SYLLABUS

This course offers an introduction to two (so-called) “projective” tests, the TAT: Thematic Apperception Test, and the Rorschach Inkblot Test (using primarily the C.S.: Comprehensive System of John Exner, but with introduction also to the R-PAS: Rorschach Performance Assessment System—since both systems are in contemporary use, though the C.S. remains dominant). Students will learn the basic knowledge necessary to administer and interpret the TAT and the Rorschach test in clinical settings. They will gain experience in administering these tests, with individual supervision by the instructor. Attention will be paid to various clinical and theoretical topics regarding the assessment of personality and psychopathology, as well as to methodological and psychometric issues, including arguments regarding reliability and validity of the Rorschach Inkblot test.

Books to consider purchasing:
Shapiro, Neurotic Styles. (order online and start reading as soon as you can)
Aronow et al, A Practical Guide to the TAT (recommended only; important sections will be on SAKAI).
Exner, A Rorschach Workbook for the Comprehensive System, latest edition (to be ordered through “Rorschach Workshops,” as discussed in class).
Weiner, Principles of Rorschach Interpretation, 2nd edition (for later in course)

Note: Other reading materials are available online through Sakai or, in some cases, as handouts. Some of the readings listed below are marked as “recommended.” All others are required. I also list some “background” readings.

Note: The following book may be on reserve at LSM, or can be borrowed from instructor: Exner, John, The Rorschach: A Comprehensive System, Vol 1, 4th Edition (= helpful reference work for the Comprehensive System approach to the Rorschach).

A PREFATORY NOTE:

In this course, you will learn about two psychological tests, frequently referred to as “projective tests”: the TAT—Thematic Apperception Test, and the Rorschach Inkblot test. These tests are used in various settings, both clinical and forensic; their purpose is to assess aspects of personality and psychopathology. Much of our class time will involve the examination and discussion of the responses of various individuals who exemplify a wide variety of disturbances and concerns.
While some of these individuals lie within the normal range of personality functioning, many have severe problems, e.g., psychosis, suicidality, severe depression, strong aggressive impulses, and personality disorders of various kinds including sociopathy and psychopathy.

The protocols we will consider include verbatim transcripts of speech by patients and clients. While these verbatim responses will often be inoffensive, they can sometimes involve expressions of a problematic or potentially upsetting nature, suggestive, e.g., of sexism, racism, or homophobia, as well as of sexual preoccupations, violent impulses, bizarre thinking, or other issues. Such matters (and the problems listed above) fall within the scope of practice in clinical psychology, and are part of what may need to be assessed in clinical settings. I just wanted to inform you in advance, so that students will know what the class entails.

Participants in the class are naturally expected to follow guidelines for APA profession-wide competencies with respect to the subject matter of this course: with appropriate professional attitude, behavior, and interpersonal communication, in an atmosphere of mutual support and civility.

CLASS MEETINGS

1: **Introductory class (class #1).**
   
   *In class*: Take Rorschach and TAT in class, in group administration. (Your responses will *not* be turned in to me or discussed in class; they are *for your own eyes only*.)

   No required reading, but I suggest you begin reading Shapiro’s *Neurotic Styles*.

PART ONE: THEMATIC APPEARCEPTION TEST (classes #2,3,4,5)

2: **Thematic Apperception Test (T.A.T.): Introduction.**

   *Read: ABZ (Allison, Blatt, & Zimet, Interpretation of Psychological Tests), pp. 1-17, 89-110 (recommended 110-133) (includes introduction to theory and practice of psychological testing)*

   - Cramer, “Stories are telling” (SPA Exchange), 1 page
   - Page with various recommended TAT sequences (incl from ABZ, NYHospital).
   - Page with descriptions of various TAT cards.
   - TAT of Mr. Wilson (online).

   By now you should have begun reading Shapiro, *Neurotic Styles* (book = crucial theoretical background re. perception and attention, cognitive style, and personality; just
glance at chap 1; you will need to read chap.s 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 during the first 3 weeks of class).

In class: discuss TAT of Mr. Wilson (available online, bring a copy to class); also: TAT of young musician (handout in class)

3: **TAT continued.**

*Read:* ABZ, pp. 102-110 (re-read these pages)
Sass summary of AWR book.
TATs #1, #II, #IV (all online; note: we will omit #III).
Consent form (1 page)

**Reminder:** Remember to read assigned chapters in Shapiro, Neurotic Styles. Also see Sass summary of Shapiro Neurotic Styles, and pp. 105-106 of the book (o-c and paranoid styles compared).

