

Psychology 400 (6 credits) 2007-2008 Clinical Psychology: A Health Profession

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Text: Trull TJ : Clinical Psychology, 7th edition, Thompson Wadsworth, 2005

Overview: The principal objective of this course is to familiarize students with the profession and the field of clinical psychology. Topics to be covered include a history of the field, issues of professional identity, understanding the career path, current issues in the profession, and descriptions of the major activities of clinical psychologists, namely assessment, therapy, research, and consultation. Note that this is a full-year course with an **unpaid Co-Op component**; students learn in the classroom as well as in a community practicum placement.

Course evaluation consists of examinations and a project described below. The weights for each component are:

Term 1	Test 1	20 percent
	Test 2	20 percent
Term 2	Home	20 percent
	Assignment	
	Test 4	20 percent
	Practicum	20 percent
Total		100 percent

Please note that the practicum evaluation accounts for 20 percent and is completed only at the end of the year. The 20 % of marks for the practicum are broken down into 15% derived from the supervisors' evaluation of the clinical or research project involvement, and into 5% for a 5-6 page [double spaced] descriptive summary of the students' clinical or research experience. These 5% require equal portions of a personalized, descriptive account of what the student actually did and an equal portion of integration of this learning experience with material learned in class.

Class project

The purpose of the clinical project is to provide firsthand practical experience in clinical psychology. This feature makes the class a co-op learning environment. In the second half of the course students will be asked to share briefly with their classmates what they are learning in their practicum/project. Students may choose to participate in one of two experiences:

A clinical placement. Here the student will devote about 4 hours per week to work in a community agency. A list will be provided with agencies that have taken one or more of our students in the past. In order to qualify as a proper placement the student should be supervised by a mental health professional (psychologist, counselor, social worker, psychiatric nurse) who can serve as a role model. The student should not just be used as cheap clerical help, and the student should be in contact with individuals who do have problems with mental health. Typical placements in the past have been : Crisis line, behavioral therapist with autistic children, or one-on-one work with a psychiatric patient through the Canadian Mental Health Association.

Students are not limited to work in the agencies on the provided list. It is the students' responsibility to contact the agency and confirm a volunteer placement. Given the short nature of this experience it is **essential that students firm up their placements by the end of September 2007** The instructor will require completion of a form with information about the students placement.

In late March/early April 2008, the agency will be asked to provide a brief evaluation of the student's performance. I do not expect that you have professional clinical skills or expertise at this point in your career. These clinical placements simply provide an opportunity for you to gain relevant experience. The good news is that many previous 400 students have continued in their placements as volunteers once the class has ended and a sizable proportion has been successful in making paid employment out of it. Evaluations are based on behaviors such as being prompt, reliable, attempting to carry out the activities to which you were assigned, and getting along with your coworkers.

B. Research placement. Here, the duty will be to work about 4 hours per week with a **clinical psychology** research project. I will provide a partial list of researchers interested in working with students. The student has the responsibility for contacting the professor and establishing the placement. The research supervisor will also be asked to provide a brief evaluation of the student's efforts. Should it turn out that even a carefully made plan for placement crashes, the student can negotiate with the instructor to write a research paper that would take approximately the same amount of time as any of the placements. This needs to be worked out on a one-on-one basis.

You should take several factors into account in choosing this course rather than PSYC 400 and in selecting option A or B. The first consideration is time. **The placements are time-consuming** and require that you be present usually at the same time every week somewhere in the Vancouver region. If you're not able or

willing to invest this time over and above classroom time, this co-op type course is probably not right for you. We know from experience that the agencies are doing us a big favor by taking in inexperienced students and we realize that the time spent on the practicum is only partially compensated through course marks. Note, however, that for a significant number of my students in the past, this practicum has turned into long-term employment and that alone may be worth the time investment. Your primary reason for choosing this course and a particular placement is to gain unique and relevant experience for your future career. **If you do not have the time or have doubts about your schedule, don't select this course.** Depending on your plans for future training, one of these projects may be more relevant than another and can provide a springboard to graduate training or clinical jobs. The third criterion in helping you make a choice between option A or B relates to past experience. If you already have research experience, then the clinical practicum of course is most complementary, and vice versa. During the month of September we will discuss placements repeatedly in class and you're encouraged to discuss any difficulties with the placements with your instructor.

The home assignment/paper mentioned above is to be a 10-page paper(not counting references), strictly adhering to APA style, 1.5 line-spaced. Details about the paper's content will be given to you in the first class in January 2008; this paper is due Tuesday, February 26, 2008, the first class after Spring Break. You are welcome to turn it in prior to Spring Break.

Correct use of language

There are some unfortunate (and worsening) trends towards incorrect use of terms in Psychology. Please apply the following to all written/spoken communication.

Use of Singular versus Plural for frequently used Psychology terms:

SINGULAR

Criterion
Datum
Index
Practicum
Phenomenon

PLURAL

Criteria
Data
Indices (Indexes has also become acceptable)
Practica
Phenomena

Topic outline and accompanying reading in the textbook

(Chapter numbers are in brackets, the topic-by-week matches are rough estimates and may change)

Week Topic

- 1 History of the profession, professional training, career paths, current issues in the profession (1 – 3)
2-3 Ethics, Social Contribution, Cross-cultural issues, the meaning of classification (3-5)
4 Making judgments, predictions and communicating findings (10)
 Assessment: Interview (6)
5-6 Assessment : Intelligence, Neuropsychology and Forensic (7,15, 19)

Test 1 October 16 Ethics Case and Short Essays

- 7-8 Assessment: Personality (8)
9-10 Assessment : Behavioural and psychophysiological (9)
11-13 Interventions: Techniques vs therapist/ client/ and process variables, therapy outcome research 11)

Test 2 December t.b.a., regular exam period (short essays)

- 14-16 Psychodynamic, humanistic and systems treatments (12,13, 15)
17-19 Behavior Therapy (14)
20 Cognitive Therapy (14)

Test 3 February 26 (homework assignment due)

- 21 Innovative versus “Freak Therapies” (not in book)
22 Stress Management & Hypnosis (not in text)
23 Pharmacological therapies (not in book, handouts will be given)
23 Teaching compliance and dealing with chronic illness behavior (17)
24 Coping with acute medical stress (17)
24 Cardiovascular disease (17)
25 Eating Disorders (not in text)
26 Cancer, AIDS, terminal illness in general (17)

Test 4: Shorts essays, cumulative for Term 2, during regular April exam period