

DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

COURSE OUTLINE – WINTER 2026

PY4690 (A3): Principles of Psychological Assessment – 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours for 15 Weeks

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

INSTRUCTOR:	Dr. Ali M. AL-Asadi, R.Psych (AB)	PHONE:	780-539-2061
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OFFICE HOURS:	By appointments		

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: This course examines the psychometric assessment tools used in psychology and education. The issues around test construction, administration, and interpretation will be addressed. Measurement techniques, personality and situational factors that may influence the results and the use of psychological and educational tests in the decision making process and diagnosis will also be discussed. In addition, special attention will be given to the assessment of children and adults, minorities and those with special needs, and the use of assessment in career counselling. The ethical and the legal implication of the use of psychological tests will also be covered. Students will be introduced to several instruments that measure aptitude, achievement, interest, intelligence, and personality (objective and projective).

PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE: Complete the following:

PY3330 - Personality (3) or permission of the instructor

REQUIRED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS:

- Wright, A. J. (2020). Conducting Psychological Assessment: A Guide for Practitioners, Wiley Publishing; and/or Growth-Marnat, G. and Wright, A. J. (2016). Handbook of Psychological Assessment, Wiley Publishing.
- A collection of reading materials, articles, and other resources based on test publishers and Open-Sourced texts is posted on this course's D2L site at:
<https://myclass.nwpolytech.ca/d2l/home>

- Publication Manual of the APA 7th Edition (use this online site: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/apa_changes_7th_edition.html)

DELIVERY MODE(S): On-Campus

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

As a result of taking this course, students will gain the abilities to:

- describe the process involved in test construction and validation
- evaluate psychometric tests using reliability, validity, norms, and standardization
- identify the use of some of the most widely used tests in psychology and education and some of their properties
- describe the various test categories and their use (and abuse) in psychology and education
- critically examine the psychometric properties of some tests and the efficacy and limitation of their use in diagnosis and decision-making
- be able to provide a basic interpretation of some tests and their application in education and counselling
- demonstrate knowledge of the essential legal and ethical aspects of tests used with individuals of different ages in general and individuals from diverse cultural and social backgrounds
- describe the current trends and controversies in the use of educational and psychological tests
- articulate fundamental knowledge and comprehension of major concepts in each personality theory
- discuss and explain how the principles of these personality theories explain the everyday personality characteristics and traits we see in ourselves and others
- identify and incorporate the elements of each personality theory to describe and explain psychological attributes
- apply and evaluate knowledge of the basic elements of each theory to predict future behaviours
- demonstrate a basic level of understanding of various research methods used in scientific investigations of personality research and critically evaluate these methods

TRANSFERABILITY:

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page

<http://transferalberta.alberta.ca/transfer-alberta-search/#/audienceTypeStep>

**** Grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability**

EVALUATIONS:

Essay about an issue in psychological assessment	20%
Test Analysis (PowerPoint Presentation)	20%
Four short exams at 7.5% each	30%
The final Exam is a Research paper, Project, or Case Study	30%
Total:	100%

* The nature, scope, and depth of each assignment will be further discussed in class.

* Remember, all exams may include questions from lectures that may not be covered by the textbook and reading materials.

Research Paper (30% of the grade)

The research essay shall focus on a topic of interest to the student. It may be related to any topics covered in class or the textbook. Examples of research topics include the evolution of psychological assessment, the relationship between assessment and treatment, the use and misuse of psychological tests, the training of students to perform psychological tests, the psychometrics properties of objective and projective tests, the use of psychophysiology tests to augment psychological assessment, the ethical use of psychological tests with a diverse population, and the use of psychological assessment in different settings (school, business, personnel selection, custody evaluation, prison and court-related assessment). Other topics may be considered if a student can show relevance to the field of psychological assessment. The research paper will be based on at least 8 peer-reviewed publications, plus other sources. The paper will be about 3000 words (typed and double-spaced APA style). The word limit does not include a title, abstract, or reference page. Papers must be written and typed in proper and current APA format (7th Edition), 12-point font and approximately a one-inch margin on all sides of the text. Many websites are devoted to the APA writing style (for example, <https://apastyle.apa.org/>). Papers should be checked to ensure correct spelling, grammar, and sentence structure. The grade of the essay will be based on a clear and concise introduction that indicates the overall structure of the essay and the purpose of the work, a concise integrative synthesis of research articles and references while illustrating the ability of critical thinking, a good structure, logical flow and clarity of style, a good conclusion that summarizes the main themes and findings of the work, and the overall presentation of the work and the appropriateness of the selected references.

Presentation

Once your topic is chosen and approved, prepare a 25-30-slide presentation. Each slide should have sufficient content to be informative, but not so much as to make it difficult to read. The presentation should have sufficient details to inform and educate the audience. It should have sufficient depth and breadth to cover the topic justly. Please use superscript numbers (example¹) for in-text citations, and then use these numbers to reference these citations in your last slide(s). Students may be asked to present to the class.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Please note that most universities will not accept your course for transfer credit **IF** your grade is **less than C-**.