**Recommended:** Schafer, Roy, “How was this story told?,” pp. 114-169 of Schafer, Projective Testing and Psychoanalysis (note: a classic article on the TAT, but out-of-date, and inconsistent with contemporary norms in various ways). Note: Some other classic articles are listed at the end of this syllabus.

In class: discuss TAT’s #I, #II, #IV

**Remember:** You should give a practice TAT before the 4th meeting. Please note: There is a Consent Form online, which you should use with any subject whom you test.

4: **TAT continued.**


Various examples of TAT responses, including #IV (if not finished in previous class; BD??, ABZ ex.s re depr and hypomania, and perhaps M-26, M-20s, and MS (all handouts in class, except for ABZ ex.s).

In class: discuss TATs of #IV (if not finished in previous class), and of MS, BD, ABZ ex.s of depression and hypomania/agitated depression, M-26, M-20s (these are all handouts in class, except for ABZ and #IV, which you should bring)

**NOTE:** your practice TAT protocol should be COMPLETED BY THIS CLASS (not graded). You will MEET individually with instructor to discuss your TAT protocol. In advance of this meeting: Think through the possible significance of your TAT protocol before meeting with instructor. See **TAT below for more information.

5: **TAT concluded; Rorschach introduced.**

TAT

*In class:* discuss more examples: TM, DM, ED, HF (all handed out in class).

*Read:*
Sass’s summary of Schafer’s diagnostic summaries re TAT (5 pages).

Note: Shapiro, Neurotic Styles, chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 should be read by now.

Note: some classic articles on TAT are listed at the end of syllabus, as optional background readings.

RORSCHACH:

Read: Begin reading Exner Workbook re Rorschach, pp. 1-88.
In class: Discuss EP Rorschach (handed out in class); perhaps some further intro to Rorschach, if there is time.

NOTE: TAT protocol to be COMPLETED BY THIS CLASS (not graded); MEET with instructor this week or next to discuss your TAT protocol. (Be prepared: Think through the possible significance of your TAT protocol before meeting with instructor.)

PART TWO: RORSCHACH INKBLOT TEST

RORSCHACH PART I (Codes & Coding; classes #6,7,8,9)

6: Rorschach (C.S.: Comprehensive System, a.k.a. “Exner”): Introduction, with Intro to coding

Read:
Finish reading Exner Workbook pp. 1-88 (includes introduction to Comprehensive System approach to Rorschach inkblot test)
See 1-page list of Codes for the Comprehensive System.
See 1-page re The 8 Scoring Categories (Table 1).
Sass summary of relevant Weiner excerpts. (Note: I have summarized most Weiner chapters [a few sections were summarized by students, as indicated]. These summaries can be found online, and will be helpful to read in connection with each assigned chapter.
Rec: Brown, Spencer, “Rorschach Test” (=1 page poem, describing one person’s emotional response to being asked to respond to Rorschach inkblots).
Rec: Merleau-Ponty, The World of Perception, chap 3 re objects.
In class: introduction to aspects of the history and theory of the Rorschach; begin discussing the Rorschach codes, using sheet listing codes plus the Workbook.

7: Rorschach: Coding I: Overview of Codes

Assignment:
Rorschach protocol #5: start trying to code as much of this as you can (an impossible task at this stage, but useful to try nonetheless; you need to flail about).
Do some practice coding examples from back of Exner Workbook.
Page re Beck “D”s.
101-109. (Remember: you may find it helpful to consult the Sass summary of Weiner book, which is on SAKAI.)

In class: Continue going over coding; begin going over coding of Protocol #5, 8:

**Rorschach: Coding continued: 1st protocol example.**

Assignment:
Rorschach protocol #5: read this over again, and finish coding it if you have not already done so.
Continue to review and study Exner’s Workbook. Familiarize yourself with the various materials re Rorschach that have been distributed or are online at SAKAI.


In class: finish going over coding of protocol #5.

