

## **PSYC 3310 3.0 M(W) PSYCHOLOGY AND LAW**

### **Instructor**

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### **Teaching Assistant**

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**Time:** Thursday 11:30-2:20pm

**Location:** SLH-D

**Textbook:** The readings for the course are contained in a **customized text for PSYC 3310** that is available in the bookstore – the nine chapters have been selected from the following text: J. Pozzulo, C. Bennell, & A. Forth (2012). *Forensic Psychology* (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). Pearson Prentice Hall: Toronto. You can purchase the entire text if you like however, but not all chapters will be covered in the course.

### **Course Objectives**

The course explores the relationship between psychology and the legal system by examining applications of psychology to legal issues and procedures. Drawing on research from a variety of areas including social, cognitive, developmental and clinical psychology, we will look critically at the trial process – both centre stage and behind the scenes. Many of the legal assumptions about human nature that underlie legal procedures and practices will be scrutinized from a psychological perspective. That is, the law's informal theories of human behaviour will be compared to what psychologists know on the basis of theory and research. The course will explore the usefulness of social science information in the practice of law, while at the same time critically examining the problems and pitfalls of using such information. A variety of topics will be covered including police interrogations and confessions, eyewitness testimony, child witnesses, jury selection, and decision making.

### **Class Format**

The course format consists of one 3 hour lecture session each week. Each week we will have a lecture, which may include a research demonstration, some video, and some class discussion. The lecture will be related in part to an assigned chapter from the textbook as well as an additional journal article. Lectures are designed to stimulate your interest in the field of psychology and law and not all of the information presented in the text will be covered in class. My job as a course instructor is to motivate you to learn and to highlight what I think are some interesting issues that are related to the weekly topic. You are responsible, however, for covering the text and the additional readings in their entirety. In addition, some of the lectures will contain information that is not in the text. Questions pertaining to such information may appear on exams, and it is in your best interest to

borrow notes from a classmate if you must miss a class. Exam questions may also be derived from supplementary materials such as videos. Research demonstrations may also be conducted in class and questions pertaining to these research demonstrations also may appear on exams. Please note that lectures, as well as other relevant materials, will be posted on Moodle although not usually before the lecture (you will need to sign in to access the postings).

### **Requirements**

Your final grade will be out of 100% and will be based on your scores on the ***in-class midterm***, the ***final exam***, and a ***written assignment***. The midterm and final exam will consist of multiple choice questions, as well as a series of short answer questions. Each test will focus on the material covered since the last test, but the final exam will also include an essay question that draws on the lectures from the whole course. You will also have one paper to write for the course. This paper is worth 20% of your final grade. The deadline for the paper submission will be March 8<sup>th</sup>. You will also have to submit your paper topic and some preliminary literature research by February 16<sup>th</sup> for 3% of your final grade. The deadline for the final paper submission will be March 8<sup>th</sup>. More information regarding the paper will be provided within the first 3 weeks of the course.

There will be no make-up tests, except under extraordinary circumstances (see below regarding Guidelines for Missed Tests/Exams).

### **Important Dates to Keep in Mind:**

- February 9<sup>th</sup> – Midterm (35%)
- February 16<sup>th</sup> – Topic Selection Outline (3%)
- March 8<sup>th</sup> – Written Essay (20%)
- Final Exam Schedule – Test (42%)

**Drop Date:** The last date to drop the course without academic penalty is March 9, 2012

### **Grading**

<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>
90+	A+
80-89	A
75-79	B+
70-74	B
65-69	C+
60-64	C
55-59	D+
50-54	D
40-49	E
0-39	F

## **General information**

Important information for students regarding University policies, including Academic Honesty/Integrity (see below as well) can be found at:

<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/>

## **Guidelines for Missed Tests/Exams**

1. You must contact me (in-person, by telephone or by E-mail) within 48 hours of the test. If you do not speak to me directly (i.e., leave a message on my voicemail or with my secretary, Zehra Bandu at 416-736-2100 ext. 66232), be sure to clearly state your name, student number, course, and a number/time at which you can be reached. If you are unable to contact me during this 48 hour period, subsequent documentation accounting for the delay must be provided.
2. Appropriate documentation verifying the circumstances for the missed test must be provided. Failure to provide appropriate documentation will result in a grade of F on the missed test.
  - A. Tests missed on the grounds of medical circumstances must be supported by an Attending Physician's Statement or a Statement by a Psychologist or Counsellor. The Attending Physician's Statement must include (i) the full name, mailing address and telephone number of the Physician, (ii) state the nature of the illness and its duration (i.e., specific dates covered), and (iii) an indication of whether the illness and/or medication prescribed would have SERIOUSLY affected the student's ability to study and perform over the period in question. Note: The Physician's office may be contacted to verify that the forms were completed by the Physician.
  - B. Tests missed on the grounds of non-medical circumstances must be supported by appropriate documentation (i.e., death certificates, obituary notice, automobile accident reports, airline/train/bus tickets/receipt for emergency travel with date of booking on ticket, etc.). Airline/train/bus ticket/receipts for emergency travel must indicate destination, departure and return dates.
3. In the case of a missed test that is legitimately documented, ***a make-up will be provided.*** You must be prepared to write within the week following the missed test (a date will be set by the instructor). Although the content to be examined will be the same, the format may or may not follow that of the original test. It is ***your responsibility to check with me as to the date/time of the make-up.*** A conflict in another course during the time of the make-up is not an acceptable reason for missing the make-up (unless there is an examination in the other course at that time). If a student misses a make-up opportunity for good reasons (see points A and B above), the missed make-up must be supported by appropriate documentation (see point A and B above).

