

**WILLIAM JESSUP UNIVERSITY
PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT**

Fall 2015/Spring 2016
STUDENT GUIDE FOR THE
PSYCHOLOGY COMPREHENSIVE
EXAMINATION

Exam Overview

Introduction

The purpose of the Psychology Department comprehensive examination (also known as the "comps") is to evaluate a student's mastery of the information presented in the core courses of the psychology program curriculum. Preparation requires students to engage in a systematic review of coursework and allows the department an opportunity to identify students who may be in need of remediation prior to being granted their degree.

Exam Process and Characteristics

The comp exam is taken during the last semester of a student's senior year. Students will need to sign up to take the exam on a specified day, time, and location. Two hours are allotted to complete the exam. One retake is allowed if a student is unable to pass the exam on their first attempt. Successful completion of the exam is required in order to graduate from the psychology program. The exam is a multiple choice criterion-references test. Questions are drawn from the content of the core program courses. A minimum criterion score of 70% is required to pass the exam. Item analyses will be conducted on the exam to assure internal consistency of items and any inconsistent items will be removed prior to calculating exam scores. A Pass/Fail finding will be determined based on a score that is equal to or greater than 70%.

Preparation for the Comps

Students are encouraged to consider the exam process as an opportunity to conduct a comprehensive review of course materials. Students will need to collect, organize, and study the materials they have acquired while taking their courses.

To prepare, students are encouraged to:

1. Review course textbooks, lecture notes, exercises, study guides, quizzes, and exams.
2. Work with other students in study groups to aid in recalling information and reviewing materials.

Exam Schedule

A time and location will be announced.

Preparation Overview

There are ten courses to review for preparing for the Comp. These are the core psychology courses in your graduation plan. The required classes are noted below:

1. Interpersonal Processes
2. Counseling Skills
3. Developmental Psychology
4. Abnormal Psychology
5. Personality Theory and Therapy
6. Fieldwork (which includes Legal & Ethical)
7. Psychology & Christian Thought
8. Psychology of Human Relationships
9. Human Sexuality
10. Research Statistics

The following information describes each content area and defines specific topics for you to focus on in your preparation.

Section 1: Interpersonal Processes

The Interpersonal Communication class provided you opportunities to develop awareness of effective communication skills that enhances your ability to work with people in the helping professions and ministry. Several topics were covered in class and are potentially present on the comprehensive exam. These include:

1. Knowing the elements of effective communication skills
2. Being able to contrast and describe the differences between linear and transactional communication
3. Describing the qualities of an effective people helper/therapist
4. Describing the characteristics of active listening
5. Being able to describe and recognize effective and ineffective ways of pacing and leading
6. Understanding meta-messages and their effect in enhancing or tearing down effective communication
7. Describing and recognizing motivations of pseudo-listening and common blocks to listening.
8. Describing and demonstrating effective postures that facilitates effective communication
9. Understand communication climates

Section 2: Counseling Skills

Your class in counseling skills provided information to you regarding assessment, supportive intervention, and making helpful referrals to people in need of mental/spiritual help. On the comprehensive exam you will be accountable for demonstrating mastery in the following areas:

1. Defining and differentiating stress, distress, trauma, and crisis
2. Know the characteristics of mental health
3. Be able to describe the six stages of the stress-response model

4. Define, contrast, and assess levels of ego functioning
5. List and define the five levels of coping styles in personality
6. Be able to identify misery amplification and resistance
7. Demonstrate an effective resistance intervention
8. Demonstrate an effective misery amplification intervention
9. Identify and define Basic Counseling Skills
10. Identify Psychosocial stressors and factors that determine the impact of a stressor on a person's wellbeing.
11. Be able to identify and define the primary defense mechanisms.