9:

**Rorschach: Coding continued: 2nd protocol example.**

Assignment:
Rorschach protocol #35: read this over; try to code it.
Continue to review and study Exner’s Workbook. Familiarize yourself with the various materials re Rorschach that have been distributed or are online.


In class:
Go over coding of protocol #35.

*NOTE: In this class session (#9), there will be an in-class, oral quiz (ungraded) on the meaning of the different codes; be sure you understand everything listed on the one-page list of all possible codes: you need to be able to define each code, state the main criteria for applying that code, state the standard interpretative or psychological meaning of that code.

RORSCHACH PART II (Administration & Special Scores; classes #10,11)

10: **Rorschach: Administration.**

Assignment: Re-read carefully the workbook, Chapter 1: Procedures.
See 4 pages “Procedures of Administration” with phrases to remember (= based on previous Workbook).
Sass re Rorschach Administration (2 pp summarizing Exner points).

In class: exercise involving: role-play administration, with focus on inquiry (protocol #182, to be distributed in class). Also: Watch DVD re Rorschach administration.

11: **Rorschach: Special scores.**
Read: Re-read Exner Workbook re special scores, pp. 62-80.
ABZ pp. 172-179 re special scores (be aware that ABZ present a slightly different set of special scores, based more directly on the Rapaport/Schafer system).
Piotrowski, Rorschach signs of organicity (1 page).
Rec: Weiner, Principles, Chap 8, Conducting a sequence analysis, pp. 238-246 (=not re special scores, but this is a good time to read this chapter)
Assignment: Code protocol #4, especially for special scores.
In class: Go through special scores, espec “cognitive.” Read several pages of JH’s Rorschach; think re special scores for this protocol. (Possibly: discuss special scores in GW also; possibly see also Bdl ex.s.)

NOTE: By this class, you should have given both a 3-card practice Rorschach (with anyone—just to get used to the procedure), and perhaps a full 10-card Rorschach (with someone not too close to you). You will then meet with the instructor (outside of class time) this week or in one of the next two weeks.

RORSCHACH PART III (Interpretation; classes #12,13)

12: Rorschach: Structural Summaries and Interpretation I, Introduction
Assignment:
See 1 page: Rorschach: Teaching Structural Summary Interpretation
See: “Cheat Sheet”: Structural Summary Form with modes and means.
Prepare, as best you can, the structural summary for protocol #5.
See: Rorschach Interpretative Guide (slightly outdated, based on 3rd edition of Exner’s The Rorschach, A Comprehensive System: Basic Foundations, Volume 1—but still somewhat useful as a summary.)
Recommended: Weiner, Principles, Chap 3, The comprehensive-system search strategy, pp. 59-83 (remember: a Sass summary of this and other Weiner chapters is online).
In class: go through the structural summary sheet, espec its bottom half.

13: Rorschach: Structural summaries and interpretation II, continued.
Assignment: Prepare structural summaries for protocol #35.
See: in Weiner, *Principles*, Tables 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 (= Search Strategy Tables, which give the order in which variables and groups of variables are to be considered)

See: Progress Evaluation Form


In class: discuss structural summary of protocol #35: first do an eyeball analysis; then use a distributed blanked out copy of #35 report to go through exercise of interpreting structural summary of protocol #35.

If time, discuss case of Mr. Ingram.

*NOTE: LEARN how to input material into RIAP computer program, available at the clinic. No in-class instruction is necessary: procedure is straightforward.*

*NOTE: Full Rorschach to be FINISHED by today (not graded). MEET with Louis Sass this week or next re your full Rorschach.

*NOTE, IN THIS CLASS (#13): IN-CLASS INTERPRETATION QUIZ (UNGRADED): In-class, oral, ungraded quiz on the meaning of the different scores in the bottom part of the structural summary sheet. (We will go around room; I will pick out something from bottom part of structural summary and ask a student to explain it to the group.)

RORSCHACH PART IV: Intro to R-PAS + various issues (Rorschach controversies; diversity issues, etc)

14: **Rorschach: R-PAS Introduction.**
Possibly continue with Interpretation topics from class #13.
Some discussion of diversity issues.
Some discussion of Rorschach controversies
But then:
To R-PAS introduction

*Note: Bring to class:
R-PAS Handouts (11 pp)
R-PAS notes by Louis Sass (3 pp)
Additional material re R-PAS (to be decided)

*Note: to be handed out in this class: Rorschach protocol that will be basis for your final paper/report.

