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# PSYX 587.01: School Psychology Methods

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**PSYX 587 School Psychology Methods**  
**Spring 2014**  
**Wednesday 12:10 – 2:00P.M. – SB 303**

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**Course Objectives**

School Psychology Methods is designed to provide students with authentic clinical experiences in a school setting. The practicum provides opportunities for students to practice the skills they are learning or have learned in classes, and to begin to engage in the professional activities of a school psychologist. Students will develop a better understanding of schools, educational staff, and students, as well as the roles and functions of school psychologists.

The first year practicum is very much an opportunity to learn about the school psychological profession. You are expected to be novices in the areas of professional practice targeted in the coursework. The practicum is intended to be a safe, positive environment under the supervision of the field supervisor, TA, and course instructor. The activities and course assignments are coordinated so that students have the opportunity to complete course assignments in the practicum site. However, opportunities for assessment will vary depending on your skill development and your field supervisor's assessment schedule and activities at the site. Please pre-plan carefully with your field supervisor to insure that you will be able to meet the requirements.

Students will spend time with their field supervisor completing professional activities. At the beginning of the practicum, students' experiences typically consist of "shadowing" their supervising school psychologist to become familiar with the responsibilities and job description of the psychologist. Students also immediately implement their skills in primary prevention, curriculum-based evaluations, academic interventions, and student progress monitoring. Over the course of the semester, the student is given increasing responsibilities and practice in specific skills such as conducting standardized academic assessments, conducting clinical interviews, classroom observations, and writing reports. Practicum students are expected to be closely supervised. The appropriate degree of autonomy given to students is left to the discretion of the supervisor and instructors.

The practicum seminar is designed to accompany the field component of the School Psychology Methods by providing students with a forum to discuss critical issues of practice in a community

of scholars and practitioners. We will be using the class as a site to integrate your coursework and field experiences, to examine your development as a professional, and to discuss emerging issues of practice. You will receive direct and indirect supervision of your practicum experience in this class in addition to that provided by the field-based supervisor.

You are expected to attend their practicum site for the equivalent of one full day (at least 6 hours) during the spring semester. Please reserve 2-4 hours weekly to conduct class assignments in the field setting, the remainder of your time will be spent working directly with your field supervisor. Please note that your supervisor may not be in the building the entire day that you are there. Additional time in the site may be required to complete course expectations. It is occasionally necessary to temporarily withdraw students from the practicum placement if problems arise due to the students' progress or to unforeseen circumstances at the practicum site. If this should occur, I will consult immediately with the student and the field supervisor to develop a plan to reestablish the practicum as soon as is feasible.

In the practicum, students will acquire knowledge and practice of (a) methods to assess academic problems within the school and classroom setting, (b) strategies for interpreting assessment data, (c) intervention strategies for addressing academic problems (d) methods for selecting and delivering interventions, (e) evaluating the effectiveness of interventions and modifying them as needed, (f) communicating results and recommendations in writing and orally.

#### NASP Domains of Practice

Domain 1: Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability

Domain 2: Consultation and Collaboration

Domain 3: Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills

Domain 5: School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning

Domain 6: Preventive and Responsive Services

Domain 8: Diversity in Development and Learning

Domain 9: Research and Program Evaluation

Domain 10: Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice

#### Corresponding Program Competencies and Objectives

##### Competency 1. Psychological and Educational Foundations of School Psychology

- Students will learn how to diagnose learning disorders using both special education classification systems and given an understanding of what constitutes normal development at different ages.
- Students will learn how to administer, score, and interpret various measures of educational achievement.
- Students will learn how to integrate various components of a psychoeducational evaluation.
- Students will learn how to make specific and appropriate recommendations and/or referrals given the unique characteristics, culture, and factors related to the student.

##### Competency 2. Psychometrics, measurement and research.

- Students will learn to evaluate test and survey instruments for psychometric properties.
- Students will select and administer appropriate psychoeducational instruments.

- Students will learn to interpret and communicate assessment results in both written and verbal forms to school interdisciplinary team members, the student and the student's family.
- Students will learn to evaluate and utilize research to inform and guide professional practice.

