

Advanced Tests and Measurement

Ethics and Professional Standards



PSY 721 Ethics

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What We Will Cover in This Section.

- Legal issues.
- Ethical principles and standards.
- Issues.



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Question?

Which of the following might be an ethical violation?
Why?



3

At a cocktail party a psychologist discusses a student's scores on an achievement test with the older brother of the student. The older brother is a teacher in that school district and wants to use the information to assist his brother who has had trouble fitting in.



4

A counselor has spent months establishing rapport with a very sullen, withdrawn student. After much hard work a level of trust is established between the two. In a placement interview the student mentions that he has been planning to bring a gun to school to 'get' a teacher who has been on his case. The counselor warns the administration, the student's parents, and the threatened teacher.



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In a formal hearing in a child custody battle the mother's attorney subpoenas all assessment materials regarding the child's mental, psychological, and emotional tests and assessment. The school counselor provides the attorney with her written notes regarding discussions with the child.



6

A counselor in a rehabilitation clinic purchases a computer-scored test that was developed to assess malingering. Using the test results the counselor makes decisions as to whether people with workers compensation cases should return to work.

When confronted by colleagues who complain that people are being incorrectly rejected for rehabilitation services on the basis of this test, the counselor states that he relied on the computer scoring and interpretation to make the decisions and that any errors are the fault of the publisher.



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A psychologist was asked to assist a human resources manager to help in identifying the most desirable candidate for a machinist's job. He uses a cognitive abilities test to evaluate the applicants. When the psychologist realized that this was an ethnically diverse group, he selected different norms for each person based on the individual's ethnicity.



8

A psychologist gives a battery of tests as part of a career guidance project for a large company. Employees are evaluated off site. They are tested during work hours, given feedback on their test scores, and then return to the workplace. One woman's scores on a two standard personality tests are quite discrepant. In the feedback session the woman denies any personal problems and subsequently returns to work. The psychologist reviews the test results with colleagues who concur that the scores are extraordinary.

What should the psychologist do?



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Legal Issues

- Background.
- Civil Rights Act, 1964.
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 1975.
- Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990.



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Ethical Issues



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Ethical Principles of Psychologists

- A. Competence.
- B. Integrity.
- C. Professional and Scientific Responsibility.
- D. Respect for People's Rights and Dignity.
- E. Concern for Others' Welfare.
- F. Social Responsibility.



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General Standards

- 1.04 Boundaries of Competence.
- 1.05 Maintaining Expertise.
- 1.06 Basis for Scientific and Professional Judgments.
- 1.07 Describing the Nature and Results of Psychological Services.
- 1.14 Avoiding Harm.

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Evaluation, Assessment, or Intervention

- 2.02 Competence and Appropriate Use of Assessments and Interventions.
- 2.05 Interpreting Assessment Results.
- 2.09 Explaining Assessment Results.

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Privacy and Confidentiality

- 5.01 Discussing the Limits of Confidentiality.
- 5.02 Maintaining Confidentiality.
- 5.03 Minimizing Intrusions on Privacy.

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Guidelines for Test User Qualifications

Guidelines that, ‘...inform test users and the general public of the qualifications that the APA considers important for the competent and responsible use of psychological tests.’



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Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing.

Establishes the professional guidelines for developing, using, and evaluating a test.



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Code of Fair Testing Practice in Education

Establishes standards for the development, interpretation, fair use, and communication of the results of ‘professionally developed’ tests.



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Ethical Standards for School Counselors

A9. Evaluation, Assessment and Interpretation

- a. Adheres to all professional standards regarding selection, administration, and interpretation of assessment measures...
- b. Provides explanations of the nature, purposes, and results of assessment/evaluation measures in language that can be understood by counselee(s).
- c. Does not misuse assessment results and interpretations and takes reasonable steps to prevent others from misusing the information.
- d. Utilizes caution when using assessment techniques, making evaluations, and interpreting the performance of populations not represented in the norm group on which an instrument was standardized.



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Issue: Right to Privacy

The right to privacy is the right of the individual to decide for himself how much he will share with others his thoughts, his feelings, and the facts of his personal life.



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Issue: Confidentiality

- Who should have access to test results?
 - Individual?
 - Teacher?
 - Parents?
 - Administration?
 - Company?
 - Supervisor?



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Issue: Feedback

- Who should get feedback?
- What format should the feedback take?

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Issue: Diversity

- Individuals with disabilities.
- Demographic variables.
 - Ethnicity.
 - Race.
 - Culture.
 - Gender.
 - Age.
 - Linguistic.

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Diversity (Continued)

- Legal issues.
- Test bias.
- Between group differences.
- Psychological characteristics that may influence test performance.
- Between-group differences

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Other Issues

- Who gives informed consent?
- Stigmatizing.
- Computerized testing.
- On-line testing.

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The End
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NEXT
WEEK!

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