

COURSE SYLLABUS

Forensic Psychology – PSYC 2—

I. Introductory Information

- (A) Department Name: Psychology
- (B) Department Catalog Number: PSYC 2--
- (C) Course Title: Forensic Psychology
- (D) Semester Hours of Credit: Three (3)
- (E) Clock Hours Per Week: Three (3)
- (F) Overlays: None
- (G) Restrictions Upon Student Registration: PSYC 100

II. Description of the Course

A. Catalog description:

An introduction to the field of psychology and the law, also known as Forensic Psychology or Legal Psychology. Students will be introduced to the many ways that psychology influences the legal system.

B. Comprehensive description:

Provides a comprehensive discussion of the growing field of psychology and the law, also known as Legal Psychology or Forensic Psychology. An introduction to how psychological phenomena may influence the criminal justice system, including profiling, custody evaluations, competency evaluations, jury decision-making, and eyewitness testimony. Students will be provided with information on careers in psychology and the law, including the growing field of trial consulting.

III: Exposition

A. Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to do the following:

1. understand the influence that clinical psychology has had on the legal system
2. understand the influence that experimental psychology has had on the legal system
3. demonstrate knowledge of the careers available to those who study psychology and the law
4. understand the roles played by members of the psychology community within the legal system
5. recognize ethical and occupational concerns involved in the intersection of psychology and the law
6. demonstrate knowledge of the criminal justice system
7. understand the roles played by members of the legal system

B. Activities and Requirements:

As part of this course, students will do the following:

1. complete assigned readings from required sources
2. participate in classroom discussions
3. complete examinations

C. Major Units and Time Allotted:

1. Overview of the criminal justice/legal system – 3 contact hours
2. Clinical psychology and the law – 11 contact hours
3. Experimental psychology and the law – 11 contact hours
4. Applied psychology and the law – 6 contact hours
5. Careers in psychology and the law – 11 contact hours
6. Ethics in psychology and the law – 3 contact hours

D. Materials and Bibliography

I. Suggested textbooks:

Bartol, C. R., & Bartol, A. M. (2004). *Introduction to forensic psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Bartol, C. R., & Bartol, A. M. (Eds.) (2005). *Current perspectives in forensic psychology and criminal justice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Costanzo, M. (2004). *Psychology applied to law*. Belmont, CA: Thomson-Wadsworth Publishing.

Wrightsmann, L. S., & Fulero, S. M. (2005). *Forensic psychology* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson-Wadsworth Publishing.

Wrightsmann, L. S., Nietzel, M. T., Fortune, W. H., & Greene, E. (2002). *Psychology and the legal system* (5th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson-Wadsworth Publishing.

II. Other materials:

Not applicable

III. Bibliographic support:

The following references are available at the Stevenson Library.

Arrigo, B. A., & Shipley, S. L. (2005). *Introduction to forensic psychology: Issues and controversies in crime and justice*. Boston: Elsevier.

Bersoff, D. N. (1999). *Ethical conflicts in psychology*. Washington, D. C.: American Psychological Association.

Blau, T. H. (1984). *The psychologist as expert witness*. New York: Wiley.

O'Donohue, W. T., & Levensky, E. R. (Eds.) (2004). *Handbook of forensic psychology: Resource for mental health and legal professionals*. Boston: Academic Press.

IV. Standards

Grades will be assigned in accordance with University policy. Final grades will be based on scores on exams and performance on additional assignments.

V. Rationale and Impact:

- A. This course will provide students with exposure to one of the growing subfields within psychology, which will not only give them a broader understanding of the field as a whole, but will provide them with information on additional career paths. This course will also meet student demand for information on Forensic Psychology, which will increase the attractiveness of the department and the University as a whole to both current and potential students.
- B. The course is designed for undergraduate students interested in psychology and the law. Thus, it is of interest to psychology majors, criminal justice majors, and potentially paralegal studies majors.
- C. This syllabus will introduce a new course into the Psychology Department. This course, as mentioned above, will meet an existing need within the department for a course in Forensic Psychology. The Criminal Justice and Paralegal Studies Department may also find the course of interest for its students.

VI. Cost and Staff Analysis:

- A. This course can be taught utilizing current psychology faculty members. A faculty member was recently hired specifically to meet this demand; thus, this course will make use of faculty hired for this purpose.
- B. It is anticipated that the course will initially be taught once a year. Additional offerings will depend on demand.

VII: Date approved by university president:

Signature

Date