*NOTE: Assignment: by today (class #14), you should have entered data into RIAP (Rorschach computer program available on clinic computers) in preparation for writing your final report, which is due one week after final class (by midnight on that day); see ** *below.
Rorschach, R-PAS introduction continued. final class
Assignment:
To be decided.....

Requirements include the following:

--Give a TAT, to be completed by class # 4. Meet with L.A.S. re TAT, after preparing notes on the TAT record (not graded).
--Give at least one 3-card Rorschach (not coded; not graded), to be completed by class # 11 at latest.
--Give a Rorschach, and code it with C.S.: Comprehensive System (without summary scores; not graded), by class #11 or #12. Meet with L.A.S. to discuss this Rorschach protocol, and other questions.
--Prepare a write-up of a Rorschach protocol (C.S.: Comprehensive System) that has been handed out to you (5-7 pages long approximately, double spaced); you will have the “correct” codes available to you, but you need to produce a RIAP computer report (grounded in the C.S.), which will serve only as a basis of your report. Your Rorschach report is due at end of semester (graded; due one week after final class meeting). There is a brief tutorial on the mechanics of the computer program available on SAKAI. See below* for more information on this assignment.

SOME TIPS:
--This course requires that you learn some technical material (Rorschach coding and interpretation). It is especially important to keep up with assignments week-by-week; otherwise you will soon find yourself out of step, confused, and unhappy.

--You will be downloading or receiving a considerable amount of copied material during the course. It will make your life easier if you set up a special filing system for this course, so that you can quickly find what you need to bring to class or to use to do assignments.

NB: Please be aware that any testing reports produced during this semester are for learning purposes ONLY. Many of you will be testing volunteers. There is a Consent Form that you should use with any subject whom you test.

If you do test a patient (which I do not recommend), your report supervised for this class is NOT to be placed in the clinical records for that patient. If you do wish to use a report for clinical purposes, then it MUST be overseen and approved independently by a supervisor at the clinical setting where the patient is being seen. This is an introductory testing course; we at GSAPP cannot yet validate your reports for professional, clinical purposes.
You should avoid testing someone whom you know at all well. A good method is for a student to recruit subjects, then trade the subjects he or she has recruited for subjects recruited by other students in the class. (An exception is the practice 3-card Rorschach; use anyone you wish for this.)

**Note re meeting with instructor to discuss the full TAT you gave:**

The TAT need *not* be turned in prior to your meeting with me. But be sure to give yourself enough time to have gone through the record quite carefully on your own, and with your partner (I may meet re the TAT with two of you at once), so that you will be prepared to talk in our meeting about what interpretations you think might be appropriate. I will ask you to tell me your thoughts re the whole record, and then we will go through some of the stories together.

Use the order of the TAT cards as specified by either ABZ or Rapaport/Schafer; you have those listed on a page on SAKAI. Easiest thing will be just to use the set of TAT cards of which you already have a copy, but be sure to add a blank card at the end if there is not one there already. Remember to omit the 4 cards that are not appropriate for the gender of the person you are testing (see list on SAKAI to figure this out).

There is nothing to hand in prior to your meeting with me. *But please bring an extra copy of the TAT stories so that I can read it along with you,* and please be sure that you have thought through the question of what you think the stories show. There is no written TAT paper due, though; just the discussion with me.

You need not type the TATs; we can use your handwritten version.

**Note re individual Rorschach meeting with instructor:**

Your Rorschach protocol need *not* be turned in prior to your meeting with me. But be sure to give yourself enough time to have gone through and coded the Rorschach record quite carefully on your own, so that you will be prepared to talk in our meeting about what codes as well as interpretations you think might be appropriate. I will first ask you to tell me your thoughts re the whole record, and then we will go through many of the responses together.

If you use a copy of the Rorschach inkblots borrowed from the clinic, please remember: you should not keep out a Rorschach set from the clinic for more than a day or two.

There is nothing to hand in prior to your meeting with me. *But please bring an extra copy of the Rorschach protocol so that I can read it along with you,* and please be sure that you have thought through the question of what you think the Rorschach responses might indicate about the person; you might consider in advance which responses you think it is most important for us to discuss. There is no written paper due on this protocol; just the discussion with me. You need not type it up; we can use your handwritten version.

