

**George Mason University, Clinical Psychology**  
**Comprehensive Assessment Practicum (PSY792)**

*Fall 2023 Syllabus*

**Professor:** Danielle Dufresne, PsyD  
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**Office:** Center for Psychological Services, Democracy Lane (new address later in fall)

**Class Meetings:** Friday 12:00-1:00pm (Zoom).

This is the first semester of a two-semester sequence and is required for 2<sup>nd</sup> year doctoral students in Clinical Psychology. The goals of the course are to help students learn advanced techniques in psychological and educational assessments and to further develop a variety of profession-wide competencies. These goals will be met through weekly group supervision meetings in which active clinical cases will be reviewed, in addition to individual meetings throughout the semester as needed and as prompted by the student or professor. Suggested readings may also be provided, and the students will be required to do independent scholarly research that relates to their cases/clients to further explore and inform issues related to diagnosis, presentation, and/or support.

***Global Expectations:***

- a. By the conclusion of the training experience, the supervisee is expected to demonstrate competency in the assessment and diagnosis of emotional and behavioral difficulties, learning challenges, and/or developmental delays in children, adolescents, and adults. This includes:
  - a. Competency in selection of assessment measures and administration and scoring proficiency and accuracy that draws upon the available empirical literature to reflect psychometric properties. Interpretation of assessment
  - b. Interpretation of assessment results, also following current research and professional standards to inform case conceptualization, diagnosis, and recommendations, while guarding against decision-making bias.
  - c. Communicating results via written report and verbal feedback.
  - d. Effective communication with third parties, such as primary care providers (e.g., pediatricians), psychiatrists, and teachers, in order to serve the best interest of client and collect information about their presentation across settings to assist in case conceptualization, diagnosis, and treatment.
- b. Demonstrate clinical judgement commensurate with developmental level.
- c. Accurately assess risk related to child abuse, elder abuse, suicidal ideation/behavior and homicidal ideation/behavior and report to supervisors and protective agencies appropriately.
- d. Manage any potential ethical, legal, or interdisciplinary difficulties competently, with supervisory support.
- e. Engage in respectful and professional behavior that adheres to program rules and regulations.
- f. Demonstrate respect of individual and cultural differences.

- g. Each supervisee's developmental clinical level, training goals, and professional goals will be considered when assigning clients and providing feedback and suggestions within supervision. While they will be considered, guarantees about cases or clients cannot be made.
- h. Moreover, general expectations include maintaining the client's file and records in a manner consistent with legal and ethical expectations set forth by governing bodies (e.g., APA) and the Center for Community Mental Health (e.g., filing test records, submitting materials for protocol checking, completing clinical notes for all contacts within 24 hours, completing invoice for services, completing day sheet, closing files in a timely manner).
  - a. **Of note, no materials are allowed to leave the Center – this includes testing protocols, test measures/kits, and client files.**

### ***Course Requirements and Assignments/Due Dates:***

- Course expectations include the completion of one comprehensive assessment (CA) – including interview, testing, scoring, interpretation, a written report, verbal feedback to the client, progress notes associated with appointments, day sheet entries for appointments, and participation in supervision.
  - 1. Overall, expectations of the GMU Center for Community Mental Health (CCMH) and George Mason University Clinical Psychology Program includes the completion of three comprehensive assessments. This includes evaluation of one adult (18+ years of age), one child/adolescent, and one case with an age-group of your choice.
    - *Note that the first of these three evaluations are typically completed in the PSYC811 class under supervision of that instructor; your second case is completed during the fall semester of this class and the third is completed in the spring semester of this course.*
  - 2. Satisfactory completion of these cases includes active participation in supervision, review and successful administration of various testing measures based on referral and concerns, successful development of the associated comprehensive report at an appropriate developmental level, the provision of feedback to the client and/or family, and the administrative closing of the client file.
- Please review associated documents available in the MESA drive for details regarding procedures, guides and timelines (e.g., Supervision; CA Procedures and Walkthrough). Should information in these documents conflict with information in the syllabus, the student should contact the instructor for clarity.
  - 1. M:\shared\cps.gradstudent\1. Information 2023-2024\Comprehensive Assessment Resources 2023-24\CA Procedures and Walkthroughs
  - 2. M:\shared\cps.gradstudent\1. Information 2023-2024\Comprehensive Assessment Resources 2023-24\Supervision Information\Dufresne

