

Psychology & Law

PSYC 601

Prerequisites

PSYC 101: General Psychology; PSYC 210: Statistical Principles of Psychological Research

Course Overview & Objectives

The interface of psychology and law is broad and multifaceted. The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the clinical and empirical application of psychology to the legal system. Specifically, we will examine how research from clinical, cognitive, developmental, and social psychology contribute to a better understanding of forensic and legal issues including eyewitness testimony, criminal profiling, risk assessment, psychopathy, law enforcement interrogation tactics, jury selection, and criminal sentencing. We will also discuss the myriad of psychologists' roles in forensic settings, ranging from a clinician evaluating a defendant's sanity to a researcher examining the reliability of lie detection to an expert witness educating jurors about psychological issues. These topics will be explored by reviewing empirical findings, discussing case examples from popular media, incorporating our past experiences and observations, and applying the principles of forensic psychology to our daily lives and beliefs about the legal system. Due to its upper-level nature, this course is geared toward students who already have a basic understanding of psychological and/or legal principles and theories.

The course objectives are as follows:

- Demonstrate a basic understanding of the application of psychological principles to the legal system.
- Develop an awareness of the current state of scientific literature in forensic psychology.
- Refine writing and critical thinking skills in the context of analyzing the appropriateness of psychological research and methods in various arenas of forensic psychology.
- Recognize common myths and misperceptions about psychology and the legal system.
- Become familiar with the wide range of psychologists' roles in the legal system.
- Appreciate the dialectical relationship between the fields of psychology and law as related to prevailing morals and legal statutes.

Course Format

Lecture, small group activities, videos, in-class writing assignments, and other demonstrations will be used to introduce a broad range of topics and assist in student learning. I view learning as interactive, so it is expected you will participate in class discussions and classroom assignments.

Required Text:

Costanzo, M. & Krauss, D. (2015). *Forensic and Legal Psychology: Psychological Science Applied to Law, 2nd Edition* New York, NY: Worth Publishers

Additional Resources

Course Website

I will use Sakai to provide you with easy access to class notes, assignments, and the syllabus. You can access the Sakai site via MyUNC or by going to <https://www.unc.edu/sakai/> and then logging in through "Onyen Login." Much of the information you will need for the course will be provided via Sakai, so please ensure that

you can access the Sakai site consistently and easily. If you have any problems logging in or navigating the system, contact the ITS (Information Technology Services) help desk at 919.962.HELP (4357). Please let me know as soon as possible if you have any problems accessing the site.

It is recommended that you print off the notes (in Microsoft PowerPoint) before coming to class each day. Doing so will facilitate your note-taking, allowing you more time to comprehend the material and participate in class discussions. These class notes are **NOT** exhaustive; that is, they merely serve as a “skeleton” of what we will be covering on that particular day. You should still be prepared to take notes during lectures. You will not perform well on the exams without attending class!

Student Companion Website:

http://bcs.worthpublishers.com/costanzokrauss/default.asp#t_628757_____

You can review material from each chapter and take practice quizzes.

American Psychology-Law Society

www.ap-ls.org

AP-LS is the professional organization for psychologists, psychiatrists, and lawyers who are interested in promoting the empirical study of psycholegal topics. This website provides resources for professionals as well as students who are interested in pursuing graduate work in forensic psychology.

APA Style (for writing papers)

www.apastyle.org

This website addresses some of the most frequently asked questions about writing in APA style. This website will be a good tool to use when writing your paper for this class.

Course Requirements

1. **Attendance and Participation:** Classroom attendance and regular participation are necessary to be successful in this course. I structure my classes to make it *worth it* to you to attend because we will be able to engage in the material in a dynamic manner with live demonstrations, relevant case examples, and small-group discussions. These materials cannot be replicated by the textbook or lecture slides. Active participation in classroom discussions will improve the quality of the course for everyone, and it has also been demonstrated to improve learning. You are therefore expected to attend and participate in all scheduled classes unless circumstances beyond your control prevent your attending. Formal attendance will not be taken; however, a portion of your grade will depend upon your completion of in-class assignments (see below). You will be accountable for information presented in classroom lectures (which may not be covered in the text). If you miss class, you should contact another student for the lecture notes to be properly prepared for an exam. I will not provide this information if you are absent.
2. **Assigned Readings/Supplemental Materials:** Each class there will be assigned readings from the text and supplementary materials (e.g., legal briefs, journal articles, videos). The purpose of the assigned readings and supplemental materials is to provide sources for learning more information about the topic matter discussed in class as well as to introduce you to seminal research in the field. It is expected that everyone will be familiar with the topic matter from the assigned readings and supplemental materials **before** the class

session in which they will be discussed. Several in-class activities will require that you be familiar with the readings and supplemental materials, and completing the readings in advance will enable you to participate in an informed discussion of the material and enable more in-depth discussion of concepts from the text. Please feel free to ask me to clarify any material in the readings you do not understand. I encourage you to read chapter summaries and discussion questions at the end of each chapter to aid in studying for exams. All readings will be available via one of the library databases or Sakai.

