PSYC 3310-A, Psychology and Law (Fall 2014)

Instructor
Name: Justin Friesen, Ph.D.
Email: jfriesen@yorku.ca
Office hours: By appointment
Office location: BSB 321G
Mailbox: BSB 101*

Teaching Assistants
Margot Sullivan
Email: margots@yorku.ca
Jacy Young
Email: jlyoung@yorku.ca
Office hours: Mondays, 1-2pm
Office location: 5030 E TEL
Mailbox: BSB 059

Surnames A-L
Surnames M-Z

*Whenever you leave anything in a mailbox, email to confirm its receipt.

Lectures: F 14:30-17:15, Sep. 8 – Dec. 7
Location: CLH E
Exam Period: Dec 9-22

Course secretary: Agnes Levstik, 281 BSB, 416-736-5125, alevstik@yorku.ca

Prerequisite: Introduction to Psychology (PSYC 1010 6.0) with a minimum grade of C. If you have registered for this course without this, the university may withdraw you without reimbursement.

Read this syllabus carefully because it contains important information.

Information for students about University policies, including Academic Honesty/Integrity (and see below) can be found at: http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/

Textbook
Costanzo, Krauss, Schuller, & McLachlan (2014). Forensic and Legal Psychology. First Canadian Edition. ISBN: 978-4641-4901-6 or 1-4641-4901-1. This textbook was used in previous terms so there may be used copies available. One copy will be on reserve at the library. There will be other supplementary readings (e.g., journal articles) available through the library website.

Course Objectives

The course explores the relationship between psychology and the legal system by examining applications of psychology to legal issues and procedures. It will draw on areas including social, cognitive, developmental, personality, and clinical psychology and look critically at most aspects of the criminal justice system. The legal system makes many assumptions about human nature and these will be scrutinized from the perspective of psychological science. We will cover topics like police interrogations, confessions, eyewitness testimony, child witnesses, jury selection, decision making, and discrimination/biases in employment contexts. This is a psychology course and although we will cover some aspects of the law incidentally, its purpose is to expose you to psychological research and teach you to think about the law in a critical way, not to teach specifics of the law.
Class Format

Each weekly lecture is 3 hours and may include videos, demonstrations, and discussions. Each topic also has assigned readings to complete outside of class. Some information presented in the readings will not be covered in class and vice versa. Students have permission to record the lecture audio for their own studying but these recordings are not to be posted online. The instructor’s notes will not be provided to those who miss class; notes must be obtained from a classmate.

Information will be posted on Moodle (https://moodle.yorku.ca/) and sent via York email so check both of these regularly. Moodle will have a discussion board for questions and communicating with other students (e.g., trading notes, study groups).

Note: This course often refers to serious crimes, including serial murder, sexual assault, and child victimization (see course topics). Anyone who might have concerns about sensitivity regarding this material and would like more information about what will be covered should contact the instructor as far in advance as possible. By comparison, however, many mainstream network television crime shows are more graphic than anything found in this course.

Assistance outside of class

The instructor and teaching assistants are available to help you with any questions outside of class but because this section is quite large, here are a few guidelines so that we can be as efficient as possible in helping you. There will be a discussion board posted on the course website that we’ll check regularly; please post your questions there first so that other students may also benefit from the answers. If you email questions, please try the TA’s first. If the issue cannot be resolved after talking to them, then contact the instructor. The TAs have weekly office hours for your benefit so try to make use of them whenever possible, especially for detailed questions that might be difficult to answer via email. We’ll do our best to respond within one business day and as quickly as possible closer to test dates.

Grade Requirements & Test Format

Anything from lecture or readings might appear on tests or the exam and a portion of each test will include material exclusively in either lecture or the text. Final grades will be based on two in-class midterms and a final exam during the exam period. Midterms will be non-cumulative except in cases when current material builds on past material in a direct way. Most of the final exam will be non-cumulative but may include a long answer question that asks you to apply principles that were covered throughout the term (i.e., is cumulative in a broad way).

It is important to show up for all tests on time. To be fair to other students and to prevent cheating, students who are late may not be allowed to write if they arrive after other students have left. Makeup tests will be allowed at a designated session following each midterm, but only under the circumstances outlined below. We will take attendance at all exams so expect to sign in and show York identification.