- *Supervision:* Students are expected to attend and participate in weekly group supervision. Individual supervision may also be scheduled, and the clinician should contact the supervisor to arrange a mutual time to meet.
- *Scheduling and Due Dates:*
  1. In order to support you in managing the assessment process over the course of the semester, please note the following.
    - Request your case by the middle of September.
    - Schedule your Intake (appointment 1), as well as two, 4-hour testing sessions (appointments 2 and 3) upon initial contact with the client.
      - This allows you to manage any scheduling related issues early in the process.
    - Complete the evaluation (see M:\shared\cps.gradstudent\1. Information 2023-2024\Comprehensive Assessment Resources 2023-24\CA Procedures and Walkthroughs for specific guidance and details)
    - During the course of the eval, you should be keeping up on scoring (and submitting to protocol checker) and participating in supervision to guide your assessment.
  2. **An initial draft of the REFERRAL and BACKGROUND SECTION is due to the instructor 1 week following the initial intake interview.**
    - This should be a complete first-draft of these sections as would be submitted with the entire report (i.e., this should not be presented as the clinician's notes, for example, but rather a composed draft covering the client's history – see templates and samples for additional guidance: M:\shared\cps.gradstudent\1. Information 2023-2024\Comprehensive Assessment Resources 2023-24\Templates and Score Conversions\For Dufresne Supervisees).
      - i. This should be emailed to the instructor as a de-identified, password protected document (use Center password). The instructor will make edits and return to the student in the same manner. That draft would then be added to the working report and submitted as part of the full draft (see below).
      - ii. There may be additions to this section (which may require additional interviewing or follow-up)
  3. An initial **FULL DRAFT, is due to the instructor between four and five weeks from the initial intake interview** (i.e., two to three weeks after the background draft is submitted).
    - Of note, testing sessions should be happening in close proximity to each other (i.e., all testing sessions are typically completed within 2 to 3 weeks, depending on if additional days are needed); it should be a rare case in which testing takes longer

than this time and you should be in regular communication with your supervisor about what may be interfering with this timeline.

- Should there need to be a third day of testing, or a session is delayed, be prepared to submit the first full draft within three business days of that session.
  - This draft should be complete and include the background section (which you should edit based on the comments provided by the instructor from the initial submission. Work in track changes only for this section! Other sections – like behavioral obs, tables with comments, summary should NOT be in track changes for this draft), behavioral observations, test results write up (of the instructed parts), summary of findings, recommendations, and complete data tables and associated “specific remarks”.
  - The instructor will make edits to this report and return to the examiner.
4. A **SECOND COMPLETE DRAFT**: Edits/comments will be addressed from the initial full draft (outlined above), and an updated draft should be returned to the instructor within one week of the clinician receiving the initial edits from the instructor. The examiner should work in track changes for any edits they are making in the entirety of this report.
- The supervisor will let the student know if there needs to be another round of edits before finalizing the report, and what the expected turnaround for those edits will be.
5. **FEEDBACK** to the client/family is expected within 8-10 weeks from the initial intake interview, per Center policy (Center Handbook: M:\shared\cps.gradstudent\1. Information 2023-2024\Guides and Manuals\2023-2024 Center Handbook).
- **DO NOT** schedule this appointment until explicitly told to do so by your supervisor
6. Should there be delays, it is the student’s responsibility to communicate this with the instructor so as to develop a mutually agreeable plan and adjusted due dates if necessary.

### *A visual timeline*

<i>Day 1</i>	<i>Day 8</i>	<i>Week 2 &amp; 3</i>	<i>Week 4-5</i>	<i>Week 5-8</i>	<i>Week 8-10</i>
<i>Intake</i>	<i>Complete first draft of referral and background and email to instructor</i>	<i>Testing sessions 1 &amp; 2</i>	<i>Complete first draft of report emailed to supervisor, including edits of background (if provided by instructor)</i>	<i>Edits between examiner and supervisor via email (additional supervision as needed)</i>	<i>Feedback with client to be completed (report finalized)</i>

- ***In sum***, the final assignment consists of a comprehensive, written report generated by the student-clinician using available resources. This also includes providing the client/family verbal feedback, a written report, and an invoice (if appropriate to the case).
  1. (Please consult the MESA drive for templates for the report and invoice:
    - M:\shared\cps.gradstudent\1. Information 2023-2024\Comprehensive Assessment Resources 2023-24\Templates and Score Conversions\For Dufresne Supervisees
    - M:\shared\cps.gradstudent\1. Information 2023-2024\Comprehensive Assessment Resources 2023-24\Invoicing
- Please do not hesitate to contact the professor should you have additional questions or encounter issues related to the assessment process. This may include email communication, a phone-call, and/or scheduled online meetings.

