed Consent for Assessment

Thank you for agreeing to volunteer to complete a series of assessments conducted by a graduate student at Reformed Theological Seminary for partial fulfillment of CO5560: Assessment and Testing. By agreeing to participate, you understand that this is a practice exercise intended for learning purposes only, and that the results obtained from the assessments will be inconclusive and will not be shared with you in detail. Your test administrator will be able to share general information about your results; however, will not be providing you with detailed results because this is only a practice exercise. After you have completed the assessments, your test administrator will write a report that will be turned in to his/her MAC Department faculty member for evaluation. Your information is completely confidential and no identifying information will be included in the written report. You will only be identified by your first initial, and if there is any information you do not want included in the report, please inform your administrator at the end of the assessment session.

You have the right to withdraw from participation at any time during the assessment process. Please feel free to ask your test administrator any questions that you may have before, during, or after your assessment session.

You may also contact the MAC faculty member overseeing this project if you have any questions and/or concerns. Her contact information is listed below.

Katie Majeste, Assistant Professor of Counseling
Reformed Theological Seminary-Jackson
kmajeste@rts.edu

By initialing below, I agree to participate in the assessment session, understand the qualifications of my test administrator, and agree to the conditions stated above.

Thank you again for your participation!

Participant (INITIALS ONLY) Date

Student Signature Date

APPENDIX E - Assessment Report Rubrics

Student Name: _____

Assignment Type: _____ Self _____ Clinical Date: _____

Criteria/CACREP Standard	Possible Points	Points Awarded
Reason for Referral	5	
Background and History	20	
Evaluation Procedures	5	
Behavioral Observations	5	
Assessment Results	40	
Recommendations	10	
Summary	10	
APA style	5	
Total	100	

To provide students with a better idea of how items are incorporated and evaluated according to expectations, see the following categories:

Criterion & CACREP Standard	Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
Historical Perspectives (Identification, Definitions) 2.F.7.a	Demonstrates minimal or inaccurate ability to conceptualize, diagnosis, and/or plan; substantial inconsistencies/errors; inaccurate summary and/or behavioral observations	Demonstrates some ability to conceptualize, diagnosis, and/or plan; some inconsistencies/errors; summary and/or behavioral observations needs to be more thorough	Demonstrates acceptable ability to conceptualize, diagnosis, and/or plan; no inconsistencies/errors; thorough summary and behavioral observations
Method of Effectively Preparing for and Conducting Initial Assessment Meetings (Identify concerns, Discuss steps) 2.F.7.b	Demonstrates minimal or inaccurate knowledge of basic concepts of testing and assessment; substantial inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation lacks thoroughness.	Demonstrates some knowledge of basic concepts of testing and assessment; some inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation needs to be more thorough.	Demonstrates acceptable knowledge of basic concepts of testing and assessment; no inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation is thorough
Diagnosis & Planning (Behavioral, Observations, Results, Recommendations, Summary) 2.F.7.e	Demonstrates minimal or inaccurate ability to conceptualize, diagnosis, and/or plan; substantial inconsistencies/errors; inaccurate summary and/or behavioral observations	Demonstrates some ability to conceptualize, diagnosis, and/or plan; some inconsistencies/errors; summary and/or behavioral observations needs to be more thorough	Demonstrates acceptable ability to conceptualize, diagnosis, and/or plan; no inconsistencies/errors; thorough summary and behavioral observations
Basic Concepts (Background and history, Evaluation procedures, Results) 2.F.7.f	Demonstrates minimal or inaccurate knowledge of basic concepts of testing and assessment; substantial inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation lacks thoroughness.	Demonstrates some knowledge of basic concepts of testing and assessment; some inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation needs to be more thorough.	Demonstrates acceptable knowledge of basic concepts of testing and assessment; no inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation is thorough
Statistical Concepts (including scales of measurement, central tendency, distributions) 2.F.7.g	Demonstrates minimal or inaccurate knowledge of basic concepts of testing and assessment; substantial inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation lacks thoroughness.	Demonstrates some knowledge of basic concepts of testing and assessment; some inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation needs to be more thorough.	Demonstrates acceptable knowledge of basic concepts of testing and assessment; no inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation is thorough

Psychometric Properties (Reliability and Validity in use of assessments) 2.F.7.h	Demonstrates minimal or inaccurate knowledge of basic concepts of testing and assessment; substantial inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation lacks thoroughness.	Demonstrates some knowledge of basic concepts of testing and assessment; some inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation needs to be more thorough.	Demonstrates acceptable knowledge of basic concepts of testing and assessment; no inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation is thorough
Use of assessments relevant to academic/educational, career, personal, and social development. 2.F.7.i	Demonstrates minimal or inaccurate ability to conceptualize, diagnosis, and/or plan; substantial inconsistencies/errors; inaccurate summary and/or behavioral observations	Demonstrates some ability to conceptualize, diagnosis, and/or plan; some inconsistencies/errors; summary and/or behavioral observations needs to be more thorough	Demonstrates acceptable ability to conceptualize, diagnosis, and/or plan; no inconsistencies/errors; thorough summary and behavioral observations
Use of symptom checklists, and personality and psychological testing 2.F.7.k	Demonstrates minimal or inaccurate knowledge of basic concepts of testing and assessment; substantial inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation lacks thoroughness.	Demonstrates some knowledge of basic concepts of testing and assessment; some inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation needs to be more thorough.	Demonstrates acceptable knowledge of basic concepts of testing and assessment; no inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation is thorough
Ethical & Cultural Strategies (Reason for Referral, Background and history, Procedures, Results, Recommendations, Summary) 2F.7.m	Demonstrates minimal or inaccurate ability to integrate ethical and cultural factors with the interpretation of assessment results; substantial inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation lacks thoroughness	Demonstrates some ability to integrate ethical and cultural factors with the interpretation of assessment results; some inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation needs to be more thoroughness	Demonstrates acceptable ability to integrate ethical and cultural factors with the interpretation of assessment results; no inconsistencies and/or errors; interpretation is thorough