Grading Chart*

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines		Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines
A+	4.0	95-100		C+	2.3	66-69
A	4.0	90-94		C	2.0	63-65
A-	3.7	85-89		C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	80-84		D+	1.3	55-59
B	3.0	75-79		D	1.0	50-54
B-	2.7	70-74		F	0.0	00-49

*This grading criterion is specific to this course and differs from the general criteria.

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

*Please note that the dates and the sequence of chapters are tentative and may change.

Dates	Topics	Evaluation
Weeks 1 & 2	Nature, History, & Consequences of Testing Applications and Consequences of Testing The Nature and Uses of Psychological Tests Ethical and Social Implications of Testing History of Psychological Testing The Origins of Psychological Testing	
Weeks 3 & 4	Technical & Methodological Issues Reliability, Norms, and Test Standardization Validity, Test Construction, & Item Response Theory	Exam 1
Weeks 5, 6, & 7	Ability, Cognitive, & Educational Testing Theories, Nature, & Consequences of Intelligence Intelligence, Achievement, & Aptitude Individual Tests of Intelligence Group Tests of Ability and Related Concepts Educational Assessment Testing Special Populations Infant and Preschool Assessment Testing Persons with Disabilities	Exam 2
Weeks 8, 9, & 10	Personality Testing & Assessment Origins of Personality Test Theories and the Measurement of Personality Projective Techniques Structured Personality Assessment Self-Report Inventories Behavioural and Observational Assessment	Essay Due Exam 3
Weeks 11, 12, & 13	Special Topics in Testing A Primer of Neurobiological Concepts Neuropsychological and Medical Assessment Employment and Vocational Assessment Forensic Applications of Assessment Legal Issues in Testing Computerized Assessment and the Future of Testing	Presentation Due Project Due Exam 4
Weeks 14 & 15	Presentations and wrap up	

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Each class's assigned readings and exercises should be completed before attending. As this course depends heavily on discussion, at times practice exercises, and illustrations, attendance at all sessions is required and critical to the student's success in the course. In case of illness or emergency, notify the instructor as soon as possible. If you have difficulty in this course, please contact me immediately for assistance. Please let me know if you would like to discuss any aspect of the course or your aspirations.

You are accountable for attending to the delivered lectures, assigned readings, and any announcements made in class. If you are unable to attend a particular class, it is your responsibility to find out what was missed. For optimal learning and readiness for class participation, you are expected to attend class regularly (no less than 80% attendance) and read the assigned chapters/topics before coming to class on the dates indicated on the timetable, except for the first session. Past course records show that class attendance is highly correlated with the final grade.

If you are unable to write a test or exam at the scheduled time due to illness or an emergency, you should notify me immediately, preferably at least 1 day in advance. A message may be left on my voicemail (780-539-2061) or e-mail (aalasadi@nwpolytech.ca), including a phone number where you may be reached, to arrange an alternative date to write the test, if feasible. Failure to notify the instructor will result in a grade of zero for the missed tests unless proof is presented that you were physically or mentally unable to do so due to a sudden illness, emergency, or unavoidable circumstances beyond the student's control.

All students are expected to display a professional attitude and behaviour in the classroom. This includes reliability, respect for and cooperation with fellow students and the instructor, attention to fellow students' questions and the instructor's response, determination to achieve first-class work while meeting deadlines, and constructive response to criticism.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

Academic Misconduct will not be tolerated. For a more precise definition of academic misconduct and its consequences, refer to the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy available at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/administration/policies/index.html>.

****Note:** all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

Additional Information:

MOST IMPORTANT: Instructors reserve the right to use electronic plagiarism detection services on written assignments. **Instructors also reserve the right to ban the use of any form of electronics (cell phones, Blackberries, iPods, tablets, scanning pens, electronic dictionaries, etc.) during class and exams.**

Cell phones, tablets, notebooks, laptops, and other electronic devices are strictly forbidden in my classes and exams. Also, I use plagiarism and AI detection software for all written assignments and essays. A score greater than 10% on these detectors will result in a mark of 0 on the assignment.

In Addition:

1. The format of each exam will be discussed in class.
2. Exam grades are final, and there is no substitute work for your poor exam grade.
3. The nature and topics of your written paper will be discussed in class
4. It is your responsibility to read each and every chapter and assigned reading (if any) and attend all lectures.
5. Lectures will not always cover the reading materials. Lectures may cover topics and include information not covered in your reading materials. Therefore, you must attend every class, as your exams may include materials from the lectures that are not covered by the reading materials.
6. Students are expected to display a professional attitude and behaviour. These attitudes and behaviours are many and will be discussed in class. Any violation or misconduct may result in dismissal from the class.
7. Talk to me if you have concerns or if you are experiencing difficulties that may have a negative impact on your academic performance.

Please keep this course information sheet for future reference.