3. **Writing Assignment (30%):** You are required to complete one 7-8 page paper that explores a specific psycholegal thesis and demonstrates a critical review of the literature. Your paper must include **AT LEAST** 10 peer-reviewed sources and **AT LEAST** one case law reference. You will have a lot of freedom in selecting your topic, but I will also provide a list of potential paper topics. Example topics include reviewing a case example from popular culture (with prior approval from the instructor) and supporting your analysis of the psychological principles in the case example with empirical data. Another example is to dissect a landmark case in the field of forensic psychology and discuss how its precedent has affected the field. More detailed instructions will be provided via Sakai regarding the specific requirements of the paper, grading criteria, and submission guidelines. Final papers are due **November 23**. Papers may be submitted up to two days late, with a letter-grade deduction for each day the paper is late.
4. **Weekly Progress Tasks (16.67%):** To assist you in structuring your progress toward writing your paper (see above), you will be required to submit weekly progress tasks. The weekly tasks include documenting your reviewed research, revising your thesis, creating outlines, and producing a rough draft of your paper. These weekly tasks are intended to provide structure for this independent writing project and to keep you on track for completing a thorough, well-written final paper by the deadline. The weekly tasks (weeks 1-10) are each worth 5 points and will be graded for effort and thoroughness. A timeline and more thorough instructions for these weekly tasks will be posted on Sakai. Most weekly tasks will be submitted via Sakai – please see the timeline document for exceptions to this submission policy. Late weekly tasks WILL NOT be accepted, unless it is previously approved.
5. **Peer Editing Writing Assignment (16.67%):** You are expected to edit a fellow student's paper. Your grade will be based on the quality of your editorial feedback to your peer. The purpose of this assignment is to a) allow you to develop your writing skills from a different perspective, 2) have you analyze the organizational and content issues of a paper from an unbiased perspective, and 3) enhance the overall quality of your own paper. Just as you are editing a peer's paper, your paper will be edited by a peer. You will then have the opportunity to incorporate that feedback into your final draft before you turn it in for your writing assignment grade. Specific grading criteria will be posted online via Sakai. The revisions and feedback you give to your colleague should be submitted via a hard-copy at the beginning of class on the day it is due. All peer reviews are due by **Monday, November 9**.
6. The paper you submit as the "draft" of your writing assignment (**due October 28**) will be the paper that will be given to another student to revise. No identifying information will be on any of the papers. If you do not submit a "draft" of your writing assignment, then you will **NOT** be eligible to earn the credit for the peer-editing writing assignment. No late peer-edited assignments will be accepted because your peer needs the feedback in a timely manner. If you fail to submit your revisions, you will not receive the revisions made to your paper.

7. **In-Class Activities (10%):** You will have the opportunity to participate in up to seven (7) graded in-class activities throughout the course. The activities will be designed to supplement the topic of the day. These will *not* be announced ahead of time, and there will not be any opportunities to make-up the activities. You are required to complete five (5) in-class activities. You will receive full credit for each activity in which you participate thoroughly and demonstrate your critical integration of the class lecture, discussion points, and supplemental materials.
8. **Exams (26.67%)**
 There will be 2 non-cumulative exams, each worth 13.33% of your final grade. The mid-term exam is scheduled for **October 7**; and the final exam is scheduled for **Friday, December 4 at 8:00 a.m.** Any of the material covered in class lectures, class activities, assigned readings, and supplemental materials will be fair game for the exams. However, the majority of the exam questions will cover what was discussed during class. Exams will be multiple-choice, and you must bring a scantron and a #2 pencil to each exam.

