

CP5204 Assessment in Counselling

3 credits. Prerequisites: *none*.

 On Campus, Saskatoon **'A'** Livestream



February 2-6, 2026

Module

Monday – Friday; 9am- 4pm

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Please note: This course includes reading and assignments before and during the module.

Course Goals

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the theory and practice of assessment in counselling. The history, principles, and current methods of assessment will be reviewed with a focus on their applied use in counselling practice. Students will be exposed to select assessment instruments to facilitate understanding of basic statistical concepts such as reliability, validity, and use of norms. The role of the clinical interview and basic principles of test construction, administration, and interpretation will be reviewed, along with discussion of ethical practice. Students will have the opportunity to apply their learning to a desired clinical issue or special population.

Relationship to Horizon's Mission

Consistent with Horizon's mission to advance God's kingdom, it is the instructor's hope that through participation in the course, students will be more personally and professionally prepared to assess clients for the purpose of counselling, with assessment results supporting the conceptualization of a client's difficulties and formulating treatment plans. It is the instructor's hope that students will develop a sound assessment philosophy and basic assessment skills to facilitate and enhance ethical counselling practice. It is also hoped that by engaging in the course, students will be better equipped to address psychological difficulties as Christians, lay helpers, and/or mental health professionals.

Competencies and Learning Outcomes

To demonstrate competency in *knowledge of counselling theory*, students will

1. Gain familiarity with the history, theory, and principles of psychological assessment in counselling contexts.
 - *Assessment:* Readings, Participation, and Reflection Journal; Test; Major Assessment Project

2. Understand test construction and the basic statistics underlying the use of standardized psychological tests.
 - *Assessment*: Readings, Participation, and Reflection Journal; Test; Assessment Report; Major Assessment Project
3. Appropriately critique, select, and use psychological instruments.
 - *Assessment*: Readings, Participation, and Reflection Journal; Assessment Report; Major Assessment Project
4. Understand the role of psychological testing and the clinical interview in the overall assessment process.
 - *Assessment*: Readings, Participation, and Reflection Journal; Assessment Report; Major Assessment Project
5. Delineate an appropriate and thorough psychological assessment protocol for a desired clinical issue and/or special population.
 - *Assessment*: Readings, Participation, and Reflection Journal; Major Assessment Project
6. Write an assessment report based on interview and testing information.
 - *Assessment*: Readings, Participation, and Reflection Journal; Assessment Report

Course Work

Required Textbooks

Whiston, Susan C. *Principles and Applications of Assessment in Counseling*. 5th edition. Australia: Cengage, 2017. ISBN: 978-1305271487.

*** 3rd and 4th editions are acceptable substitutions for the 5th edition.*

DTL: <https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/920019240>.

Zimmerman, Mark. *Interview Guide for Evaluation of DSM-5-TR Psychiatric Disorders and the Mental Status Examination*. Philadelphia, PA: Psych Products Press, 2023. ISBN: 978-0963382122.

***It may be easiest to order this book from <https://turning.ca/>*

DTL: <https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1425375415>.

****While students have the benefit of accessing many of their textbooks online through the [Digital Theological Library](#), they will not have access to the Digital Theological Library upon graduation. Therefore, we encourage students to purchase select textbooks to build their personal library.**

Other Required Readings (TENTATIVE)

These required readings (and any additional readings) will be posted on Populi and available to students during the module. Alternative readings may be substituted for these readings during the week of the module.

Draper, P., McSherry, W. (2002). A critical view of spirituality and spiritual assessment. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 39(1), 1-2.

Hill, P. C., Pargament, K. I., Hood, R. W., McCullough, M. E., Swyers, J. P., Larson, D. B., Zinnbauer, B. J. (2000). Conceptualizing religion and spirituality: Points of commonality, points of departure. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 30(1), 51- 77.

Malony, H. N. (2000). The psychological evaluation of religious professionals. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 31(5) 521-525.

Richards, P. S., Bergin, A. E. (2005). Religious and spiritual assessment. In P. S. Richards and A. E. Bergin (Eds.), *A Spiritual Strategy for Counseling and Psychotherapy* (2nd Ed., pp. 219-250). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Standard, R. P., Sandhu, D. S., Painter, L. C. (2000). Assessment of spirituality in counseling. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 78(2), 204-210.

Worthington, E. L., Sandage, S. JU. (2001). Religion and spirituality. *Psychotherapy*, 38(4), 473-478.

Suggested Reading

Walsh, W. Bruce and Nancy E. Betz. *Tests and Assessment*. 4th edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall Inc., 2001.

Course Assignments and Activities

1. Readings, Participation, and Reflection Journal (20%).

Students are expected to complete the pre-module reading and complete additional readings and a reflection journal during the week of the module. Students are also expected to actively participate in class activities and group discussions. Non-participation will result in a grade deduction at the discretion of the professor.

Pre-module reading (5%): Students are required to read the main textbook (i.e., Whiston, 5th edition) prior to the commencement of the module. Confirm you completed this reading on Populi under the assignment “Pre-Module Reading.” **Due date:** February 1, 2026.