Section 3: Developmental Psychology

Developmental Psychology's goal was to provide you with an overview of the human lifespan and how we change and grow over time. Specifically, this course introduced you to the body, mind, and psychosocial development of the individual across the lifespan. Developmental concepts and theories were reviewed and applied in the study. Several key issues from this class are included in the comprehensive examination. Students should be prepared to recognize, compare and contrast concepts and applications including:

1. The main developmental categories presented in Freud's psychosexual theory of development.
2. The main developmental categories presented in Erikson's psychosocial theory of development.
3. The main developmental categories presented in Piaget's cognitive theory of development.
4. The main developmental categories presented in Kohlberg's theory of moral development.
5. The main developmental categories presented in Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development.
6. Recognize that growth is multidirectional, multidisciplinary, multicontextual, multicultural, and plastic. For example, nature and nurture contribute to each stage in unique ways. Be able to apply this information to the major lifespan stages.

Section 4: Abnormal Psychology

This course introduced you to human psychopathology and what is meant by "abnormal" in respect to mental health. The field of abnormal psychology has had a dramatic growth spurt in recent years. The current state of psychopathology in terms of its identification, description, diagnosis, etiology, and treatment was addressed. Your study of psychopathology should have prepared you to skillfully differentiate the normal from the abnormal in human mental health.

You should be familiar with the "Bio/psychosocial/spiritual" model and the DSM-5 classification system that is used to diagnose and further aid in the formulation of treatment for mental illness. Importance is placed in the mental status exam (MSE) items as they are used to describe and recognize each of the major diagnostic disorder categories of study. In addition to the MSE, the tests most frequently used to study the brain, intelligence, and personality are of further importance.

Areas of Focused Study:

- Models of Abnormality (including Christ's gold standard)
- Clinical Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment
- Anxiety and Stress Disorders

- Somatic and Dissociative Disorders
- Mood Disorders
- Suicide
- Eating Disorders
- Substance Use and Addictive Disorders
- Schizophrenia
- Personality Disorders
- Disorders of Childhood and Adolescence
- Disorders of Aging and Cognition

Section 5 - Personality, Theory & Therapy

Your courses should have prepared you to:

- 1) Identify and describe the various personality theories and theorists
- 2) Identify the faith integration issues with each theory
- 2) Apply these theories to clinical vignettes

You can expect questions on:

1. Psychoanalytic
2. Object Relations
3. Attachment Theory
4. Adlerian
5. Existential
6. Person Centered
7. Gestalt
8. Behavioral
9. Cognitive Behavioral
10. Social Learning Theory (Bandura)
11. Reality
12. Feminist
13. Postmodern (Solution Focused and Narrative)
14. Family Systems

Section 6 - Legal and Ethical Issues/ Fieldwork

Although some of these issues were mentioned in several classes taken in the major, you should review your Theory notes and the information gathered in your practicum coursework. You should be prepared for questions on the following issues:

1. Ten-step model of ethical decision making
2. Malpractice
3. Guidelines for mental health professionals regarding confidentiality and exceptions to confidentiality
4. Tarasoff ruling
5. Informed consent
6. Privilege
7. Dual relationships
 - a) General condition

- b) Conditions specific to faith based settings
8. Scope of practice
 9. Scope of competence
 10. Treatment of minors, emancipated minors
 11. "Dependents" of the court
 12. "Wards" of the court
 13. Suicide and procedures to prevent suicide, assessing the suicidal level
 14. Involuntary confinement (5150 of the Welfare and Institutions Code)
 15. Mandated reporters
 16. Child abuse reporting procedures and penalties for non-reporting
 17. Injuries that would make you most suspicious that abuse was the cause
 18. Elder abuse reporting requirements and penalties for non-reporting
 19. The following terms should be familiar to you:
 20. Gravely disabled,
 21. Child Protective Services
 22. Molest

Section 7 – Psychology & Christian Thought

The Course on Psychology and Christian Thought studied ways that biblical prescription and scientific inquiry can be used together to aid people seeking out aid from paraprofessionals. In addition, appropriate and responsible uses of religious and spiritual disciplines were considered.