#### Competency 3. Methods of school-based intervention.

- Students will use problem-solving methods to develop and implement empirically supported intervention procedures including psychoeducational interventions.
- Students will design and deliver empirically supported preventative practices at the idiographic level.
- Students will learn to select appropriate progress monitoring measure to evaluate intervention progress and outcomes.
- Students will learn to communicate and interpret intervention outcomes in both written and verbal forms in school interdisciplinary team members, the student, and the student's family.

#### Competency 4. Professional school psychology

- Students will learn to utilize special education laws and eligibility criteria for the purpose of assuring a free, appropriate public education.
- Students will learn to have an understanding of, and ability to practice within legal and ethical responsibilities related to the provision of school psychological services.
- Students will have an understanding and awareness of multicultural issues and their impact on student performance as well as the school psychologist-client relationship.
- Students will learn to understand the need for cultural competence and awareness.

### **Course Policies and Procedures**

#### Academic Honesty and Integrity

As students entering the field of school psychology, I expect a high standard of academic integrity. Students are expected to perform to the utmost of their ability in an honest and ethical manner. The University of Montana Student Conduct Code (SCC) should be reviewed, especially in regards to plagiarism. It is the policy of the SPSY program that plagiarism will result in an "F" for the course in which the academic violation occurs as well as grounds for consideration of dismissal from the program. The SCC can be accessed either on line (UM Homepage, A-Z Index, select "S", scroll down to "Student Conduct Code") or in the UM Catalog, page. 22.

#### Professionalism

I expect all students to behave with the highest standard of professionalism, both during class and in your practicum site. As a school psychologist in-training, you represent the university as well as the field. Keep in mind that how you dress and behave makes an impression of you as a professional. Consequently, please wear professional clothing during your practicum setting and act in a manner that highlights your knowledge and expertise.

#### Accommodations for Disabilities:

It is my strong desire to fully include all students in this course. Please discuss any desired accommodations with me as soon as possible. I require documentation of any disabling condition prior to providing substantive accommodations (those that involve changes to

deadlines, activities, or products) in this course. Students have the responsibility to arrange for such accommodations with Disability Services for Students (DSS). Please refer to the UM Catalog, page 334.

### Attendance and Active Engagement

Attendance is highly encouraged since student's course grades are partially determined by participation in class discussions and activities. Moreover, missing a class can substantially affect students' depth of understanding. Please inform me prior to class if a late arrival or early departure from class is absolutely necessary. An excused absence will be granted only in a *documented* emergency situation.

### Religious Observance

Please notify me in advance if you will be absent from class for religious observances.

### Incompletes and Make-Up Procedures

Incompletes will be given under limited circumstances (e.g., personal situations, illness). Make-up procedures must be arranged immediately with me. It is my intention to facilitate your success in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me regarding potential barriers to this goal.

### Electronic Devices

Electronic devices (such as cell phones, I-pods, mp3s, etc.) must be turned off and put away before class. I encourage the use of computers during class to take notes or to use electronic articles and PowerPoints. However, the use of computers for personal reasons during class is inappropriate and disrespectful to other students and to me. I will speak with you if I feel that your use of computers is detracting from your learning and will use discretion in reducing grades for those students who are using computers in a disrespectful manner when class is in session.

### Commitment to Multiculturalism

I am committed to creating an environment in which individuals' diversity and opinions are respected. I strive to integrate multicultural and diversity issues in my courses in ways that is relevant to course content and process. I hope students will contribute their unique perspectives to this effort by considering and raising issues related to multiculturalism and diversity—and respecting others' outlooks throughout this course

### “People First” Language

Students are expected to use appropriate, “people first” language in class discussions and written work. People with disabilities are just that: people who happen to have physical, sensory, behavioral, or intellectual disabilities. Please avoid phrases like “the handicapped,” “autistic kids,” “severely retarded,” or other statements that highlight the disability rather than the individual. Instead, speak and write in a way that puts “people first,” for example, “the student with a severe disability,” “the program for students with behavior disorders.” This small change emphasizes the humanity and individuality of the person and clarifies that disability is only one of many characteristics (and not necessarily the most important!) that people can possess.

## Required Texts

Jacob, S., Decker, D. & Hartshorn, T.S. (2010). *Ethics and Law for School Psychologists* (6<sup>th</sup> Ed.) Hoboken, N.J. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

*Best Practices in School Psychology V* (2008). Thomas, A. & Grimes, J. (Eds.). Bethesda MD: National Association of School Psychologists (NASP).