Module readings (5%): Students are required to read the additional readings assigned by the professor during the module. These will be available on Populi. Confirm you completed this reading each day on Populi under the assignment “Module Reading.” **Due date:** February 2-6, 2026 (daily).

Reflection Journal (10%): Students will submit a daily journal (250 words/day) reflecting on their learning for each day of the module. Content of the journals should focus on critical reflection of the content of each day’s learning and activities, and application to counselling. Spiritual reflection is encouraged as a component of the journal submission. **Due date:** February 2-6, 2026 (daily).

- Related learning outcome(s): #1-6 (all).
- **Assignment length:** Reflection Journal: 250-500 words per day.
- **Due dates:** Specified above.

Post-Module Requirements

2. Assessment Report (25%).

Students will watch a pre-recorded assessment interview and write an assessment report based on the interview. More information will be provided in class.

- Related learning outcome(s): #2, 3, 4, 6.
- **Assignment length:** 5-8 pages, single-spaced.
- **Due date:** February 25, 2026.

3. Test (20%).

Students will complete a multiple-choice and essay question test to evaluate their content knowledge of the basic psychometric information reviewed in the course (Whiston chapters 1-4 and lecture material). This test will be administered on Populi and can be taken by the student anytime up to and including the due date. Login information to access the test will be provided during or immediately following the module. A time limit will be imposed (see Populi).

- Related learning outcome(s): #1, 2.
- **Assignment length:** 30-60 multiple choice questions; 1-2 essay questions.
- **Due date:** On or before March 11, 2026.

4. Major Assessment Project (35%).

Construct and describe an appropriate assessment process (level 1 and 2) for a chosen population of interest or desired clinical issue (e.g., depression, anxiety, grief, marital conflict). Include a description of the purpose and context of the assessment, the different components of the assessment (e.g., interview, tests, other information gathering strategies if any), and the details of how it would practically unfold (e.g., number of hours, who would be involved, sequencing of interview and testing). Provide a literature review of important current issues relevant to the assessment process, and the population and problem(s) of interest. Describe anticipated areas where you may need to do probative level 2 assessment, based on your literature review. Choose and describe at least one psychological test instrument that you will use as part of your level 2 assessment, and provide information on its reliability, validity, norm group, and how you will incorporate this instrument in the assessment process; provide a rationale for its use. Provide a copy of your level 1 and 2 semi-structured interview template.

- Related learning outcome(s): #1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
- **Assignment length:** 12-15 pages, double-spaced (excluding addendums).
- **Due date:** March 30, 2026.

Estimate of Time Investment (individual time investments may vary)

Classroom Time	30 hrs	N/A	Assignment Weighting
1. Readings (24hr + 5hr) Participation, and Reflection Journal	29 hrs 8 hrs	Feb 1; during module During module	20%
2. Assessment Report	10 hrs	February 25, 2026	20%
3. Test	4 hr	March 11, 2026	25%
4. Major Assessment Project	40 hrs	March 30, 2026	35%
Total =	~121 hrs		

All assignments are due at 11:59pm ***SK time*** unless otherwise indicated.

Course Schedule (TENTATIVE)

	Order of Topics	Reading/Handouts for Review
Day 1	History & Meaning of Assessment	Whiston Ch 1
	Basic Statistical Concepts in Testing and Assessment	Whiston Ch 2
	<u>Class Discussion:</u> Reasons for conducting spiritual assessment	Draper & McSherry (2002) Richards & Bergin (2005) pp. 219-223
Day 2	Reliability, Validity, & Test Construction	Whiston Ch 3, 4
	Initial Assessment in Counseling Mental Status Examination	Whiston Ch 8 Zimmerman
	<u>Class Discussion:</u> Clinically relevant dimensions of religion and spirituality	Richards & Bergin (2005) pp. 224-233
Day 3	Assessment of Personality	Whiston Ch 12 PAI
	Assessment for the Purpose of Diagnosis	Whiston Ch 12 Zimmerman

	<u>Class Discussion:</u> Process of religious/spiritual assessment	Richards & Bergin (2005) pp. 234-249
Day 4	Assessment of Depression, Anxiety & Substance Abuse Assessment of Suicidal Ideation	Zimmerman BDI-II PHQ-9 STAI PCL-C SASSI-3 ASIQ BHS
	Assessment of Cognitive Ability Assessment of Spirituality	Whiston Ch 9, 10 WAIS-IV
	<u>Class Discussion:</u> Psychological evaluation of religious professionals	Malony (2000)
Day 5	Assessment of Interpersonal/Family Functioning	Whiston Ch 14 MSI-R IIP
	Selecting, Administering, Scoring, and Communicating Assessment Results	Whiston Ch 7
	Ethics related to Testing and Assessment	Whiston Ch 5
	Watch video for assessment report assignment	Interview template

- Assignments will not be accepted after *March 30, 2026*.

Academic Policies

General Assignment Guidelines

Please see the [Horizon](#) & [MCS](#) Format Guide for assignment submission, grammar, and formatting guidelines. The length of papers should fall within +/- 10% of the stated length. Papers that fall outside the length guidelines may not be graded. Assignments should be submitted via Populi under *Submissions* (not *Comments*). The resource at this [link](#) explains how to submit assignments on Populi.