Grading

The grading scheme conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ - 7, C+ = 5). For a full description of York’s grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm 1</td>
<td>Oct. 10</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Multiple choice (45 question) &amp; short answer (15 points)</td>
<td>Weeks 1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm 2</td>
<td>Nov. 14</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Multiple choice (45 question) &amp; short answer (15 points)</td>
<td>Weeks 5-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>Dec. 9-22</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Multiple choice (45 question), short answer (15 points), and long answer (20 points)</td>
<td>MC &amp; SA: Weeks 9-12 Long answer: broadly cumulative</td>
</tr>
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</table>

As per university regulations, students must be available to sit for examinations during the entire exam period. The last day to drop the course without receiving a grade is November 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90+</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-79</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>0-39</td>
<td>F</td>
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Due to time constraints and class size it’s not possible to return tests in-class. Students who wish to review their tests should contact their assigned TA or visit during office hours. Any requests for re-evaluation should be directed to your TA first. If the TA’s response is unsatisfactory, students may request re-evaluation by the instructor. This request should be in writing or by email and state what aspect of the marking is believed to be incorrect. Any re-marking may result in a raised or lowered mark. All requests for re-evaluation of tests must be received before the last day of class or, for the final exam, within 7 calendar days of marks being released. Re-marking will only occur to remedy marking mistakes, not for non-academic reasons. There will be no extra credit assignments.

**Learning Disability Services & The Alternative Exam Centre**

York University has policies in place to ensure that all students have equal opportunity to attain their educational goals. Accommodations related to diagnosed learning disabilities will be made but they must be arranged through Learning Disability Services. It is your responsibility to be aware of and meet their deadlines and requirements put in place by the alternative testing centre; in the absence of other exigent circumstances, extensions will not be granted if those deadlines are missed and the only remaining option will be to write with the class. For more general help with academic skills, such as strategies to study effectively, see Learning Skills Services.

Important links

- Learning Disability Services: http://lds.info.yorku.ca/
- Alternate Exam and Test Scheduling: http://www.yorku.ca/altexams/
- Learning Skills Services: http://lss.info.yorku.ca/
Religious Observances

York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community and making accommodations for observances of special significance. Students who have religious commitments that conflict with academic obligations on certain holy days and wish accommodation may submit York’s religious accommodation form to the instructor in accordance with the procedure in York’s religious accommodation policy.

Missed Tests & Exams

Missing a Test or Exam Due to Extenuating Circumstances

From time to time students become ill or have other unavoidable conflicts that prevent them from meeting academic obligations. The university is committed to assisting these students, but adjustment of due dates or deferrals of term tests or final examinations are not automatic upon the presentation of suitable verification. The instructor will use this documentation among all information available when determining whether accommodation is warranted. Failure to follow the instructions below or to provide appropriate documentation as specified will result in a grade of zero on the missed work.

To be fair to all students, makeup tests will only be allowed except under unavoidable, extraordinary circumstances and at the instructor’s discretion. Allowable circumstances typically include sickness, an accident, or family misfortune. Vacation, work, other scheduled tests, or community obligations are not acceptable reasons to miss or defer an exam.

If you miss or know you will miss a midterm/exam, you must email your TA and cc the instructor, as soon as possible or within 24 hours of missing the test. Include the course name, your full name, and your student number. If you do not meet this deadline, subsequent documentation accounting for the delay may be required. In this email (i) outline the reason for your absence, and (ii) confirm that you have or will presently obtain the relevant documentation to support this reason. Although email is preferred, if you cannot access email within the 24 hour time frame because of your circumstances you may leave an initial phone message with the course secretary--but you must still email your TA as soon as possible. Documentation (see below) must be provided when requested.

Documentation for Missed Tests

Students who miss a test must provide (i) the Faculty of Health Missed Test Form and (ii) documentation that corroborates one’s reason for missing the exam. Usually you will be asked to bring this with you to the makeup exam. By submitting documentation you consent to its verification with the individual or organization providing it. False claims of illness and/or the submission of false supporting documentation is an academic offence. In most cases, personal emails or notes (e.g., from a parent) are not acceptable documentation.

