

Behavioral and Emotional Assessment of Children and Adolescents

PSYC – 543A

Spring 2026

Professor: Jeremy Jewell, Ph.D.

Class Location: Alumni Hall 0333

Office: Alumni Hall, Room 0139

Class Times: Thur 12:30 – 3:20 p.m.

Office Hours: 9:30 am to 12:30 pm Thursdays (or by appointment)

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Course Description (3 credit hours)

Behavioral and Emotional Assessment of Children and Adolescents is designed to provide the student with skills and competencies in the measurement, evaluation, and diagnosis of emotional and behavioral problems for children and adolescents to aid in the identification of the exceptional child. A variety of measures will be examined, including rating scales, behavioral observations, functional behavioral assessment, and diagnostic interviews. The course will include discussion of reliability and validity, administration of techniques, integration and interpretation of data, and report writing. An emphasis will also be placed on the link between continuing assessment and intervention related to the identification and instruction of the exceptional child.

Required Texts

1. Chafouleas, S. M., Johnson, A. H., Riley-Tillman, T. C., & Iovino, E. A. (2021). *School-based Behavioral Assessment (Second edition)*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
2. McConaughy, S. H., & Whitcomb, S. A. (2022). *Clinical Interviews for Children and Adolescents: Assessment to Intervention (3rd ed.)*. Guilford Publications.
3. Steege, M. W., Pratt, J. L., Wickerd, G. Guare, R. & Watson, T. S. (2019). *Conducting School-based Functional Behavioral Assessments (Third edition)*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
4. Whitcomb, S. A. (2018). *Behavioral, Social, and Emotional Assessment of Children and Adolescents (Fifth edition)*. New York, NY: Routledge.
5. Other selected readings as assigned.

Classroom Format

Class time will be spent on lecture as well as discussions of the assigned material. In addition, class time will also be spent role-playing therapeutic techniques and viewing student video tapes. The course schedule below lists dates and assigned readings. Since much of the time will be spent in discussion, it is critical that students read assigned material before class so that all students will be able to participate in the learning process. Additionally, students will be expected to maintain a single therapy case to be assigned by their practicum supervisor. Students will meet with their practicum supervisor for supervision of this case.

Course Objectives

By the completion of the course students will gain:

1. Understanding of the purposes, characteristics, strengths and limitations of formal and informal models and methods of assessment for the purposes of data collection.
2. Familiarity with evaluating psychometric properties when selecting assessment methods and applying psychometric theory to the evaluation of assessment materials and techniques.

3. Understanding of the importance of collecting data across environments and incorporating information about students, families, cultures, and communities in assessments, interventions, and evaluation of progress.
4. Understanding of the application of nondiscriminatory evaluation procedures specific to the importance of cultural, linguistic, and other experiential factors when interpreting and using data.
5. Knowledge of effective, data-based decision making, and problem solving skills regarding the use of assessment data to address students' needs, plan interventions, and identify factors that influence learning and behavior in the classroom.
6. Skills related to the use of technology in data-based decisions making to administer, score, and interpret psychological assessment techniques.
7. Skills related to preparing clearly written reports that address referral questions, accurately report data, provide guidance for interventions, and articulate assessment findings in a manner that is understandable for the reader.

Assignments and Final Grades

Assignment	Total Points
Final Exam	100
Assessment Presentation	100
FBA Case Study	150
Practicum Based Behavioral Evaluation Report	150
Total	500

Final grades are as follows:

- A 462 +
- B 420 - 461
- C 387 - 419
- D below 387

Course Requirements

Final Exam – The final exam will consist of short answer and essay items covering content that we discussed in class as well as in the readings throughout the semester.

Assessment Presentation – In pairs, students will give a presentation regarding a narrow band assessment tool that measures specific emotional or behavioral concern. The presentation should cover 1) a description of the measure 2) reliability and validity of the measure 3) sample items and 4) any limitations of the measure. Presentations should last approximately 10-15 minutes (time will be strictly monitored). A power point presentation and handouts for the class. Presentations will be graded on 1) Content (clarity, depth, and breadth) 2) Quality of handouts and presentation and 3) Presentation style.

Functional Behavioral Assessment Case Study – Students will work in pairs to alternate roles as psychologist and parent. The use of AI to enhance the realism of the mock evaluation is permitted if helpful. This assignment develops skills in functional behavioral assessment, data analysis, and report writing. Students will analyze simulation data and synthesize findings into a comprehensive FBA report. Students will be given a general description of the referral concern, and will develop an operational definition, including examples and non-examples, from that initial concern. Students will conduct a mock BAPS-I interview with their partner. The instructor will provide students with ABC data, using some of the forms used in Ch. 8 of the Steege et al. (2019) text. Students will complete the BAPS assessment results form based on the information gathered from the BAPS-I and ABC data, identify their hypotheses about function, and identify areas in need of additional information. Students will write a complete FBA report synthesizing the information obtained from each stage of the FBA, clearly identifying the function(s) of the target behavior and outlining evidence-based interventions that are functionally related to the target behavior.