## **Cheating/Plagiarism**

The University does not look favourably on cheating of any kind and the penalties for doing so are very harsh. Become familiar with the rules and regulations regarding cheating/plagiarism and academic honesty. Go to the following website <http://www.yorku.ca/academicintegrity/> and read the section 'For Students.'

**Cheating:** Cheating is the attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation. Among the forms this kind of dishonesty can take are: obtaining a copy of an examination before it is officially available or learning an examination question before it is officially available; copying another person's answer to an examination question; consulting an unauthorized source during an examination; obtaining assistance by means of documentary, electronic or other aids which are not approved by the instructor; or changing a score or a record of an examination result.

**Impersonation:** It is a breach of academic honesty to have someone impersonate one's self in class, in a test or examination, or in connection with any other type of assignment in a course. Both the impersonator and the individual impersonated may be charged.

**Plagiarism** and other misappropriation of the work of another: Plagiarism is the representation of another person's ideas or writing as one's own. The most obvious form of this kind of dishonesty is the presentation of all or part of another person's published work as something one has written. However, paraphrasing another's writing without proper acknowledgment may also be considered plagiarism. It is also a violation of academic honesty to represent another's artistic or technical work or creation as one's own. This is not to say that students should not use the work of others with the proper acknowledgment.

## **Sanctions for Academic Misconduct**

When verified, a violation of academic honesty may lead to the following penalties:

1. Oral or written disciplinary warning or reprimand;
2. A make-up assignment or examination;
3. Lower grade or failure on assignment or examination;
4. Failure in the course;
5. Suspension from the University for a definite period;
6. Notation on transcript;
7. Withholding or rescinding a York degree, diploma or certificate

## **Weekly Topics & Readings**

**January 5** – General Introduction & Methods.....Chapter 1

**January 12** – Police and the Investigative Process.....Chapter 2+

Hasel, L.E. & Kassin, S.M. (2009). On the presumption of evidentiary independence. *Psychological Science*, 20, 122-126.

**January 19** – Police Investigations continued.....Chapter 2+

Moore, T.E., Copeland P., & Schuller, R. (2010). Deceit, betrayal and the search for truth: Legal and psychological perspectives on the “Mr. Big” strategy. *Criminal Law Quarterly*, 55, 349-405. [YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE ONLY FOR SECTION 4 ‘PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES’ (pp. 379-405)]

**January 26** – Detection of Deception and Memory.....Chapter 3

Meissner C.A. & Kassin S.M. (2002). “He’s guilty!”: Investigator bias in judgments of truth and deception. *Law & Human Behavior*, 26, 469-480.

**February 2** – Eyewitnesses and Identification.....Chapter 4+

Hilliar, K.F. & Kemp, R.I. (2010). Now everyone looks the same: Alcohol intoxication reduces the own race bias in face recognition. *Law & Human Behavior*, 34, 367-378.

**February 9** – Midterm: *Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, and assigned readings, lectures/films*

**February 16** – Child Victims and Witnesses.....Chapter 5+

Connolly, D.A., Price, H.L., Lavoie, J. & Gordon, H.M. (2008). Perceptions and predictors of children’s credibility of a unique event and an instance of a repeated event. *Law & Human Behavior*, 32, 92-112.

## **February 18-24 – Reading Week**

**March 1** – The Jury: Voir Dire, Selection & Decision Making.....Chapter 6+

Schuller, R.A., Kazoleas, V., & Kawakami, K. (2009). The impact of prejudice screening procedures on racial bias in the courtroom. *Law and Human Behavior*, 33, 320-328.

**March 8** – Jury continued.....Chapter 6+

Schuller, R. A. & Hastings, P. (2002). Complainant sexual history evidence: Its impact on mock jurors' decisions. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 26, 252-261.

**March 15** – Film..... Chapter 7

**March 22** – Mental Illness: Fitness to stand trial, NCRMD..... Chapter 8+

Crocker, A. G., Nicholls, T. L., Cote, G, Latimer, E. A., & Seto, M.C. (2010). Individuals found not criminally responsible on account of mental disorder: Are we providing equal protection and equivalent access to mental health services across Canada. *Canadian Journal of Community Health*, 29, 47-54.

**March 29** – Mental Illness & Risk Assessment..... Chapter 9+

Porter, S. & Woodworth, M. (2007). “I’m sorry I did it...but He Started it?”: A comparison of the official and self-reported homicide descriptions of psychopaths and non-psychopaths.

**Final Exam: Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and assigned readings, lectures/films**  
**To be held in the Final Examination Period (April 4-20)**