For medical circumstances, your physician, psychologist, or counsellor, must complete a form providing the necessary details and dates. This individual must be willing to state that you were medically unable to take the exam. The attending physician’s statement linked below is preferred but any letter that includes the same information is sufficient. For non-medical reasons, supporting third-party documentation is still mandatory as requested (e.g., death certificate, accident report, airline ticket for emergency travel).
If you are facing extreme personal circumstances and are unable to get the required documentation, or have repeatedly been in need of accommodation, it may be prudent to drop the course and re-take it at a time when circumstances are more conducive to participating fully in it.

Important forms (also posted on Moodle):

- Faculty of Health missed test documentation form:
  http://health.info.yorku.ca/current-student-information/missed-test-form/
- Other relevant forms: http://psyc.info.yorku.ca/forms/

**Makeup Tests**

For students with approved absences, there will be **one** set date for each makeup test, arranged by the TA’s, which will be approximately a week after the original date and outside of class. There can be no individual makeup sessions; the only exception to this rule is that students registered with Learning Disability Services may arrange to write a makeup at the alternative exam centre on or before the designated makeup date, in keeping with the centre’s regulations. Deferred final exams may be held after the exam period; this date may be after the due date for grades submission, so students who do not want a lower grade submitted temporarily may choose to submit a Deferred Standing Agreement.

All makeup dates will be posted in advance on the course website and you should receive email confirmation of the makeup examination date from the instructor or your TA, but it is ultimately your responsibility to obtain the information about when the makeup test/exam is (by checking Moodle) and ensure that you are prepared and present to write the makeup test/exam. The content to be examined will be the same but the questions on and format of the makeup may or may not follow that of the original test/exam.

For students who miss the designated makeup test, further accommodation is at the instructor’s discretion. NOTE: Students who miss a test must make all possible efforts to attend its makeup because only extremely unusual circumstances would warrant accommodation after a missed makeup. If a test and its makeup is missed for such circumstances, alternative arrangements will likely consist of a research paper on one of the topics covered by that test (approximately 8-10 pages), with the specifics to be determined but typically due the last day of class. These procedures are in place to ensure that all students are fairly evaluated on all course content.

If you miss a test before the official drop date for any reason, you might not receive the requisite feedback on your course work to determine if you need to drop the course or not. As a result, it is in your best interest to write the tests on the scheduled dates.

**Cheating/Plagiarism**

The penalties for cheating of any kind are very harsh. Become familiar with the rules and regulations regarding cheating/plagiarism and academic honesty. See:
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 that are not approved by the
instructor; or changing a score or a record of an examination result. It is also 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.

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 makeup 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

For more detailed information you may visit: http://www.yorku.ca/academicintegrity/students/

Congratulations for making it to the end of the syllabus! If you email your TA with your name and the
subject line “I made it!” before the start of class #2, then you’ll receive a 1% bonus mark. Don’t tell
other students about this because the point was to have read this far.

Weekly topics and readings are on the next page
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sep. 12</td>
<td>An Introduction to Forensic Psychology</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
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<td>Interrogation and confessions</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Sep. 26</td>
<td>The Psychology of Police Investigations (2):</td>
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<td>Profiling and racial bias</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Oct. 3</td>
<td>Deception and lie detection</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Oct. 10</td>
<td>Midterm 1* &amp; video</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Oct. 17</td>
<td>Eyewitness Testimony</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Oct. 24</td>
<td>Children in the Justice system: Victims, Witnesses,</td>
<td>Chapter 6; Bonnie &amp; Scott (2013)</td>
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<td>Young Offenders</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Nov. 7</td>
<td>Juries: Fact Finders</td>
<td>Chapters 7 &amp; 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Nov. 14</td>
<td>Midterm 2* &amp; video</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Nov. 21</td>
<td>Clinical Psychology in Court (1): Fitness to</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
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<td>stand trial and criminal responsibility</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Nov. 28</td>
<td>Clinical Psychology in Court (2): Psychopathy</td>
<td>Chapters 10 &amp; 12</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and intimate partner violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Dec. 5</td>
<td>Workplace Discrimination</td>
<td>Chapter 13 (pp. 339-end); Fiske et al. (1991)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dec. 9-22</td>
<td>Final exam period</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Midterms will take up the first half of class (75 minutes) and the second half will be a video.

Readings

*Because of copyright law, links to these articles will be posted on Moodle so that you can access them through the library but I cannot post the files directly.*