Practicum Based Behavioral Evaluation - For this assignment, each student will conduct a behavioral evaluation of a child or adolescent at your practicum site (different from the child/adolescent used for the PSYC 537a Counseling course). These are site dependent, please keep continual communication with the instructor to ensure you are meeting the assignment requirements. The evaluation should include data collected from parents and teachers, as applicable, and involve the following methods:

1. **Interviews:** Conduct with the parent, teacher, and/or child/adolescent.
2. **Behavior Rating Scales/Questionnaires:** Use tools like the Conners' Comprehensive Behavior Rating Scale or the Behavioral Assessment System for Children (3rd Edition) for parents and teachers.
3. **Behavior Observations:** Observe the child in a school setting using formal observation methods and tools.
4. **Report Writing:** Write your evaluation components alongside your practicum supervisor to complete their comprehensive report. If permitted by your practicum site, submit a redacted report with your elements highlighted or use the template provided on Bb to share your work. We will discuss these options further in class.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Required Reading	Assignments/Activities
1/15	Theoretical & Ethical Considerations	Whitcomb Ch 1 Chafouleas et al. Ch. 1, 2, & 8	Assessment Presentation & FBA teams Assigned
1/22	Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scales	Chafouleas et al. Ch. 6 Whitcomb Ch 8 & 9 Best Practices (Green) – Chap 14	
1/29	Clinical Interviews	McConaughy & Whitcomb Ch 1-6	
2/5	Eligibility and Diagnosis	Whitcomb Ch. 3 Rosenblatt (1997) Best Practices (Green) – Chap 19	
2/12	Assessing Internalizing Disorders		Student Assessment Presentations
2/19	Assessing Externalizing Disorders		Student Assessment Presentations
2/26	Assessing Externalizing Disorders Cont.		Student Assessment Presentations
3/5	Report Writing: Interpretation & Recommendations	Best Practices (Green) – Chap 13 Video: SPP 91: Writing Assessment Reports People Will Read, Understand, and Remember Video: SPP 170: AI for School Psychologists Video: Prompting in School Psych AI	
3/12	No Class - Spring Break		
3/19	Defining & Observing Behavior	FBA Module 2: Defining Target Behavior Chafouleas et al. Ch. 4 Steege et al. Ch. 8	Receive FBA case referral
3/26	What is behavioral function & functional behavior assessment?	Steege et al. Ch. 1- 4 Best Practices (Green) – Chap 9	
4/2	FBA: Interviews and other indirect methods pt. 1	Chafouleas et al. Ch. 3 Steege et al. Ch. 6, 7, 8	
4/9	FBA: Interviews and other indirect methods pt. 2	FBA Module 3: Record Reviews FBA Module 4: Interviews and Behavior Rating Scales McConaughy & Whitcomb Ch 7 (p.184 – 187)	
4/16	FBA Reports	Steege et al. Ch. 9 & 13 Chafouleas et al. Ch. 7	
4/23	Socially just assessment in a multicultural society	Whitcomb Ch. 2 Hanchon & Allen (2017) Video Part 1 & 2 : Culturally Responsive Problem Solving	FBA Case Study Due
4/30	Final Exam		
5/7	Turn in Practicum Behavioral Evaluation Report		

Course Policies

Communication. All students must have an SIUE email address to participate fully in this course, as email will be used to communicate information regarding assignments, any changes to course structure, and to provide individual student feedback, when necessary.

Class attendance. Perfect class attendance to in person and online meetings is expected, but no student should attend in-person class meetings if they are not feeling well. Any student who is absent due to an emergency should contact the professor as soon as possible regarding the absence, although students remain responsible for any material/assignments missed. In addition, no late work will be accepted without prior arrangements. Repeated absences may result in letter grade deductions. All assignments must be completed to receive a grade in this course.

Academic Engagement. Being engaged in this course includes checking Blackboard regularly, communicating with the instructor about any delays in completing course assignments, being prepared to discuss class readings, and actively participating in course discussions. High quality participation includes allowing ample opportunity for one's peers to participate in all classroom discussions, as well as contributing one's own thoughts and ideas both independently and when called upon to do so.

Assignments. All assignments must be completed to receive a grade in this course. Please be aware that it is completely your responsibility to adhere to all relevant university guidelines related to officially withdrawing from this course.

Late assignments. The instructor reserves the right to determine the appropriate number of points to deduct from work turned in late. Any late work will be subject to an initial point deduction off the total possible points to be earned (10% of the total point value), and subsequent point deductions will be applied for each day that the assignment is not turned in after the due date. Excused absences that occur early in the semester do not excuse tardiness in submitting work later in the semester.

APA Format in Written Work. Students are expected to be familiar and/or to familiarize themselves with APA standards for citations and references, per the *7th edition* of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Please ensure that you have access to this text at any time that you may need it during the semester. A lack of knowledge of appropriate citation and referencing format will not excuse you from point deductions from written assignments or disciplinary action in the case of plagiarism. If you would like additional instruction in the use of APA format, please arrange to speak with me, or seek out the resources described below. Students who require additional assistance in writing in the areas of grammar and/or organization are strongly encouraged to seek out additional assistance from outside sources to assist in improving their ability to revise their written work. University-based services for assisting students with professional writing include the Writing Center (<http://www.siue.edu/IS/WRITING/index.html>), which also provides workshops in APA style.