Make-up Policy

Make-up exams will **ONLY** be allowed in the case of extreme circumstances such as severe illness, hospitalization, death in the immediate family, or unavoidable obstacles (i.e., car accident). Proper documentation **will** be required for missing an exam. Proper documentation includes (a) date and time of incident, (b) clear description of why the student could not take the exam at the scheduled time, and (c) name and phone number of the physician/verifier. Further documentation may be requested. Make up tests may be in a different format than the original exam and will be given at the convenience of the instructor or at the time of the final exam. If possible, you must contact me **24 hours in advance** if you are going to miss an exam. In order to be eligible to make up an exam for an excused absence, you **MUST** contact me **within a week** of the missed exam. If you miss an exam without appropriate documentation, you will receive a score of zero for the exam.

The final draft of your writing assignment may be submitted up to two (2) days late. For each day the assignment is late, you will be deducted one letter grade, with a maximum penalty of a two letter-grade deduction. You will not be allowed to submit late weekly progress tasks unless you have **prior approval** and only due to extreme circumstances.

In-class assignments (including Reading Roles) cannot be made up – even if the absence is excused. You are allowed to miss two of these assignments without penalty so there is no opportunity to make them up.

Grading Scale

	A: 93-100	A-: 90-92
B+: 87-89	B: 83-86	B-: 80-82
C+: 77-79	C: 73-76	C-: 70-72
D+: 67-69	D: 60-66	F: ≤59

Grading System

Grades can be determined by completing the following chart:

	Points Earned/Possible
Weekly Writing Assignments	<u> </u> / <u>40</u> (8at 5 pts each)
Peer Editing	<u> </u> / <u>50</u>

Final Draft	<u> </u> / <u>100</u>
In-class activities	<u> </u> / <u>30 (5 at 6 pts each)</u>
Exam 1 (Midterm)	<u> </u> / <u>40</u>
Exam 2 (Final Exam)	<u> </u> / <u>40</u>
FINAL GRADE*	<u> </u> / <u>300</u>
*Divide your earned points by 300 to get your average	

Things to Remember about Grades

- Disputes regarding grading should be addressed by making an appointment with me **within one week** of receiving the grade.
- If you would like to discuss your course grade, please schedule an appointment to do so **before** finals week. I will not provide grades through emails, so please try to keep track of your grades throughout the semester.

General Class Guidelines and Professional Behavior

- Please turn off or silence all cell phones and electronic devices for class. Do not send texts, check your email, Facebook page, etc. during class. These activities are distracting to me as well as your peers. You may bring a computer to class to take notes, but if you are caught using it for any other purpose (e.g., online shopping, watching sports highlights or Jimmy Fallon lip sync battles) I will ask you not to bring it back.
- Please arrive on time. If you are late, enter quietly and sit in the least disruptive location.
- Prior to turning in assignments or preparing for exams, **review the syllabus and Sakai**. Many of your questions can be answered there.
- Please be respectful of other students. Some topics of discussion may be sensitive or controversial. Keep this in mind as you share your opinions, and be considerate of others when they are sharing.
- Class meets from 8:00 a.m. until 8:50 a.m. I will not lecture past 8:50, so I ask you not to begin packing up until I am finished lecturing. This is distracting and disrespectful to me and your fellow students.
- Please keep track of your grades via Sakai. I will not accept individual requests for grade calculation throughout the semester. If you have a specific question or concern about your grade, please make an appointment to see me.
- Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other social networks: Professionalism, in part, entails maintaining fairness, equity, and impartiality in the instructor-student relationship. Therefore, I do not accept "Friend requests" from current students for any online social networks. I appreciate your understanding and cooperation.

How to Succeed in Psychology & Law

- COME TO CLASS!!!
- Review the assigned readings/supplemental materials PRIOR to class
- Keep up with the weekly progress assignments for your final research paper. Not only are these assignments worth credit toward your final grade, but completing them will help you earn a higher grade on the final writing assignment which is 30% of your grade. Participate in class discussions and be willing to participate with your peers during in-class assignments

- Draw examples from your personal experiences or current events in the media to illustrate the topics
- Don't be afraid to ask questions in class or meet with me during office hours. Don't wait until the day before the exam or the end of the semester to ask for help.
- HAVE FUN!!! 😊

UNC Honor Code and Academic Integrity

For more than 130 years, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has had a student-administered honor system and judicial system through which students have pledged not to lie, cheat, or steal. All students in attendance at the University of North Carolina are expected to abide by the Honor Code and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The University expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. Students enjoy a great deal of freedom at Carolina and have been entrusted to hold each other accountable for maintaining a just and safe community. Academic misconduct includes all acts of dishonesty in any academically related matter and any knowing or intentional help or attempt to help, or conspiracy to help, another student. Your full participation and observance of the honor code is expected. The Honor Code can be viewed at <http://honor.unc.edu>

