INTRODUCTION TO THE RORSCHACH INKBLOT METHOD
WIDENER UNIVERSITY / INSTITUTE FOR GRADUATE CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY
DPSY 513 (FORMERLY DPSY 755) / SECTION B / FALL 2010

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CLASS HOURS:  Tuesdays, 2-5:30pm  (Lecture 2-4:15 / Lab 4:30-5:30, both in Bruce Room 005)

OBJECTIVES:
• To understand the development, psychometric properties, current research findings, and appropriate use of the Rorschach Inkblot Method, primarily using John Exner’s Comprehensive System (CS); also to become aware of the forthcoming Rorschach Performance Assessment System (R-PAS)
• To demonstrate proficiency in conducting standardized Rorschach administration
• To accurately code (i.e., score) Rorschach responses and transform those codes into interpretable data
• To interpret Rorschach data from various sources (e.g., structural variables, behavioral observations, projective content when available), in order to provide an in-depth personality profile of the patient, and also to apply that profile to answer common clinical referral questions
• To communicate test findings in written and verbal forms, using style, language, and organization that is as meaningful, palatable, and directly useful to the recipient as possible
• To apply the Rorschach appropriately to diverse populations, including to understand its strengths and limitations as an assessment tool across age groups, ethnic groups, and cross-nationally
• To synthesize this understanding of the Rorschach (and of personality assessment more generally) with student’s ongoing practicum experiences

NCSPP TRAINING MODEL:  This course will emphasize the following core competencies:
• ASSESSMENT:  The Rorschach is one of the major personality assessment tools in a psychological test battery
• CONSULTATION / EDUCATION:  Education is provided by identifying the kinds of referral questions Rorschach data can address.  Consultation is provided to the client and referral source regarding the test results and their application.
• INTERVENTION:  Effective feedback to the client is the first step in an effective intervention process. Feedback to the referral source, therapist, and others can also enhance intervention.
• DIVERSITY:  Individual differences, demographic factors, and contextual factors all influence Rorschach interpretation and are considered for each case.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

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ADDITIONAL REQUIRED READINGS (each is available on E-Reserve; E-RES password is DPSY513):


ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING: (Subject to change slightly) Date Due % of Total
- Take-Home Write-Up: Applying Assessment/Rorschach to Practicum Sep. 14 10 %
- Take-Home Exam 1: Basic Coding / Structural Summary Oct. 26 20 %
- Take-Home Exam 2: Interpretive Write-Up / Partial Rorschach Nov. 9 20 %
- Take-Home Exam 3: Advanced Coding + Interp / Full Rorschach Dec. 14 35 %
- Homework coding practice Multiple 5 %
- Class attendance and participation N/A 10 %
- Rorschach administration exercise Week of Dec. 7 Pass / Fail
- Extra credit (optional; see details below) Dec. 14 Half letter grade

All assignments will be explained fully as they approach, but feel free to ask for details at any time. Note that all assignments will be take-home and open-book.

Your total raw numerical grade will be converted to a final letter grade for the course, as follows: A 94+ / A- 90-93 / B+ 87-89 / B 84-86 / B- 80-83 / C+ 75-80 / C 70-74 / F <70

EXTRA CREDIT:
Two extra credit options are available. Thoughtful completion of option 1 or 2 will boost your final course grade by one half-letter (e.g., B+ to A-). You cannot earn additional credit by completing both extra credit options.