***NOTE RE FINAL PAPER/REPORT: AT END OF SEMESTER (7 days after final class meeting), TURN IN paper on Rorschach protocol (Comprehensive System), probably with structural summary included (which will have been handed out, with
“correct” codes). 5-7 pages, double spaced. Use computer program as part of the process to produce a report; BUT then integrate this material with a more qualitative consideration of individual responses, sequence analysis, or whatever else seems relevant; offer an overview of the most salient features of the protocol. Note: do not just offer material from the computerized report! See below *** for more guidelines re this paper. The paper should be double-spaced. Please create a standard WORD document; do NOT send a pdf, as I will need to be able to write my comments directly into your paper.
Send paper to the following email address: lsass@gsapp.rutgers.edu.

(See below for more information on this assignment.) *Note: Paper due 7 days after final class meeting.

*** Note re final write-up of a Rorschach protocol. There is no single way to do this assignment well, but here are a few suggestions to bear in mind:

Try to say something about the qualitative features of some of the specific responses. Consider also whether you might have something interesting to say about sequence analysis (e.g., possible psychodynamic interpretation of two or more responses offered in a row—which could be within a given card or across two or more cards). Consider whether there might be features of the automatic, computerized interpretation that could be misleading—and if so, say why. In general, try to write your report in a way that is easily comprehensible, and that makes sense to you. That is: avoid too much Rorschach jargon, but at the same time, try to indicate what it is about the Rorschach responses that warrant the interpretations you offer. Actual psychological reports sometimes make little reference to the actual data, but in the case of this assignment, I would like you to indicate the empirical bases of your interpretations, either explicitly in your text or by including the variable on which your interpretation is based in a parenthesis. It is often a good idea to include some brief illustrative quotations in the body of your paper (these can be as short as a phrase or a sentence). Try (without going to an obsessive extreme) to indicate that you know why you are offering the interpretations you offer (as opposed to simply paraphrasing what is given in the computerized report). Include in your report a summarizing paragraph that gives a quick overview of the most significant findings (at beginning or end, or perhaps lead with something very general and then sum up at the end).

Please do not turn in a paper that simply regurgitates, with merely cosmetic or stylistic changes, the RIAP report. The RIAP report should only be a starting point. For instance: you should NOT include statements (or versions of statements) from the RIAP report that you yourself do not fully understand or could not defend if they were challenged.

And to repeat: you MUST indicate the empirical basis of your claims (i.e., by indicating which structural summary score is relevant to what you claim, or which particular response supports your claim).

Some details on the final paper: Please email your paper to: lsass@gsapp.rutgers.edu

Please give the attachment containing your paper a label as follows: your last name, first name, Rorschach paper; as in the following example: Smith, John_Rorschach
paper. Your paper should be DOUBLE SPACED, and the pages should be numbered.
Paper should be 5-7 pages long, double spaced.

LIST OF SOME MATERIALS TO BE HANDED OUT IN CLASS:

_The following three items are not photocopies:_
Structural Summary Blank
Color Location Sheet
Cluster Data Sheet

_And the following items are photocopies:_
“Cheat sheet” with modes and means
Protocols # 5, 35, 4, 182.
Psychological reports re: JP, MR, TM.

A number of photocopies will be handed out in class, for in-class use only, including:
TATs of: musician, MS, TM, ED, HF, M-20s, M-26.
DM: Gottschalk response, 2 TAT responses

**REFERENCE INFORMATION RE COURSE READINGS:**

Washington DC: Harper & Row. (=ABZ)
Additional recommended readings re diversity issues in Rorschach:


Additional Readings re Rorschach controversy:

Sass summary of
(2003), chapter 9 (= pp. 217-255, 363-371 of What’s Wrong…; you need only read my summary of this particular chapter).

Recommended:


Introduction to R-PAS, either in this class or the following. Reading to be announced. Source of information is Meyer et al (2011).

SOME ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND READING on the TAT, CLASSIC ARTICLES (SUGGESTED ONLY):
Here are listed some background readings on the TAT (not required), for those who are interested in consulting some of the classic articles:


STATEMENTS ON DISABILITIES AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’s disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form.

Rutgers University’s principle of academic integrity can be found here: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers/