Iowa State University

Department of Psychology
Spring 2012
PSYCH 383
Sections 9080020, 9080025, and 9080030

Tuesday & Thursday 9:30 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.
Room LAGOMAR E0164

Psychology & Law

Monic P. Behnken, J.D., Ph.D.
Adjunct Assistant Professor
Department of Psychology
& Criminal Justice Studies Program
Iowa State University

Email: mbehnken@iastate.edu
Office: W159 Lagomarcino Hall
Phone: (515) 294-9831
Office hours: 2:00 – 3:30 T/TH

Course Description:
This class will focus on the role of psychology within the legal system. We will utilize various legal cases to examine the role of psychology at all stages of the criminal justice process from understanding the origins of crime to various theories of incarceration. The goal of this text is to introduce you to the various aspects of psychology within the system and our justice system’s response to its involvement. This course will also utilize articles and legal cases covering 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 ability to think critically. You should not undertake this course unless you are willing to attend lectures daily and perform a considerable amount of reading 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 relevant issues in the psycho/legal nexus 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 a variety of controversial topics in this field and identify ways to support your opinions with sound research.

Required Texts:
There is no required text for this course.

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

50% - Exam 1
50% - Final Exam

The exams will consist of several short answer and matching items. Exam items will cover all assigned readings. We will discuss the exams in more detail a few days before you take the test.

Readings:
Weekly readings should be completed before the reading is discussed. Class participation is expected. Discussing and debating the issues raised in the readings with your classmates (regardless of your position on the issues) will help you develop a clear sense of your stance on controversial issues, opposing views and arguments, and the ability to engage in a professional dialogue with those who hold differing opinions. 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 skills. This requires regular class attendance, completion of all assignments, and classroom participation. I am here to help you learn the course material, improve your writing skills, do well on exams, 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:**

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<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>January 10:</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
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<td>January 12:</td>
<td>Careers in Psychology and the Law</td>
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<th>Week 2</th>
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<tr>
<td>January 17:</td>
<td>Overview of the Legal System</td>
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<td>January 19:</td>
<td>Overview of the Legal System</td>
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<th>Week 3</th>
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<tr>
<td>January 24:</td>
<td>Overview of Psychology within the Legal System</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 26:</td>
<td>Overview of Psychology within the Legal System</td>
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<th>Week 4 – What is a victim?</th>
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<tr>
<td>January 31:</td>
<td>Aileen Wuornos Case Review</td>
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<td>February 2:</td>
<td>Video Presentation</td>
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<th>Week 5 – What is a victim?</th>
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<tr>
<td>February 7:</td>
<td>Video Presentation and Discussion</td>
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<td>February 9:</td>
<td>Cary Staynor Case Review</td>
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<th>Week 6 - Competence</th>
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<td>February 16:</td>
<td>Lionel Tate case review</td>
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Week 7 – Insanity

February 23:  Tests for Insanity

Week 8 – Insanity

February 28:  Course Reader – \textit{Yates v. Texas} (171 S.W. 3d 215)
March 1:  Course Reader – John Hinckley case review

Week 9

March 6:  Video Presentation
March 8:  Video Presentation and Discussion

Week 10

March 13:  SPRING BREAK
March 15:  SPRING BREAK

Week 11

March 20:  Review/Catch up
March 22:  \textbf{Exam 1}

Week 12 – Sexual Offenders & Civil Commitment

March 27:  Jaycee Lee Dugard case review
March 29:  Shaniya Davis case review

Week 13 – Contributions to filicide

April 3:  Susan Smith case review
April 5:  Casey Anthony case review

Week 14 – Children who kill

April 10:  Eric Smith case review
Week 15 – Serial Killers

April 17: Ted Bundy case review
April 19: Jeffrey Dahmer case review

Week 16

April 24: Review/Catch up
April 26: Review/Catch up

Final Exam: TBD