### ***Grading***

- a. You will receive a grade of “Satisfactory” or “Incomplete.”
  - To receive a **“Satisfactory”** grade for this course, you must meet the minimum Competency Benchmarks in Professional Psychology, as outlined in the associated Rating Form (*GMU Readiness for Internship Level Rating Form*).
    - This additionally includes, at minimum, the submission of the complete first draft (Item 3 outlined above in the *Scheduling and Due Dates* section. It is strongly preferred the full report be done by the end of the semester).
  - An **“incomplete”** grade will be posted if the complete, first draft of the written report is not submitted by the end of the semester. (**Please note, this may have an impact on financial supports.**)

### ***Method of Evaluation***

- a. The professor will review supervisee’s clinical notes and written report and offer formal feedback and edits. The supervisor may also review sessions via audio or video tape at their discretion.
- b. Informal feedback will be provided to the supervisee during supervisory sessions and in their report drafts. Formal feedback will be provided in the form of a student evaluation at the end of each semester. Communication regarding student performance in this class will be communicated with the student’s advisor as well as the clinical faculty.
  - It is the faculty’s responsibility to review student progress in all graduate courses to ensure that all students are successfully meeting requirements of the graduate program. This information is shared during faculty end-of-semester student review meetings and earlier should concerns arise regarding the student’s performance.
  - Specific feedback will focus on the supervisee’s demonstrated clinical skills, documentation, ethics, and adherence to Center policies and professionalism broadly.

***Student Learning Outcomes in Profession-Wide Competencies in Professional Values and Attitudes, Individual and Cultural Diversity, Ethical and Legal Standards, Reflective Practice, Relationships, Assessment, Intervention, Consultation and Interprofessional Skills, and Communication and Interpersonal Skills (most or all of these may apply):***

- a. Evidence of integrity, accountability, concern for the welfare of others, professional identity, professional growth, and professional reliability;
- b. Awareness, sensitivity, and skills in working professionally with diverse individuals;
- c. Knowledge and application of ethical, legal, and professional standards and guidelines;
- d. Reflective practice, self-assessment, self-care, and participation in supervision process;
- e. Forms and maintains productive/respectful relationships with clients, colleagues, and supervisors;
- f. Assessment and diagnosis of problems, capabilities, and issues of individuals, groups, and organizations;
- g. Display relationship skills of empathy, warmth, listening, and clear communication;
- h. Use and adapt evidence-based approaches with clients effectively;
- i. Ability to consult effectively with other professionals;
- j. Produce and comprehend oral, nonverbal, and written communications that are informative and well-integrated; demonstrate a thorough grasp of professional language and concepts.

***University Policies and Resources***

- a. Student Responsibilities About Communication: Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communication from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- b. [Honor Code and Academic Honesty](#): You are expected to be familiar with and abide by George Mason University's Honor Code. The Code requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. It is your responsibility to see me if you have questions about these policies. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee.
- c. Students must follow the university policy for [Responsible Use of Computing](#) and registration in [Administrative information](#).
- d. Student services: The University provides a range of services to help you succeed academically and you should make use of these if you think they could benefit you. I also invite you to speak to me (the earlier the better).
- e. [The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs)

to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance. Counseling Center: Student Union I, Room 364, 703-993-2380.

- f. Accommodations: Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the [George Mason University Office of Disability Services \(ODS\)](#) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester.
- g. [The George Mason University Writing Center](#) staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing. University Writing Center: Robinson Hall Room A114, 703-993-1200. The writing center includes assistance for students for whom English is a second language.
- h. [Library](#): Most University Libraries resources are available to you from home. They have a variety of online services.
- i. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- j. [Diversity](#): George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.
- k. [Religious Holidays](#): It is the obligation of students, within the first two weeks of the semester, to provide professors with the dates of major religious holidays on which they will be absent or unable to turn in work due to religious observances.
- l. [Student Privacy](#): All students at Mason control access to their educational records and must give consent before that information is disclosed to any third party, including parents.
- m. Class Cancellation Policy: If class is cancelled, I will notify you by email.
- n. Mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking: As a professor, I am designated as a "Non-confidential Employees" and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center at 703.380.1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services at 703.993.2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703.993.8730 or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).