## Course Requirements

Your performance in the field will be evaluated conjointly by your field supervisor, the teaching assistant (TA) and the instructor of the course.

### 1. Practicum Goals, Self-Assessment, and Professional Development Plan (10 points)

At the beginning of the semester, you will prepare a statement of the specific learning goals (and documentation or a plan of how to achieve these goals) you have for your practicum. These goals and plan will be discussed at the first individual conference. We will refer to these objectives throughout the semester to assist in the supervision of your experience.

You will reflect about your experience at your practicum site at the middle and end of the semester. You will reflect on your experiences with assessment, intervention and consultation as outlined on the *Reflections on Practicum Experience* guideline (see Appendix). Your reflections will be used by your university-based supervisors as feedback about your development as a professional. Specific topics that need further development will be identified for discussion in practicum seminar.

Finally, you will complete practicum hour logs to document your training experience. You will obtain your on-site supervisor's signature to each. The logs will be returned to you for inclusion in your professional portfolio.

### 2. Curriculum-based Evaluation Case Report & Presentation (90 points)

At your practicum site you will complete a curriculum-based evaluation (CBE) for a student identified as being in need of additional academic support. Students will secure a child/adolescent (ages 6-17) via parent consent for the purpose of administering assessments. This will involve identifying a target area of need, conducting a problem analysis, setting an appropriate goal, selecting a potentially highly effective intervention, implementing the intervention, monitoring progress, and evaluating the effects of the intervention. The plan must incorporate best practices in school-based intervention by including an appropriate goal, address issues of social validity, treatment integrity, and generalization and maintenance, a plan for progress monitoring, and outcome evaluation plan. Further information will be provided on how to complete this assignment and a rubric is provided in the appendix.

I expect that you will meet individually by appointment with me, your practicum supervisor, and course teaching assistant to clarify or gain more insight into the activities as needed. Activities to be completed at your practicum site will be pre-approved by your practicum site supervisors in conjunction with the university practicum supervisor.

### 3. Clinical Evaluation (30 points)

The following criteria will be used in clinical evaluations:

- Maintaining a professional demeanor and appearance in the field site
- Attendance and promptness in the field site
- Meeting deadlines and responsibilities in the field site
- Effective communication with field supervisors
- Effective interactions with teachers, children, parents and other school staff
- Maintaining confidentiality of all testing materials and files
- Protecting the confidentiality of individuals involved in testing and other professional activities
- Participation in and openness to receiving supervision

You will use the Practicum Student Performance Evaluation Form to obtain evaluative feedback from your on-site supervisor and discuss that information with your university-based supervisor. A copy will be provided to you for discussion and to retain in your professional portfolio.

You will use the Practicum Student Consumer of Services Performance Evaluation form, to obtain evaluative feedback from a consumer of your services during the semester. This person may be a general or special education teacher, a principal, a parent(s), etc., and should be someone who has had the most experience with you in your role as a school psychologist.

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Points</u>
Practicum Goals, Self-Assessment & Professional Plan	10
Curriculum-based Evaluation Case Report	60
Curriculum-based Evaluation Case Presentation	30
Clinical Evaluation	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>130</b>

### **Other Course Activities**

#### Activity Log

Documenting your practicum experience is important in planning your professional development as well as for applying for professional credentials. You should regularly keep a log of your hours (including supervision hours), activities, cases, workshops, client characteristics (e.g., age, disability, referral type), assessment tools used, and interventions conducted. You may use the format of your choice.

#### Consultation Time

Please feel free to contact the instructors or TA to consult about your practicum experiences and/or your progress in the course assignments.