Students preparing for the comprehensive exam should reacquaint themselves with information on the following topics:

1. Study and know well McMinn's personal and professional challenges facing Christian counselors. Chapter 1, McMinn
2. In order for integration to move beyond the limitations of current scholarly conceptual models to more applied models that can be used in the counseling room, the Christian counselor must better understand: Chapter 1, McMinn
3. What is the author's view of the relationship between Christian counseling models and the scientific method? Chapter 1
4. Effective counseling requires an ongoing assessment of three areas. Know them: McMinn Chapter 2
5. Know the examples of a faulty awareness of self, others, and need: McMinn, Chapter 2
6. There are several examples of a faulty sense of self, need, and relationships. Know them: McMinn, Chapter 2
7. A comprehensive integration perspective on psychological and spiritual health involves these components: McMinn, Chapter 2
8. "Christian counseling is more complex than other forms of counseling because our goals are _____." McMinn, Chapter 2

9. Know the examples of faulty healing relationships proposed by McMinn: Chapter 2
10. Know the seven different types of prayer in counseling: McMinn, Chapter 3
11. In his chapter on prayer, there are many ways in which counselors have used prayer in counseling. Know them: McMinn, Chapter 3
12. McMinn notes that Dr. Eric Johnson suggests ways the Bible can influence Christian Counselors. Which term refers to “giving us standards for what should be?” McMinn, Chapter 4
13. Know the ways Dr. Eric Johnson suggests the Bible can influence Christian Counselors: McMinn, Chapter 4
14. Know the five ways to confront a client. McMinn, Chapter 5
15. McMinn notes that two authors argued positions that appeared almost identical; however, they were diametrically opposed. _____ “argued that the concept of sin is the cause of virtually all psychopathology” whereas _____ “argued that sin is the cause of virtually all psychopathology.” Chapter 5
16. Know well the concepts of internal and external attribution as they are applied to the concept of sin. McMinn, Chapter 5
17. When faced with the reality of fallen human nature, McMinn believes we are left with three choices. They are: Chapter 6
18. Know the common misperceptions of forgiveness. McMinn, Chapter 7
19. Know the “Reasons for Forgiveness Scale.” Chapter 7
20. The term “_____ counselor” describes a counselor who is able to consider simultaneously: psychology, theology, and spirituality: McMinn, Conclusion

The concept of redemption, as it is applied to counseling, suggests a certain stance Christian therapists take when working with others. Contemplate the differences this stance makes when comparing a secular and an integrating Christian therapist. Also compare a biblical counselor with an integrating Christian therapist.

Section 8 – Psychology of Relationships

The Psychology of Relationships class studied attachment patterns in relationships across the life-span. You learned that we are made in the image of a relational God, who is relational, both within Himself, and with His creatures. Thus, we human beings are healthiest when we are both intrapsychically relational as well as interpersonally relational. Be prepared for questions about the formation of our relational nature, the dance of intimacy with humans and with God, and loneliness as a signal to us about our disconnection from others. Attachment phenomena was a key focus of the class. Self transcendence, surrender, and identity formation were discussed as defining features

of healthy bonds. Be prepared for questions about the basic tenets of attachment theory, the defining features of each attachment style—in both parent-child bonds and romantic bonds.

The course also discussed the difficulties in growing up in families where attachment needs are not met, sometimes for reason of alcohol/drug addictions in the parental system. Be familiar with the roles and key characteristics of each role that are sometimes adopted by children who are seeking to survive a relationship with parents who are dysfunctional. The defining features of addiction, and the types of addicts should be familiar. Also be prepared for questions about codependency, the Cartman drama triangle, and the rescue process.

Sibling relationships were discussed as some of the most long lasting relationships you can have. These relationships also can influence your future attachments. Be prepared for several questions about our need for safe people in our lives, unsafe relationships and why some people have a pattern of being in unsafe relationships, and issues involved in decisions to end an unsafe relationship.

You also learned about the 6 capacities you will need to fall in love and remain in love. You should be familiar enough with these capacities to recognize the key features of each.

You also learned about attachment to God. Be familiar with the ideas that some people replicate human attachment patterns in their relationship with God and some people compensate for unhealthy human attachments by imaging God as an ideal parent/partner. Ultimately all people will find that their human attachments, as healthy as they might have been, were not perfect and thus these internal working models need to be redeemed, to one degree or another, as we learn to experience God for who He is.

