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

Credit Point Value: 4 Credit Points

Qualifying: 8 credit points of Second Year Psychology including PSYC 2112 and PSYC 2114

Assessment: Classwork: Tutorial Quiz, worth 20% of unit total.
Covering the first part of the course (Week 6).
1,500 word Report, worth 30% of unit total
Due Date: Before 4pm Monday, 11 October (Week 11)

Examination: 30% multiple choice and 20% short answer, worth 50% 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). 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) will also be taught. Topics covered in the Organisational Psychology component include job selection, performance management and appraisal, job satisfaction, and work motivation.

Teaching outcomes:
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The following are a list of projected teaching outcomes. The course is designed to be interesting, 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, evaluate, and apply basic psychometric principles, and to especially understand the concepts of reliability and validity.

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

4. 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.

5. Demonstrate the ability to describe, explain, and evaluate the general aspects of the underlying theories of personality, intelligence, interests, attitudes, aptitudes and the role that theories play in Psychological Assessment.

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

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

8. Awareness of the general nature of Organisational Psychology.

9. Demonstrate an understanding of the role of job and task analysis in selection.

10. Demonstrate a knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of interviewing and the ability to apply these to the design of structured behavioural interviews.

11. Demonstrate an ability to describe, evaluate and apply psychological models of job satisfaction and work commitment and related methods of assessment, in organisational settings.

12. Demonstrate an understanding of work motivation and the effect of job design/enrichment approaches.

13. 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, a tutorial quiz, 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 5 general topics listed below (the final order may change).

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1. Introduction to Psychological Assessment
Conceptual Definitions of ‘psychological test’, ‘assessment’, etc. and consideration of the many uses (and abuses) of psychological tests. General principles for administering a psychological test. Ethical considerations in psychological testing and introduction to guidelines for critiquing of psychological tests.

2. Introduction to Psychometrics and Test Development
The concepts of reliability and validity, and how these are crucial in psychological assessment (the approach adopted here will be mostly a ‘hands-on’ approach to psychometric issues). Issues related to comparability of test scores including scaling, norming, and equating procedures. Conceptual introduction to different approaches to test development (e.g., factor analysis) and the analysis of item response patterns.

3. The Varieties of Psychological Assessment: Ability and Personality Testing
   **Ability:** Consideration of some of the core concepts underlying ability testing. A brief review of theoretical and empirical issues pertinent to the concept of intelligence. Consider issues related to individual ability tests (e.g., Wechsler Scales, Stanford-Binet). Advantages and disadvantages associated with group testing.

   **Personality:** Consideration of the core concepts underlying personality testing. The re-emergence of trait models in the study of personality. Review of ‘Objective’ vs. ‘projective’ personality assessment techniques. Issues associated with self report inventories. Test-taking attitudes and response bias.

   **Psycho-Educational:** Psycho-educational assessment and dynamic assessment. Consideration of issues associated with special populations including ones with various disabilities.

4. Organisational Psychology
Overview of the theory and practices of Organizational Psychology. The role of job analysis and consideration of various models and measures of job performance. Consideration of selection research and the underlying theories. Conceptualizing and assessing job satisfaction, work commitment and motivation. Consideration of issues related to stress and burnout, teams and leadership, and training.

5. Advanced Issues
Consideration of a variety of testing-related issues associated with bias, fairness. Ethical responsibilities and social impact of assessment.

TEXT


(This is an abbreviated version of the full text, but gives the main relevant information (at considerably less cost, than the full version. If students wish to read more detailed accounts, they are directed to any number of books on psychological testing, examples of which are listed in the recommended references section below, or to the full text version of Murphy & Davidshofer)
## TIMETABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lectures</th>
<th>Lecturer</th>
<th>Tutorials</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1  Introduction and Definitions</td>
<td>DB</td>
<td>No Tutorials</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2  Selected History of Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3  Psychometrics I: Reliability</td>
<td>DB</td>
<td>Construct Validation Project: Test Administration</td>
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<td>4  Psychometrics II: Reliability and Validity</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>5  Psychometrics III: Evaluation of Validity</td>
<td>DB</td>
<td>Test Evaluation Principles</td>
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<td>6  Test Development I: Factor Analysis &amp; Theory Testing</td>
<td>DB</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>7  Test Development II: FA &amp; Item Analysis</td>
<td>DB</td>
<td>Factor Analysis and Item Statistics</td>
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<td>8  Test Development III: Item Analysis</td>
<td>DB</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>9  Ability Assessment I: Conceptualizing ability</td>
<td>DB</td>
<td>Ability Assessments</td>
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<td>10 Ability Assessment II: Cognitive Assessment tools</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>11 Personality Assessment I: Conceptualizing personality</td>
<td>DB</td>
<td>QUIZ (based on weeks 1 to 4)</td>
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<td>12 Personality Assessment II: Objective &amp; Projective tests</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>13 Psycho-Educational Assessment: Dynamic assessment</td>
<td>DB</td>
<td>Personality Assessments</td>
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<td>14 Psycho-Educational Assessment: Dynamic assessment</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>15 Organisational Psychology Overview &amp; Job Analysis</td>
<td>BG/HP</td>
<td>Dynamic Assessments</td>
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<td>16 Job Performance</td>
<td>BG</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>17 Selection: Validity of Cognitive ability &amp; Personality</td>
<td>BG</td>
<td>Selection Interview I</td>
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<td>18 Selection: Validity of Other Measures &amp; Approaches</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>-  NO LECTURE --- Labour Day Holiday</td>
<td>BG/HP</td>
<td>Selection Interview II</td>
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<td>19 Training I</td>
<td>HP</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>20 Training II</td>
<td>HP</td>
<td>Selection Interview III (Assignment Due)</td>
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<td>21 Work Attitudes: Job Satisfaction and Commitment</td>
<td>BG</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>22 Work Motivation: Need Theories, Goal Setting, Job Design</td>
<td>BG</td>
<td>Training</td>
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<td>23 Stress &amp; Burnout</td>
<td>BG/HP</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>24 Teams and Leadership</td>
<td>HP</td>
<td>Special Populations and Ethics</td>
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<td>25 Ethics and Revision</td>
<td>DB</td>
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*Specific readings will be provided in the lectures; There may be slight changes to this outline based on how the course progresses and test availability*
RECOMMENDED REFERENCES

*Psychological Testing:*


*Cognitive Abilities / Dynamic Assessment*


*Personality/Interests/Motivations*


*Organizational Psychology*


*Ethics*


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