### Course Schedule

The course schedule is subject to minor adjustments, as determined by the instructor.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
Jan. 29	Course Orientation/Syllabus Review Introduction to clinical expectations Classroom observation skills	BP Ch 101	
Feb. 5	Interviewing Skills	Rhodes (2005) BP Ch 102 McConaughy (2005)	Practicum Goals, Self-Assessment, & Professional Development Plan due
Feb. 12	Ethical issues in schools File reviews & background information	Jacob & Hartshorne (2006) Ch 3 & 4 Burns, Jacob, & Wagner (2008)	Schedule individual supervision with TA and Dr. Goforth
Feb. 19	No Class-NASP		
Feb. 26	Case Reviews		
Mar 5	Case Reviews		
Mar. 12	Report Writing Providing feedback 1	Kamphaus Ch 17 BP Ch 134 & 135	Part 1 of CBE case due
Mar 19	Interpretation of assessment data; Clinical observation of testing behavior & writing observation findings	BP 10	
Mar 26	Writing recommendations  Guest lecture: Dr. Lindsey Nichols	BP Ch 21  Readings TBA	Mid-semester goal update and reflection due  Individual Supervision with Dr. Goforth
Apr 2	NO CLASS-Spring Break		



Apr 9	Integrating data from assessments Multicultural Issues 1	Serving ELL with Disabilities Ch 4 & 7 BP Ch 108	Part 2 of CBE case due
Apr 16	Accommodation, differentiation of academic instruction	BP 36 Bolt & Roach (2009) Jacob & Hartshorne Ch 5 & 6	
Apr 23	Multicultural Issues II	BP 93 Serving ELL with Disabilities Ch 8 & 11	
April 30	Curriculum-based Evaluation Presentations (2 students)		Final version of CBE due
May 7	Curriculum-based Evaluation Presentations (3 students)		End-of-Semester Reflections & Practicum Logs due  Supervisor & Consumer Evaluations due

## Course Readings

- Bolt, S. E., & Roach, A. T. (2009). Testing accommodations for students with disabilities *Inclusive assessment and accountability: A guide to accommodations for students with diverse needs*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Burns, M. K., Jacob, S., & Wagner, A. R. (2008). Ethical and legal issues associated with using response-to-intervention to assess learning disabilities. *Journal of School Psychology, 46*, 263-279. doi: 10.1016/j.jsp.2007.06.001
- Illinois State Board of Education. (2002). Serving English Language Learners with Disabilities: A Resource Manual for Illinois Educators.
- Kamphaus, R. W., & Frick, P. J. (2005). Report writing *Clinical assessment of child and adolescent personality and behavior*. New York: Springer.
- McConaughy, S.H. (2005). Parent Interviews. In McConaughy (Ed.), *Clinical Interviews for Children and Adolescents*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- McConaughy, S.H. (2005). Teacher Interviews. In McConaughy (Ed.), *Clinical Interviews for Children and Adolescents*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Rhodes, R. L. (2005). The interview process: Practical guidelines. In R. L. Rhodes, S. H. Ochoa & S. O. Ortiz (Eds.), *Assessing culturally and linguistically diverse students: A practical guide*. New York: The Guilford Press.

## Appendix A

### Curriculum-based Evaluation Case

A curriculum-based evaluation is a decision-making framework for considering the assumed causes of the problem, validating the hypotheses, and linking results to teaching recommendations. For this assignment, you will complete a full, in-depth curriculum-based evaluation at your practicum site.

You will meet with your field-based supervisor to discuss possible students (age 6-17) who have been identified as being in need of additional academic support. You will obtain parent consent as well as teacher assent for the purpose of administering assessments. You will identify a target area of need, conduct a problem analysis, set appropriate goal(s), select a potentially highly effective intervention, implement the intervention, monitor progress, and evaluating the effects of the intervention. The plan must incorporate best practices in school-based intervention by including an appropriate goal, address issues of social validity, fidelity (treatment integrity) and generalization and maintenance, a plan for progress monitoring, and outcome evaluation plan.

**Report.** You will provide a written report of your CBE case. The report must be typed using Times New Roman, 12-font. When appropriate, APA-style formatting is required. I expect that the report be written using clear, concise language with no grammatical or spelling errors. Please submit the report in a 3-ring binder and include previous versions as you submit each part. The required sections that *must* be included in the report are below.