Late Assignments and Extensions

Please contact the professor well in advance if you would like to request an adjustment to any of your due dates. No extensions will be granted beyond the end of the course unless approval is granted by Horizon's Assistant Academic Dean.

A late penalty will be assessed for all overdue assignments: 1-3 days late, penalty of 10%; 4-6 days late, penalty of 20%. After six days late, an assignment receives a grade of 0.

Grading

Grade	Percentage	GPA	Descriptor
A+	97-100%	4	Exceptional
A	93-96%	4	Excellent
A-	90-92%	3.7	Excellent
B+	87-89%	3.3	Good
B	83-86%	3.0	Good
B-	80-82%	2.7	Good
C+	77-79%	2.3	Satisfactory
C	73-76%	2.0	Satisfactory
C-	70-72%	1.7	Satisfactory
D+	67-69%	1.3	Minimal Pass
D	63-66%	1.0	Minimal Pass
D-	60-62%	0.7	Minimal Pass
F	<60%	0	Failure

Academic Integrity

Students learn best when practicing academic integrity. A lack of integrity is displayed in acts such as deception, abuse of confidentiality, cheating, inappropriate collaboration, or plagiarism. Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the words or ideas of another person or an artificial intelligence (AI) tool in such a way as to give others the impression that it is their own words or ideas. In academic writing, there should be no doubt which words or ideas are the student's and which are drawn from other sources or AI. Students are expected to submit their own original work and give due recognition to sources from which all substantial phrases, sentences or even ideas are drawn. Note also that you may not submit work done in one course to satisfy the requirements of another course (unless both instructors agree beforehand to accept such work). See [here](#) for examples of plagiarism and further guidelines in the [Student Handbook](#).

Horizon has a subscription to software that ensures the originality of academic writing, verifies the proper citation of all sources, and detects AI-generated content. When you submit an assignment, you will automatically receive a summary on Populi that includes your submitted files along with an originality score (a high originality score is positive).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage

In keeping with the Academic Integrity policy above, students must disclose on the title page of all assignments whether or not they have used AI and how they have used it. If the assignment has no title page, the student must disclose this to the instructor by some other means, such as in

a comment on Populi. Students are expected to follow the policy for acceptable use of AI that is published in the [Student Handbook](#).

Accessible Learning Services Information

Horizon is committed to provide safe and inclusive learning environments which equalize the opportunity for students with disabilities to meet the requirements of the institution, programs, and courses. The application for Academic Accommodations begins with a student disclosing a medical diagnosis or professionally documented learning disability during the application process. Enrolled students may contact Horizon's Academic Accommodations Coordinator, Richelle Bekkattla at rbekkattla@horizon.edu. All Academic Accommodations will adhere to the Guiding Principles listed in the [Student Handbook](#).

Class Attendance (On Campus or Livestreaming)

Students should attend all classes in order to facilitate competency development. Students are expected to be present through the delivery method that they registered for, either on campus or through livestreaming with their camera on. A student must be present for the full duration of a class period in order to be registered as present for the class. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, students may miss the equivalent of six hours of class (e.g., one day of a module course or two three-hours classes) without academic penalty. Students who are absent for more than this will automatically fail the course. Students wishing to be exempted from this policy due to extenuating circumstances may make an academic appeal, where they will need to document and verify those circumstances. Students who miss a class are responsible to get missed notes or handouts from another student, rather than from the professor.

Livestreaming Etiquette

Students taking the course through livestreaming are required to indicate this during their course registration. While livestreaming access is available for on-campus students who are unable to attend class due to illness, on-campus students are expected to attend class in person following the class attendance policy.

If attending class online via livestream, in order to be marked present for class, you must keep your camera on and stay present and attentive throughout the class session, extending the gift of full engagement. Access your class with a computer (preferably) or tablet, not a cell phone. Arrive to class on time, and dress as you would if you were attending class on campus. Join the class from a quiet space with minimal background noise, and mute your microphone until you wish to speak to the class.

Use of Technology

Horizon encourages the use of electronic devices in the classroom to enhance learning. Careful consideration must be given to privacy issues, copyrighted materials, and the general care and concern for others. Please respect the following classroom policies:

- Please use online access for course learning only. This is a matter of respect for the instructor's teaching, your own learning, and fellow students who may be distracted by other uses.

- Students should secure permission from the instructor to record any teaching material. This includes PowerPoint slides, white board illustrations, notes, and any form of audio or video.
- Student feedback is a valuable input for course improvements. Please resolve any classroom grievance about the instructor or course with the instructor personally, through the Horizon College and Seminary grievance procedures, or the Populi-based course evaluations. It is inappropriate to air classroom grievances on a social media platform.
- When instructors use recording mechanisms in the classroom, recorded materials will be used for the sole purpose of instruction and cannot be released to any social media outlet without the written consent of the students whose images have been recorded.
- In general, it is not acceptable to share photographs or videos of students in the classroom setting without permission from those whose images appear in such media.