Option 1: Read The Executioner’s Song and consider Mailer’s portrayal of Gary Gilmore: his internal world (thinking, affect, perceptions of people, etc.) and his behavior. Next, consider Gilmore’s Rorschach findings, as interpreted and discussed in class. Assuming Mailer’s portrayal is fully accurate, write a paper (5+ pages, double-spaced) that discusses how effectively the Rorschach captures Gilmore’s psychological functioning. Be sure to touch on the most relevant Rorschach variables from each cluster, and pay particular attention to areas where the Rorschach findings are especially on- or off-target in assessing Mailer’s Gilmore.
Option 2: Review the available literature applying the Rorschach (CS) to one DSM disorder or clinical condition. Write a paper (5+ pages, double-spaced) that explicitly incorporates at least three sources: at least two must be original research articles; one may be a journal article, book chapter, or comparable source that simply reviews the literature or discusses theoretical concepts. You are encouraged to meet with me when choosing a condition and/or selecting articles. Start your paper by explaining which Rorschach variables you expect to be relevant to assessing your chosen condition. Then, based on your lit review, discuss which variables in fact have/have not been found effective. Comment on the overall usefulness of the Rorschach in assessing your chosen condition.

Test Supplies:
This semester, you will repeatedly find it necessary to use certain test materials: (1) a set of Rorschach inkblots, needed for practicing administration and also helpful during coding; (2) Structural Summary forms, used for tabulating Rorschach scores; and (3) Locations Sheets, used during administration. (Note that you may not duplicate these copyrighted materials.) You are strongly encouraged to purchase a set of inkblots, as well as a “starter set” of 2 Structural Summary forms and 5 Location Sheets. Purchasing these items is not strictly required, but if you choose not to do so, you must have ongoing access to inkblots and the other materials all semester. For our section, I will collect payment and distribute materials on behalf of the Institute, as we will be coordinating a group purchase in order to lower costs and to speed delivery. You must purchase materials no later than Tuesday, September 14 (during one of our class breaks). Payment needs to be via check only, payable to the Institute. Cost is $99 for inkblots only; $7 for the “starter set” only; $105 for inkblots with starter set.

Other Policies, Requests, and Suggestions:
- For convenience’s sake, lecture and lab periods are scheduled back-to-back. Each lecture will include a 15-minute break, and another 15-minute break will precede lab. To prevent wasted class time, I need your help in resuming class punctually. I will re-start promptly after breaks, so please be on time and ready.
- Please buy a 3-ring binder (3/4-inch is best) to hold cases, worksheets, etc. Please bring the binder and the Rorschach workbook to each class, as we will refer to their contents frequently. Also, I encourage you to buy small index tabs, so you can mark the Rorschach workbook for easy page-finding.
- Be aware of two online university resources: Go to the university library’s E-RES page to download each week’s required readings and Powerpoint slides, plus other resources (supplemental readings, sample evaluation reports, etc.). Also, Campus Cruiser offers some potential resources, as we will discuss in class.
- For any short-notice announcements (e.g., emergency class cancellations), I will contact students via group email, using your university-provided addresses. If you do not routinely access that email address, please provide me with your preferred contact information, no later that our first class.
- You will need to devote more time to this course than most doctoral-level courses. This includes not only reading but also practicing Rorschach administration and coding, as well as time-intensive take-home exams.
- Unavoidably, exams are placed toward the semester’s end. Please be pro-active and plan ahead, as needed.
- Notice that class (& lab) participation counts toward your final course grade. Even if your preferred learning style tends to be more passive-receptive, I challenge you to contribute actively to our classes and labs. As a rule of thumb, I would like to hear from you (answering my questions; asking questions; making relevant points) at least once each class. We also need you to be an active contributor to all small-group lab activities.
- Students are encouraged to collaborate on all un-graded assignments. However, for all exams, collaboration of any kind is strictly prohibited. Even minor aspects of these assignments must be completed on your own.
- The greatest threat to Rorschach validity is poor administration. This course will provide as much attention to administration as possible, but it will also be critical for you to practice outside of class. As a rule of thumb, I suggest conducting 5+ practice administrations before taking our pass-fail admin exercise. One caution: Not all people are appropriate to use as practice subjects, as we will discuss in class. Your classmates will be your best resources for practicing admin, but I also encourage you to seek a meeting with one of your lab leaders or myself, as needed, for practice and feedback.
[1] **August 31:**
CLASS: Syllabus & intro to course. Intro to personality and projective assessment.
LAB: Students’ & public’s perceptions of Rorschach (including film clips).

