

Course Syllabus

Psyc. 3308-001: Forensic Psychology

Instructor: Kevin Murch

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Office Hours: Wed. 9-10AM and by appointment

Course Number, Section Number, and Course Title: Psychology 3308-001, Forensic Psychology

Time and Place of Class Meetings: MWF 10-10:50AM, Life Science 100

Required Textbooks and Other Course Materials: Bartol, C.R., & Bartol, A.M. (2008). *Introduction to Forensic Psychology Research and Application*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Description of Course: This course examines the legal system's basic assumptions and procedures in light of social scientific evidence pertaining to human behavior relevant to the rights of defendants, victims, children, and mental patients, including areas of clinical psychology in which psychologists act as expert witnesses and consultants.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Contrast the perspectives of psychology and law;
- Demonstrate knowledge of the basic principles and systems of American jurisprudence (i.e. how laws are made, the organization of state and federal courts, and the basics of civil and criminal court procedures);
- Demonstrate understanding of psychological research on relevant legal topics (e.g. assessment of risk among criminal offenders, etc.);
- Appreciate the unique ethical issues involved with the practice of forensic psychology;
- Appreciate the potential benefits and limitations of psychological knowledge applied to assist law enforcement personnel;
- Describe the different types of forensic psychological evaluations and the procedures used by psychologists to obtain information that forms the basis of their opinions;
- Appreciate the challenges facing psychologists who work in corrections; and
- Understand the various career opportunities in forensic psychology and the training each requires. [Insert measurable student learning outcomes]

Course Requirements:

1. Regular Examinations

This course will have three in-class examinations. Each examination will be worth 100 points and cover material from the assigned reading and lectures. Exam questions will be based on learning objectives for each chapter which will be distributed in class. The format of exam questions will be multiple-choice.

2. Quizzes

Starting the second week of class, students will have weekly quizzes. These quizzes will add up to 100 points over the course of the semester and are intended to provide a supplement to students' grades, as make-up examinations will not be offered. Additionally, if students are dissatisfied with an exam grade, they may substitute their cumulative score on quizzes for an exam grade. Students will only receive credit for correct answers and will not be penalized for incorrect answers; however, if a student should opt to substitute their quiz grade for an exam, totals will be considered out of 100 points. These quizzes are being included in an effort to encourage regular class attendance and to facilitate learning of course objectives. Quiz questions will come directly from a pool of examination questions, so it is to a student's advantage to participate.

3. Final Examination

This course will have a comprehensive final examination which will cover all the material presented in the course. The final examination will be worth 200 points and is mandatory. Questions will be presented in a multiple choice format.

Grading Policy: Final course grades will be based on a total of 500 possible points obtained from the following sources: **(1)** three examinations (100 points each) or two examinations with quiz substitution (100 points each) and **(2)** comprehensive final exam (200 points). Final course grades will be calculated as follows: 450-500 = A, 400-449 = B, 350-399 = C, 300-349 = D, 0-299 = F

Attendance Policy: Regular class attendance is strongly encouraged. Students are expected to complete the assigned reading prior to the class meeting for which it was assigned. As noted above, attendance will be encouraged through weekly quizzes which can be used to supplement grades.

Descriptions of major assignments and examinations with due dates:

Dates ¹ :	Topics ² :	Readings ³ :
1/21/09 – 1/23/09	Introduction and Overview of Forensic Psychology	Chapter 1
1/26/09 – 1/30/09	Overview (continued) Police Psychology	Chapter 2
2/2/09 – 2/6/09	Investigative Psychology I	Chapter 3
2/9/09 – 2/13/09	Investigative Psychology II Exam 1: Friday 2/13/09	Chapter 3
2/16/09 – 2/20/09	Consulting I: Overview	Chapter 4
2/23/09- 2/27/09	Consulting I: Criminal Courts	Chapter 5
3/2/09-3/6/09	Consulting II: Juvenile and Civil Courts	Chapter 6
3/9/09-3/13/09	Criminal Psychology I: Criminal Behavior Exam 2: Friday 3/13/09	Chapter 7
3/16/09-3/20/09	Spring Break	
3/23/09-3/27/09	Criminal Psychology II: Violence and Intimidation	Chapter 8
3/30/09-4/3/09	Criminal Psychology III: Sexual Assault	Chapter 9
4/6/09-4/10/09	Victimology I	Chapter 10
4/13/09-4/17/09	Victimology II	Chapter 11
4/20/09-4/24/09	Correctional Psychology I	Chapter 12
4/27/09-5/1/09	Correctional Psychology II Exam 3: Friday 5/1/09	Chapter 13
5/4/09-5/8/09	Special Topics and Review	
5/11/09-5/15/09	Final Exam Week Comprehensive Final Exam: Monday 5/11/09 8-10:30 AM	
¹ Dates are listed in a weekly basis. ² Topics are subject to change depending on the progression of the class. ³ Assigned readings are from the required text. Any additional readings will be distributed in class.		

Drop Policy: Please refer to the University of Texas at Arlington's drop policy.

Americans With Disabilities Act: The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112 - The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of federal legislation entitled *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.

As a faculty member, I am required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the

basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty of their need for accommodation and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels. Information regarding specific diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability. Also, you may visit the Office for Students with Disabilities in room 102 of University Hall or call them at (817) 272-3364.

Academic Integrity: It is the philosophy of The University of Texas at Arlington that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University.

"Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts." (Regents' Rules and Regulations, Series 50101, Section 2.2)

Student Support Services Available: The University of Texas at Arlington supports a variety of student success programs to help you connect with the University and achieve academic success. These programs include learning assistance, developmental education, advising and mentoring, admission and transition, and federally funded programs. Students requiring assistance academically, personally, or socially should contact the Office of Student Success Programs at 817-272-6107 for more information and appropriate referrals.

Final Review Week: A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless specified in the class syllabi. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. Classes are held as scheduled during this week and lectures and presentations may be given.

E-Culture Policy: The University of Texas at Arlington has adopted the University email address as an official means of communication with students. Through the use of email, UT-Arlington is able to provide students with relevant and timely information, designed to facilitate student success. In particular,

important information concerning registration, financial aid, payment of bills, and graduation may be sent to students through email.

All students are assigned an email account and information about activating and using it is available at www.uta.edu/email. New students (first semester at UTA) are able to activate their email account 24 hours after registering for courses. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, and it remains active as long as a student is enrolled at UT-Arlington. Students are responsible for checking their email regularly.

Make-up Exam Policy: There will be no make-up examinations for this course. If you are unable to make it to a test, you may substitute your cumulative quiz grade for missed points.