

# Assessment in Counseling

## Chapter 1

# Learning Objectives

- LO1: Define the term *assessment*.
- LO2: Debate whether assessment is an integral part of counseling.
- LO3: Understand the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs' (CACREP) standards for assessment.
- LO4: Distinguish among the different types of assessment tools.
- LO5: Comprehend major historical influences on today's practices in assessment.

# What Is Assessment?

(Slide 1 of 2)

- Involves some type of measurement
- Involves gathering samples of behavior, making inferences
- Objective and systematic

# What Is Assessment?

(Slide 2 of 2)

- Terminology
  - Assessment
  - Appraisal
  - Testing
  - Tests vs. instruments

# Do Counselors Need to Know about Assessment?

- American Counseling Association's *Code of Ethics* (2014)
- Research on counselors' test usage
- Counselor credibility

# Assessment Is Integral to Counseling

- Essential steps in counseling:
  1. Assessing the client problem(s)
  2. Conceptualizing and defining the client problem(s)
  3. Selecting and implementing effective treatment(s)
  4. Evaluating the counseling

# Assessment Can Be Therapeutic

- Therapeutic assessment model (Finn, 2007)
  - Better outcomes, improved perception of counselor
  - Clients with eating disorders
- Assisting clients in decision making

# What Do Counselors Need to Know about Assessment?

(Slide 1 of 2)

- Standards for assessment (CACREP, 2009)
  - Historical perspectives concerning the nature and meaning of assessment
  - Basic concepts of standardized and nonstandardized testing and other assessment techniques
  - Statistical concepts
  - Reliability

# What Do Counselors Need to Know about Assessment?

(Slide 2 of 2)

- Standards for assessment (CACREP, 2009)  
(Cont.)
  - Validity
  - Social and cultural factors related to the assessment and evaluation of individuals, groups, and specific populations
  - Ethical strategies for selecting, administering, and interpreting assessment and evaluation instruments and techniques in counseling

# Types of Assessment Tools

(Slide 1 of 2)

- Standardized vs. Nonstandardized
- Individual vs. Group
- Objective vs. Subjective
- Verbal vs. Nonverbal
- Speed vs. Power
- Cognitive vs. Affective

# Types of Assessment Tools

(Slide 2 of 2)

- **Cognitive vs. Affective Tools**
  - **Cognitive instruments** → cognition, perceiving, processing, concrete & abstract thinking, remembering
    - Intelligence/general ability tests
    - Achievement tests
    - Aptitude tests
  - **Affective instruments** → interest, attitudes, values, motives, temperament, non-cognitive aspects of personality
    - Structured personality instruments
    - Projective techniques

# History (Slide 1 of 7)

- Early Testing
  - Greeks - 2500 years ago
  - Chinese - 2000 years ago
  - Francis Galton - credited with launching the testing movement
  - Wilhelm Wundt - credited with founding the science of psychology
  - James McKeen Cattell - expanded testing to include memory and other simple mental processes

# History (Slide 2 of 7)

- 1900-1920
  - Binet-Simon scale (1905)
    - Assessed judgment, comprehension & reasoning
    - Ratio of mental age to chronological age (IQ)
  - Stanford-Binet scale (1916)
  - World War I - group testing (Army Alpha & Army Beta)
  - Frank Parsons - “father of guidance”

# History (Slide 3 of 7)

- 1920s and 1930s
  - Theoretical debate concerning definition of intelligence
  - Aptitude tests developed for selecting and classifying industrial personnel
  - Development of vocational counseling instruments
  - Stanford Achievement Test (1923) – first standardized achievement battery
  - First edition of *Mental Measurements Yearbook* (1939)

# History (Slide 4 of 7)

- 1940s and 1950s
  - Dissatisfaction with existing personality instruments
    - Projective techniques became popular
      - Rorschach
    - MMPI developed (early 1940)
  - Standardized achievement tests well-established in public schools
    - Multiple aptitude batteries appeared after 1940
  - Criticisms of assessment began to emerge
    - Need for standards (APA)
    - Need for centralized test publication, electronic scoring

# History (Slide 5 of 7)

- 1960s and 1970s
  - Examination and evaluation of testing and assessment - widespread public concern
  - 1970s - Grassroots movement for “minimum competency” testing for high school graduates
  - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (1974)
  - Increased use of computers in assessment

# History (Slide 6 of 7)

- 1980s and 1990s
  - Use of computers blossomed: administration, scoring, interpretation, computer-adapted testing, report-writing
  - Revision of instruments in response to criticism
  - Increasing use of authentic and portfolio assessment

# History (Slide 7 of 7)

- 2000 to the present
  - Influences of technology and the Internet
  - Research on multicultural issues
  - Achievement testing & No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
  - Increased interest in accountability and effectiveness data
  - Revision of *Standards* and DSM