PSYC3211 –
Psychological Assessment and Organisational Psychology

Unit of Study Code: PSYC3211

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Format of Unit: 1 hour x 2 lectures/week x 13 weeks
1 hour x 1 tutorial/week x 12 weeks
Tutorial sizes: maximum of 20 students per group

Credit Point Value: 4 Credit Points

Qualifying: 12 credit points of Second Year Psychology including PSYC 2112 and PSYC 2114

Assessment: Classwork:
1,000 word Report, worth 20% of unit total
Due Date: Monday 21st May 2001

Examination:
50% multiple choice and 30% short answer, worth 80% of the unit total

Evaluation of teaching and learning:
Date: Week 13 of the semester
Type: Questionnaire

Unit of study general description:
The unit is divided into two sections (that overlap considerably in practice, if not theory) with Psychological Assessment preceding Organisational Psychology within the Semester. The Psychological Assessment component will cover fundamental issues in the construction, evaluation, and administration of psychological tests. Students will be given 'hands-on' experience with a variety of psychological instruments including those used for personality, aptitude, and clinical assessment. A variety of psychometric 'skills' (e.g., calculating reliability, the rudiments of scale construction) will also be taught. This component will conclude with an introduction to state-of-the-art issues in psychological assessment (e.g., the impact of computers and the WWW on psychological assessment). Topics covered in the Organisational Psychology component include leadership and social structure, productivity and satisfaction, job selection, and conflict resolution.
Teaching outcomes:

The following are a list of projected teaching outcomes. The course is designed to be fun, fulfilling and challenging.

(1) Demonstrate the ability to describe, explain, and evaluate major issues and controversies surrounding Psychological Assessment (e.g., Can we measure human behaviour? Is there a best form of psychological assessment?)

(2) Demonstrate the ability to describe, explain, and evaluate the historical antecedents of contemporary Psychological Assessment.

(3) Demonstrate the ability to describe, explain, and evaluate each of a number of theoretical approaches to scale and test construction and to critically compare and contrast these approaches.

(4) Demonstrate the ability to describe, explain, and evaluate underlying theories of personality, intelligence, interests, attitudes, aptitudes (and the like) and the role that these theories play in Psychological Assessment.

(5) Demonstrate the ability to describe, explain, evaluate, and apply basic psychometric principles, and to especially understand the concepts of reliability and validity.

(6) Demonstrate the ability to describe, explain, evaluate, and apply the major ethical issues underlying Psychological Assessment.

(7) Demonstrate the ability to describe, explain, evaluate, and to perhaps even apply psychological tests in a range of assessment contexts.

(8) Demonstrate the ability to design, describe, explain, evaluate, and apply principles of Psychological Assessment in an empirical context.

(9) Awareness of the general nature of Organisational Psychology.

(10) Demonstrate an understanding of the role of job and task analysis in selection.

(11) Demonstrate the ability to describe the validity of different selection methods, including selection interviews, and to apply these to the design of structured behavioural interviews.

(12) Ability to discuss the general characteristics of organisational systems.

(13) Ability to describe, evaluate and apply psychological models of leadership, and related methods of assessment, in organisational settings.

(14) Ability to describe, evaluate and apply psychological models of work satisfaction, and related methods of assessment, in organisational settings.

(15) Ability to describe and evaluate attempts to integrate psychometric assessment in organisational settings.

(16) Awareness of the need for careful integration between theory, research, and application in Organisational Psychology.

Evidence of learning:

In order to pass the course students are expected to be able to accurately identify, explain, and broadly apply the models described in the syllabus. High quality outcomes involve not only detailed and accurate descriptive knowledge of the syllabus items but also soundly argued evaluation and detailed application of those items. Assessment will take the form of a written report, short-answer questions, and multiple choice items that will cover the full range of teaching outcomes.

SYLLABUS

Introduction. It has been claimed that psychological tests (often in their explicit use by organisational psychologists) represent the most important practical contribution that psychology has made to modern society. Indeed, knowledge of the principles underlying psychological tests is pertinent to the vast majority of professional careers in psychology. The student participating in this course: (a) will gain "hands-on" experience with the administration, scoring, and interpretation of psychological tests, (b) obtain an understanding of the many conceptual and methodological issues comprising the domain of psychological assessment, and (c) obtain an understanding of conceptual and practical issues in the area of organisational psychology.
Course Outline. The lecture (and tutorial) program will cover topics listed below.