The following terms should be familiar: safe haven, secure base, attachment behavioral system, care giving behavioral system, exploratory behavioral system, internal working models of self and other in each attachment style, collusion, merger hungry, merger wary, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Section 9 – Human Sexuality

This course overviewed the theology of sexuality, noting that sexuality is a mystery--something that we will never fully understand. We live out on a human plane a "physical picture of a spiritual reality" that gives us glimpses of the relational nature within the Godhead and God's relationship with us, His creatures. Although our sexual nature is good, it has been distorted since the fall. We now vacillate between evil eroticism and the evil absence of eroticism (in Karl Barth's words). We Christians must learn to live in righted erotic relationships. Be familiar with the meanings of fornication and adultery as two forms of misuse of sexuality that plague humans since the fall.

Sexuality and Attraction

Know the difference between the act of sex and sexuality. Know the 3 main neurotransmitters in attraction. Know the 2 major hormones involved in feelings of attachment. Be familiar with Christopher McCluskey's making love model. Know the difference between healthy and unhealthy sex.

Sexual Anatomy

Be prepared for questions that test your knowledge of sexual organs and their functioning. So,

review your notes on male and female anatomy. Suggestions for reclaiming sexual functioning after rape or molest should be familiar to you.

Sexual Response Cycle

Be familiar with Master's and Johnson's 4 phase model of the sexual response. Also be familiar with Bason's non-linear sexual response cycle. Be familiar with the meanings of terms like cervix, , refractory period, ejaculatory inevitability.

Sexual Dysfunction and Treatment

Review your notes on erectile dysfunction, orgasmic dysfunctions, and therapy. Know the difference between ejaculatory incompetence, delayed ejaculation, retrograde ejaculation, premature ejaculation. Know the difference between sensate focus therapy (how it is practiced) and the semans method/stop start technique, and the squeeze technique. What are they used to treat. Know the most common dysfunctions in men and women.

Sexual Distortions

Paraphilias, fetishes, transvestism, transsexualism, frotteurism, pedophilia, voyeurism. Review your notes on sex addiction

Sexually Transmitted Diseases (Infections)

Review your notes on STD's and be prepared to recognize those that those that can be contracted from surfaces outside the body and those that are transmitted exclusively thru sexual contact.

Sex Education

Parents are the primary sex educators but the church should be supporting them in this role. Review your notes on sexual curiosity in children, and sexual self-discovery.

Section 10 – Research Statistics

Topics covered in the Research Methods & Statistics class will include the following:

1. Understand the difference between observational and experimental studies.
2. Understand confounding, explanatory, extraneous and response variables; association and causation.
3. Understand statistical descriptors of the center of data and variability of data.
4. Understand the z score and the Pearson correlation coefficient.
5. Understand conditional probability, independence and Bayes Rule.
6. Understand probability distributions and how to compute the mean and standard deviation of a distribution.
7. Understand the Binomial distribution and how to compute its mean and standard deviation.
8. Understand the difference between discrete and continuous probability distributions, PDFs and CDFs.
9. Understand the Normal distribution and tests of normality.
10. Understand sampling distributions and sampling variability.

11. Understand the Central Limit Theorem.
12. Understand sampling distributions of a sample proportion.
13. Understand biased and unbiased statistics.
14. Understand confidence level, confidence interval and how to select the sample size for a population proportion problem.
15. Understand the Student t score, its degrees of freedom, and how to use it for a population mean problem.
16. Understand hypothesis testing, null and alternate hypotheses, Type I and Type II errors, alpha, beta and their relationship, the P value, lower-tailed, upper-tailed and two-tailed tests, how to reject or fail-to-reject the null hypothesis.
17. Understand how to distinguish between paired and independent samples.
18. Understand how to compare two populations using paired or independent samples.
19. Understand how to evaluate hypotheses of the distribution of categorical variables using the Chi-Square test.
20. Understand linear and multiple regression and how to evaluate the quality of a regression model.
21. Understand single and multiple factor ANOVA and the F-test.