Due [work to be done by this week]: None.
Read [to be read by this week]: None.

[2] **September 7:** *(NOTE: We will be joined by section A students, this week only)*

Due: None.
Read: Exner Volume 1 ch 1-3, 11, 5-6; Lilienfeld et al. (2001); SPA (2005); Masling (2006) -- Italicized readings are from E-RES; Weiner ch 1; Workbook ch 2.

[3] **September 14:**
CLASS: Coding (roughly to end of Determinants).
LAB: Small-group coding: Start Protocol 1 (to end of Determinants only).

Due: WRITE-UP (practicum application)
Read: Workbook ch 3; Volume 1 ch 7.

[4] **September 21:**
CLASS: Coding (roughly to Z-Scores)
LAB: Small-group coding: Protocol 1, revisited (FQ to Z-Scores only).

Due: Coding Protocol 1 (to end of Determinants only).
Read: Workbook ch 4-6; Volume 1 ch 8.

[5] **September 28:**
CLASS: Coding (to end). Overview of Structural Summary. Hand out “Alice” Str.Sum. exercise (due next week).

Due: Coding Protocol 1 (to Z-Scores only).
Read: Workbook ch 7-9; Volume 1 ch 9-10.

[6] **October 5:**

Due: Structural Summary Exercise (“Alice”). Coding Protocol 2.
Read: Workbook ch 1; Volume 1 ch 4, 12-13, 22 (pp523-524 re: S-CON only); Meyer, et al. (2005; NOT 2007); Weiner ch 2-4. Also, handout (R-optimized administration adjustments).

[7] **October 12:**
CLASS: Intro to interpretation (continue, as needed). Cluster interpretation: Controls & Situational Stress.

Due: Coding Protocol 3.
Read: Volume 1 ch 14-15; Weiner ch 5 (pp146-159 only), 13.

[8] **October 19:**
LAB: Small-group coding: Review Protocol 4; Also, any broader coding questions & Exam 1 prep (as needed).
Due: Coding Protocol 4.
Read: Volume 1 ch 16; Weiner ch 5 (pp 133-146 only), 12.

[9] October 26:
CLASS: Cluster interpretation: Self Perception.
LAB: Small-group interpretation: Controls / SitStress & Affect.
Due: EXAM 1 (coding + structural summary).
Read: Volume 1 ch 20; Weiner ch 5 (pp 159-170 only), 14.

[10] November 2:
LAB: Small-group interpretation: Self Perception & Interpersonal Perception.
Due: None.
Read: Volume 1 ch 21, 17; Gacono & Meloy (1994); Weiner ch 5 (pp 170-182, 112-118 only), 10.

[11] November 9: (NOTE: Due to IGCP Master’s degree ceremony, class will end at 3:50)
NO LAB THIS WEEK.
Due: EXAM 2 (partial-R or interp). And, bring Ror cards & loc sheets to class for practice.
Read: Workbook ch 1; Handout (R-opt admin adjustments).

[12] November 16:
Due: Coding Protocol 5.
Read: Volume 1 ch 18-19, 22 (pp 524-525 re: PTI only); Weiner ch 5 (pp 118-133 only), 11.

[13] November 23:
Due: None.
Read: Volume 1 ch 22; Weiner ch 6-8; Erdberg (2007); Weiner 2 (pp 44-48 only).

[14] November 30:
LAB: Small-group coding: Review Protocol 6. Also any broader coding questions & Exam 3 prep (as needed).
Due: Coding Protocol 6.
Read: Meyer (2002); Exner (2007); Meyer, et al. (2007); Weiner 2 (pp 48-56 only).

[15] December 7:
CLASS: Communicating assessment findings (report writing & verbal feedback), revisited and advanced.
Due: Admin P/F exercise to be done by this week.
Read: None.

[16] December 14:
NO LAB THIS WEEK.
Due: EXAM 3 (coding + full-Ror interp).