Iowa State University

Department of Psychology
Fall 2010
CJ ST 403
Section 3805005

Tuesday & Thursday 3:40 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
160 Heady

Criminal Offenders: Mentally Disordered Offenders

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or by appointment

Course Description:
This class will focus on mentally disordered offenders within the justice system. We will utilize a textbook to examine theories about criminal behavior, relevant research about this population, public policy initiatives, and practical solutions. The goal of this text is to explain the types of criminal offenders and outline our justice system’s response to their activities. This course will also utilize articles and legal cases discussing well known criminal cases to identify the salient issues within this framework.

The class will also serve as a method of challenging and developing your abilities to think and write critically. You should not undertake this course unless you are willing to attend lectures daily and to perform a considerable amount of reading, writing, and discussion. While each day has some form of lecture, we will largely rely on discussions regarding the reading assignments and issues raised by them.

The goal of this course is to introduce you to the state of the art dialogue surrounding these types of offenders and to help you develop the critical thinking skills necessary to successfully participate in that dialogue. This course is also designed to help you develop your opinion on these issues and identify ways to transform those beliefs into a professional setting.

Required Texts:

Required Additional Readings:
This course will also utilize articles and legal cases that will be available online through WebCT.
Requirements:
You will be required to submit all written work and two exams to receive a passing grade for this course. All assignments must be turned in on time. The grade breakdown is as follows:

10% - Class participation
10% - First Essay (5 pages maximum)
20% - Second Essay (5 pages maximum)
20% - Exam 1
20% - Exam 2
20% - Final Exam

The exams will consist of several multiple choice, matching, and short answer items. We will discuss the exams in more detail a few days before you take the test. The papers will be based on a question or series of questions provided by me. You should present a clear thesis statement and use evidence from the readings, lectures, or other sources to reinforce your thesis. The paper will be due before class begins. We will discuss all assignments in greater detail before they are due.

Readings:
Weekly readings should be completed before the reading is discussed. Class participation is worth 10% of your grade, and discussing and debating the readings with your classmates (regardless of your position on the issues) will have an impact on your grade. Having a discussion about these topics is one of the ways that criminal justice professionals of all levels, even undergraduates, improve their own understanding of the subjects they study. Please come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings.

Disabilities:
Iowa State University complies with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The ADA is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. Any student who may require an accommodation under such provisions should contact me as soon as possible. You should also contact, at your earliest conveniences, the Student Disability Resources office, The SDR is located in the Student Services Building, Room 1076, 515-294-7220, TDD 515-294-6335.

Academic Misconduct:
Academic Misconduct in any form violates Iowa State University’s Student Disciplinary Regulations and will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to: copying or sharing answers on tests or assignments (ie. cheating – the use of prohibited information including notes, cribsheets, copying from another student, etc.), plagiarism (ie. copying – the appropriation of someone else’s writing, data, analysis, and/or results without attribution, acknowledgement, or credit including passages copied directly from a book, the internet, other student’s papers, etc.), and having someone else do your academic work. See the Conduct Code at www.dso.iastate.edu/ja for more details and a full explanation of the Academic Misconduct policies. If you are caught cheating or plagiarizing, your work will be turned in to the Office of Judicial Affairs.

Class Decorum:
Please do not carry on extraneous conversations during the lecture or discussion. All electronic devices must be silenced before you enter the classroom. Disruptions due to cell phones will not be tolerated. If you arrive to class late, please enter the room quietly and inconspicuously. Should you be required to leave the room during the lecture, please do so quietly and be respectful of your fellow students.
Since this class has a large discussion component based upon several subjective and controversial issues, a professional dialogue will be expected. Several viewpoints different from your own will likely be expressed. Intimidation, profanity, hostility, or aggression towards others who express a point of view different from your own will not be tolerated.

Expectations:
As your professor, my goal is to develop your analytical and critical thinking. This requires regular class attendance, timely completion of all assignments, and an in-depth discussion each week. I am here to help you learn the course material, improve your writing skills, do well on exams and papers, and develop skills that will be useful to you as a professional. Ask lots of questions. Share your concerns. Visit my office hours. Or see me after lecture.
Schedule:

Week 1
August 24: Introductions
August 26: Overview of the Criminal Justice System and Violent Offenders: Ch. 1 The Importance of Violent Offenders to Criminology

Week 2
September 2: Course Reader – Tests for Insanity

Week 3
September 7: Violent Offenders: Ch. 3 The Behavioral Genetics of Predatory Criminal Behavior
September 9: Course Reader – Andrea Yates case (Yates v. Texas, 171 S.W. 3d 215)

Week 4
September 14: Violent Offenders: Ch. 4 The Socialization of Violent Criminal Offenders
September 16: Course Reader – Dan White case (People v. White, 117 Cal. App. 3d 270)

Week 5
September 21: Exam I
September 23: Paper Workshop & Violent Offenders: Ch. 6 Early Risk Factors for Young Homicide Offenders and Victims

Week 6
September 28: Course Reader – Eric Smith case review
September 30: Course Reader – Lionel Tate case review
Week 7

October 5:  *Paper #1 Due* Begin film
October 7:  Conclude film

Week 8

October 12:  Violent Offenders: Ch. 8 Comparing Women and Men Who Kill
October 14:  Course Reader – John List case review

Week 9

October 19:  Course Reader – Susan Smith case review
October 21:  Violent Offenders: Ch. 14 Prosecuting Criminal Predators

Week 10

October 26:  Course Reader – John Hinckley case review
October 28:  *Exam 2*

Week 11

November 2:  Violent Offenders: Ch. 13 – Civil Commitment Laws for Sexual Predators
November 4:  Course Reader – Richard Allen Davis case review

Week 12

November 9:  Violent Offenders: Ch. 10 – Still Psychopathic After All These Years
November 11:  Course Reader – Ted Bundy case review

Week 13

November 16:  Violent Offenders: Ch. 11 – The Heterogeneity of Predatory Behaviors in Sexual Homicide
November 18:  Course Reader – Jeffrey Dahmer case review
Week 14

November 23: Thanksgiving Week
November 25: Thanksgiving Week

Week 15

November 30: Paper Workshop
December 2: Paper #2 Due/Course Reader – The Future alternative adjudication

Week 16

December 7: Wrap up/Review
December 9: Film

Thursday

December 16: Final Exam 2:15-4:15