1. Introduction to Psychological Assessment

a. The Many Uses (and Abuses) of Psychological Tests.
c. Principles for Administering a Psychological Test.
d. Understanding the Experimenter-Participant 'Relationship'.

2. Introduction to Psychometrics (and other Technical Criteria)

a. Psychometrics. The concepts of reliability and validity, and how these are crucial in psychological assessment. (The approach adopted here will be a more 'hands-on' approach to psychometric issues than that covered in PSYC 3201).
b. Comparability of Test Scores. Scaling, norming, and equating procedures.
c. Factor Analysis. An important technical tool (i.e., statistical method) in test appraisal and test construction.

3. The Varieties of Psychological Assessment I: Ability Testing

c. Tests for Special Populations. (i) Infant and preschool testing – (examples will include the Bayley Scales of Infant Development). (ii) Multicultural testing – is it possible to develop 'culture-free' measures of cognitive ability? (iii) Testing people with various disabilities.

4. The Varieties of Psychological Assessment II: Personality Testing

a. Core Concepts underlying Personality Testing. The re-emergence of trait models in the study of personality. 'Objective' vs. 'projective' techniques: Review and expansion.
b. Self-Report Personality Inventories. (i) The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventories. (ii) California Psychological Inventory. (iii) Measures of the 'Big Five' factors of personality. (iv) Eysenck Personality Measures. (v) Test-taking attitudes and response bias: Information that every user of self-report personality inventories should be aware!
d. Projective Techniques. The nature of projective techniques – more than meets the eye?! (i) The Rorschach. (ii) Thematic Apperception Test. (iii) Word Association Tests. (iv) Performance Techniques (e.g., Draw-a-Person Test).
e. Other Techniques. (i) Measures of cognitive style. (ii) Interviews (structured or otherwise). (iii) Biodata.

5. Psychological Tests: Future Trends, Prospects, and Limitations

a. Ethical Considerations in Psychological Testing.
e. Summary and Conclusions.

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6. Organisational Psychology

a. Overview of Organisational Psychology: Theory and Practice
b. Understanding the role of job analysis in selection, and the design and evaluation of selection systems.
c. Conceptualising and Assessing Leadership in Organisations: Organisations as systems; processes of influence in organisational systems; conceptualising and assessing leadership.

TIMETABLE

N.B. There may be some special guest lecturers from time to time that will be announced in class.

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<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>LECTURES</th>
<th>TUTORIALS</th>
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| 1    | 1. Introduction to Assessment  
2. Definitions, Tests, Inventories, and Questionnaires | No Tutorials |
| 2    | 3. The History of Assessment I  
4. The History of Assessment II | Validating the Lark-Owl Chronotype Indicator (LOCI): Introduction; Report Writing |
| 3    | 5. Introduction to Psychometric Issues: Reliability  
6. Introduction to Psychometric Issues: Validity | Validating the Lark-Owl Chronotype Indicator (LOCI): Field Testing and Methodology |
| 4    | 7. Major Theories Underlying Ability Assessment  
| 5    | 9. Aptitude Assessment: ASVAB  
10. Major Theories Underlying Personality Assessment | Computerized Testing of Ability: STOCA, CAM-IV, CABS, and Other Instruments |
| 6    | 11. Personality Assessment: Projective Measures  
| 7    | 13. Other Forms of Psychological Assessment  
14. An Introduction to Applied Psychology and Testing | Attitude and Interests Assessment |
| 8    | 15. Computers, WWW, Future Trends, and Testing  
| 9    | 17. Overview, Job Analysis, and the Criterion Concept  
| 10   | 19. Validity of Traditional and New Selection Methods  
20. Predicting Adaptive Performance | Assessing Work Satisfaction |
| 11   | 21. Applying Fundamental Theories on Organisational Contexts  
22. The Nature of Influence in Organisational Systems | Selection Interview I |
| 12   | 23. Modern Style Theories of Leadership  
24. Modern Contingency Theories of Leadership | Selection Interview II |
| 13   | 25. Modern Trait Theories of Leadership  
26. Work Satisfaction | Selection Interview III |

Earlier editions (the library has plenty) are pretty good, but tend to focus on psychological tests that have become somewhat outdated.

REFERENCES