Special Needs

If you require assistance in the classroom due to a disability of any type, please contact Accessibility Resources and Services (ARS) during the first week of the semester so that appropriate accommodations can be made. After initial arrangements have been made with ARS, or if you are already registered with the ARS, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss any course accommodations that may be necessary. The ARS website address is <http://accessibility.unc.edu>

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE*

		Topics covered	Text	Supplemental Materials	Assign. Due
Week 1					
W	8/19	Introduction to Course/Review Syllabus			
F	8/21	Overview of Psychology and Law	Ch. 1		
Week 2					
M	8/24	The Psychology of Interrogations/Paper Topic	Ch. 2		
W	8/26	Interrogations/Falso Confessions		Perillo & Kassin (2011)	Reading Role
F	8/28	False Confessions cont.		Kassin (2012)	Wk #2
Week 3					
M	8/31	Detecting Deception	Ch. 3		

W	9/2	Detecting Deception		Ekman & O'Sullivan (1991)	Reading Role
F	9/4	No Class – Literature search			Wk #3
Week 4					
M	9/7	NO CLASS – Labor Day			
W	9/9	Criminal Profiling	Ch. 5	Douglas & Burgess (1986)	
F	9/11	Trial Consultation		Williams & Jones (2005) chapter; Brodsky (2009) excerpts	Wk #4
Week 5					
M	9/14	Trial Consultation		Casey Anthony trial fact sheet	
W	9/16	Jury selection	Ch. 6		
F	9/18	Expert Witness Testimony		Brodsky et al. (2010)	Wk #5
Week 6					
M	9/21	Expert/Eyewitness Testimony	Ch. 7	Video: "Picking Cotton"	
W	9/23	Eyewitness Testimony		Behram (2001)	Reading Role
F	9/25	Eyewitness Testimony		Stebly et al. (2001)	Wk #6
Week 7					
M	9/28	Jury Decision-Making	Ch. 13		
W	9/30	Capital Trials/Writing Assignment Review (creating an outline)	Ch. 17	Butler and Moran (2007); Barnett et al. (2004)	Reading Role (Butler)
F	10/2	Capital Trials		Just mercy excerpt	Wk #7
Week 8					
M	10/5	Review for Midterm			
W	10/7	Midterm			
F	10/9	Competency to Stand Trial	Ch. 8		Wk #8
Week 9					
M	10/12	Competency to Stand Trial		Video: A Crime of Insanity)Part 1- 0:00-22:30)	
W	10/14	Competency to Stand Trial/Restoration		Hubbard (2003)	
F	10/15	No Class- Fall Break			

Week 10				
M	10/19	Criminal Responsibility	Ch. 9	
W	10/21	Criminal Responsibility	Video: Ralph Tortorici (Part 2)	
F	10/23	Criminal Responsibility	Eddie Routh and James Holmes files	Wk #10
Week 11				
M	10/26	Violence Risk Assessment	Ch. 14	
W	10/28	Violence Risk Assessment		Wk #11 Draft
F	10/30	Guest Lecture: Dr. Michael Griffin The case of Edward Neely	Dr. Griffin's evaluation of Mr. Neely	
Week 12				
M	11/2	Risk Assessment: Duty to Warn	Ethical Vignettes	
W	11/4	Sexual Violent Predator (SVP)	Levenson & Cotter (2005); Tewksbury et al. (2012)	Reading Role
F	11/6	SVP Debate		Debate Prep
Week 13				
M	11/9	Malingering	McDermott (2012)	Peer Reviews
W	11/11	Malingering		
F	11/13	Malingering	Case Studies	
Week 14				
M	11/16	Juvenile Offenders: Treatment and Assessment	Schetky (2003); Excerpt from Just Mercy	
W	11/18	Juvenile Offenders cont.	Vincent et al. (2012)	
F	11/20	Civil Commitment	Wyatt v. Stickney; NC involuntary commitment	
Week 15				
M	11/23	Child Custody	Ch. 12	Final Paper
W	11/25	No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday		
F	11/27	No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday		

Week 16					
M	11/30	Correctional		Video: Serving Life	
W	12/2	Review for Final Exam			
Final Exam					
F	12/4 8 am	FINAL EXAM			

*The course schedule may change during the semester. We may spend more or less time on each topic depending on the level of comprehension the class demonstrates. You will be notified of any changes.