1. Referral Problem
  - a. Assessment Procedures (e.g., RIOT)
2. Cumulative Folder Review
3. Interviews
  - a. Teacher
  - b. Parent
  - c. Student
4. Curriculum Description
  - a. Description of general education (i.e., Tier I) curriculum, including evidence-base for curriculum.
  - b. If applicable, description of special education curriculum
5. Observation of Student Behavior
  - a. Clear, operational definition of behavior
  - b. Systematic observation of behavior compared to same-age, same-sex peer (e.g., momentary time sampling)
  - c. Summary of behavior in context of classroom environment
6. Curriculum-Based Assessment
  - a. Problem Definition

- i. Clear, operational definition
  - b. Current functioning and instructional level
  - c. Consideration of individual & cultural factors
- 7. Intervention Plan
  - a. Goal
    - i. Specific and operationalized
    - ii. Provide justification for goal (e.g., realistic vs ambitious goals)
  - b. Intervention Description
    - i. Summarize research-base for intervention
    - ii. Provide justification for choosing the intervention
    - iii. Describe implementation steps
    - iv. Describe any modifications made to the intervention and provide justification
- 8. Progress-Monitoring
  - a. Description of progress-monitoring procedures
  - b. Clear presentation of data (tables and/or graphs)
- 9. Intervention Evaluation
  - a. Describe intervention fidelity and modifications
  - b. Provide evidence of social validity
  - c. Summarize intervention effectiveness
- 10. Recommendations
  - a. Provide list of recommendations
    - i. Written in a “teacher-friendly” language
    - ii. One page step-by-step description that teachers could use in future
- 11. Reflection on CBE (2-3 pages)

The curriculum-based evaluation report will be completed in 3 parts. Please look on the syllabus for the specific deadlines for each part.

### **Part 1**

- Referral Problem
- Cumulative folder review
- Interviews (teacher, parent & student)
- Curriculum description
- Observation of student behavior

### **Part 2**

- Revisions of Part 1
- Curriculum-based Assessment
- Intervention Plan

- Progress-monitoring

**Part 3**

- Revisions of Parts 1 & 2
- Intervention evaluation
- Recommendations
- Overall reflection

**Presentation.** In addition to the written report of the curriculum-based evaluation, you will present your case to your colleagues. The presentation should be 15 minutes with 5 minutes for Q&A. Your presentation should follow the structure of the written-report.

You will be evaluated on:

- Summary of problem analysis and problem definition
- Description of intervention and intervention effectiveness
- Clarity of progress monitoring graphs
- Clarity and organization of presentation
- Ability to stay within time-limits

Your colleagues will also provide written feedback about your presentation and case.

## Appendix B Professional Goals

The University of Montana  
School Psychology Program  
Professional Goals for Practicum Experience  
Spring 2014

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Practicum site: \_\_\_\_\_

Practicum supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please reflect upon your current skills, knowledge and competencies. Then, develop and write concrete, observable, and measurable goals for your professional development this semester under each of these categories (you can have multiple goals under each category). You will review your goals with your university- and field-based supervisors.*

Sample Goals:

- By December 5, 2013, I will administer one child assessment under the supervision of Mary Finnegan.
- By December 5, 2013, I will speak to at least one parent about the needs of their child with a disability and will use appropriate non-verbal and verbal communication (e.g., speak clearly, make eye contact).

### Part 1: Reflection on Strengths and Weaknesses

### Part 2: Professional Goals

1. Goal for Assessments
2. Goals for Intervention
3. Goals for Professional Collaboration or Consultation
4. Goals for Legal, Ethical, and Professional Performance
5. Goals for Promotion and Awareness of Diversity

**Appendix C**  
**Reflection on Practicum Experience**

The University of Montana  
School Psychology Program  
Reflections on Practicum Experience  
Spring 2014

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Practicum site: \_\_\_\_\_ Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Practicum supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Please reflect about your experience at your practicum site in relation to the following areas.

I. The Educational Process.

II. Assessment for interventions. This may include observation, interviews, records reviews, standardized measures, and alternative assessment (CBM). Include your experiences with diverse populations

- III. Direct intervention services. Include your experiences with diverse populations
- IV. Consultation (teachers, parents, students, administrators.) Include your experiences with diverse populations.
- V. Parent-School Relationships: What experiences have you had working with parents? How has this added to your knowledge on the parent/family perspective of their child?
- VI. Professional development: Personal reflections about development of your role as a school psychologist.



VI. Self Assessment and Goal Statements:

(a) Describe the one professional task you did best and are most pleased about this semester

(b) Describe and discuss the one professional task you felt the *least* prepared to handle.

(c) What training or professional goals would you like to address in the future?

VII. What would you like more information about?