AI Usage in the Course. AI usage in this course is not allowed in any way except as noted in the FBA Case Study.

Department Policies

The Psychology Department's Policy on Withdrawals and Incompletes

All withdrawals must be completed by the end of the 13th week of classes during fall and spring, and by a similarly late date (i.e., before 82% of class meetings have occurred) in any summer term. Grades that apply to students who initiate a withdrawal and grades that apply when a student fails to officially withdraw within established deadlines are determined by university policy (see <http://www.siue.edu/policies/1j1.shtml>). The

granting of a grade of I (Incomplete) is not automatic. It is available only in cases when a student has completed most of the work required for a class but is prevented by a medical or similar emergency from completing a small portion of the coursework before the deadline for grade submission. An “I” must be approved by the instructor with appropriate documentation provided by the student. If an instructor agrees to give a student an “I”, the instructor will fill out a Memorandum of Incomplete Grade to be kept with the student’s records. If the work is not completed by the time specified on the Memorandum, the student’s grade will be changed from an I to F.

The Psychology Department’s Writing Policy. As a student in this course, you will be expected to display college-level writing, which includes completing course assignments that meet the following basic writing criteria. Specifically, all written assignments completed for this course should include:

- clear transitions from sentence to sentence and idea to idea (e.g., paper is organized/flows well).
- verb tense consistency.
- clear and unambiguous sentences and ideas.
- writing that is free of typos, spelling errors, and major grammatical errors.
- properly formatted citations and references, per the 7th edition of the APA manual.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of basic writing skills but will give you an idea of what we are looking for in our papers. If you feel you need help with your writing, you are encouraged to seek assistance from the writing center on campus (<http://www.siu.edu/is/writing>) or utilize one of the many online resources they have identified to help students (<http://www.siu.edu/is/writing/resources.shtml>). If your graded written assignments fail to meet the basic writing requirements listed above (and any others found to be appropriate by your instructor), the instructor will stop the grading process and return the paper to you (see below for the specific policy for this class). The penalty for unacceptable writing in this class is as follows: if your paper violates any of the above stipulations or is otherwise inconsistent with the stated expectations for a written assignment, it will be returned to you for resubmission, and 25% of the total available points will be deducted.

The Psychology Department’s Policy on Plagiarism. Plagiarism includes presenting someone else’s words without quotation marks (even if you cite the source), presenting someone else’s ideas without citing that source, or presenting one’s own previous work as though it were new. When paraphrasing from another source or your own work, at the very least, the student should change the wording, sentence syntax, and order of ideas presented in the paper. Additionally, you should not submit a paper, or parts of a paper, written to fulfill the requirements of one class for the requirements in another class without prior approval of the current instructor and appropriate citation. Ideally, the student will integrate ideas from multiple sources while providing critical commentary on the topic in a way that clearly identifies whether words and ideas are those of the student or are from another source. Plagiarism is one type of academic misconduct described in SIUE’s Student Academic Code (<http://www.siu.edu/policies/3c2.shtml>). University policy states that “Normally a student who plagiarizes shall receive a grade of F in the course in which the act occurs. The offense shall also be reported to the provost.” (<http://www.siu.edu/policies/1i6.shtml>). The University policy discusses additional academic sanctions including suspension and expulsion from the University. To ensure that you understand how to avoid plagiarism, we encourage you to review the information on plagiarism provided on the Department of Psychology web page at <http://www.siu.edu/education/psychology/plagiarism.shtml>. In addition, it is expressly prohibited for students to work together on, review, or look at each other’s homework, papers, or presentations for this class unless you are told otherwise.

Academic integrity/plagiarism

Students are reminded that the expectations and academic standards outlined in the [Student Academic Code \(3C2\)](#) apply to all courses, field experiences and educational experiences at the University, regardless of modality or location. Plagiarism is the use of another person’s words or ideas without crediting that person. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and may lead to failure on an assignment, in the class, or

dismissal from the University, per the [SIUE academic dishonesty policy](#). Students are responsible for complying with University policies about academic honesty as stated in the [University's Student Academic Conduct Code](#).

University Policies and Information

University policies and guidance that address teaching, learning, and student support services are available at: <https://kb.siue.edu/132378> Students are encouraged to visit this resource site for current information on:

- Regular and Substantive Interaction
- Recordings of Class Content
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Pregnancy and Newly Parenting Policy
- Services for Students Needing Accommodations (ACCESS)
- Academic and Other Student Services (Library, Academic Success, Tutoring, etc.)
- Cougar Care
- Student Success Coaches

Subject to change notice

All material, assignments, and deadlines are subject to change with prior notice. It is your responsibility to stay in touch with your instructor, review the course site regularly, or communicate with other students, to adjust as needed if assignments or due dates change.