

Saint Leo University

PSY330

Introduction to Forensic Psychology

Course Description:

Forensic psychology is the application of the science and profession of psychology to questions and issues relating to law and the legal system. This course will introduce students to the specialty area of forensic psychology. Particular emphasis will be on the applied aspects of the field.

Prerequisite:

PSY 121

Textbooks:

Cronin, C. (2019). *Forensic psychology: An applied approach* (3rd ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt Publisher. ISBN 978-1-5249-7061-1

Course Objectives:

As a result of this course the student will be able to:

1. Identify and describe the specific roles of the forensic psychologist as expert witness, trial consultant, and preparer of amicus briefs.
2. Describe psychologists' role in police work including selection, training, and evaluating for fitness-for-duty.
3. Describe criminal profiling, needs for profiling, and the use of psychological autopsies.
4. Define hypnosis and court decisions regarding its use. Discuss guidelines for proper use of hypnosis and the polygraph. Evaluate the research regarding the validity of the polygraph and describe alternative approaches, such as the cognitive interview.
5. Discuss the role of eyewitness testimony and psychological research on the accuracy of eyewitness testimony. Describe procedures for improving eyewitness testimony. Discuss the role of children as eyewitnesses and court decisions regarding statute of limitations, admissibility of expert testimony, and recent Supreme Court decisions regarding expert testimony.
6. Describe alternative dispute resolution (ADR), effective negotiation, role of trial consultants and litigation consultants, change of venue requests and sequestered voir dire.
7. Discuss witness preparation and present how to organize a case.
8. Describe approaches to jury selection, ways to measure juror bias, jury investigation and use of supplemental juror questionnaires. Discuss the ethics of psychologists involved in jury selection.
9. Define the types of competency and insanity. Discuss assessment of criminal responsibility and ultimate issue testimony. Describe techniques used to assess competency including competency to stand trial, competency to plead guilty, and the competency of juveniles.
10. Describe the nature of domestic violence, battered women syndrome (BWS), the relationship of BWS to post-traumatic stress disorder, defense of battered women who kill their abusers, and the admissibility of expert testimony regarding BWS. Discuss the validity of BWS.
11. Describe rape trauma syndrome, assessment of rape trauma syndrome, and admissibility of psychological testimony regarding rape trauma syndrome.
12. Discuss assessing allegations of child sexual abuse, children's rights, and the role of the psychologist as an expert witness.
13. Discuss the role of psychologists in child custody disputes. Present techniques of custody evaluations, the expert witness role and ultimate-opinion testimony, and the ethical considerations associated with child custody evaluations.
14. Discuss psychological contributions to court cases involving discrimination. Define discrimination and prejudice, and present court decisions related to race and special education classes.
15. Define the types of sexual harassment, analysis of the causes of harassment, and intervention approaches in the workplace.
16. Discuss the role of psychologists in death penalty cases. Discuss mitigation assessment, competency evaluations, evaluation of defense arguments, and the death penalty. Discuss the ethics of psychologists' involvement in death penalty cases.
17. Define and discuss the use of amicus briefs, particularly the involvement of the American Psychological Association. Identify individual briefs filed by the APA.

Core Value(s):

In addition to the above state objectives, the Psychology Department has identified the Saint Leo University Core Values of *Respect* and *Community* to be included in the curriculum.

Community: Saint Leo University develops hospitable Christian learning communities everywhere we serve. We foster a spirit of belonging, unity and interdependence based on mutual trust and respect to create socially responsible environments that challenge all of us to listen, to learn, to change and to serve.

Respect: Animated in the spirit of Jesus Christ, we value all individuals' unique talents, respect their dignity and strive to foster their commitment to excellence in our work. Our community's strength depends on the unity and diversity of our people, on the free exchange of ideas and on learning, living and working harmoniously.

Quizzes & Exams:

There will be six quizzes and two exams during the term. These quizzes will cover only the material presented since the last quiz, the midterm will cover Modules 1-3 and the final will cover Modules 5-7.

Topic Paper:

Students are required to write a 6-10 page paper using scholarly resources and APA format.

Topic Paper Presentation:

Students will create a PowerPoint presentation to present their paper to the class. Students should respond to at least two classmates' presentations.

Grading:

Item	Points	Weight
Topic Paper Draft	100	7.7%
6 Discussion Assignments @ 30 points each	180	27.7%
6 quizzes @ 30 points each	180	27.7%
Midterm Exam	70	10.8%
Topic Paper	250	10.7%
Topic Paper Presentation	100	4.6%
Final Exam	70	10.8%
Totals Points	950	100%

Letter Grade/Score:

A	94-100%
A-	90-93%
B+	87-89%
B	84-86%
B-	80-83%
C+	77-79%
C	74-76%
C-	70-73%
D+	67-69%
D	60-66%
F	<60%

Course Schedule:

Module 1 Introduction to Forensic Psychology

Outcomes: After completing this module the student will be able to:

- Define forensic psychology and legal psychology.
- List activities encompassed in the practice of forensic psychology.
- Detail the training in forensic psychology.
- Describe career opportunities in forensic psychology.
- Identify APA Ethical Standards and Specialty Guidelines.
- Discuss rules regarding expert witness testimony and admissibility.
- Distinguish between decision making in the legal system and decision making in psychology.
- Explain the Frye test, Federal Rules of Evidence, Daubert v. Merrell Dow Pharmaceuticals, Inc. decision, and Kumho Tire Co. v. Carmichael decision.
- Define ultimate-issue testimony.

Assignments:

Assignments	Due No Later Than
Read Chapters 1 and 2	
Explore the recommended websites	
Post your introduction	11:59 PM Thursday EST/EDT
Post your response to the Module 1 Discussion Board	11:59 PM Thursday EST/EDT
Respond to your classmates' discussion postings.	11:59 PM Sunday EST/EDT
Complete the Review Questions	
Complete the Module 1 Quiz	11:59 PM Sunday EST/EDT

Module 2 Forensic Assessment Issues and Types

Outcomes: After completing this module the student will be able to:

- Discuss unique issues related to forensic assessment.
- Identify psychometric properties related to assessment.
- Detail types of assessment instruments and their use in forensic settings.
- Contrast the McNaughton Rule, the ALI Standard, and the Brawner Rule as definitions of insanity.
- Define an affirmative defense.
- Define NGRI and GBMI and the possible outcomes for these decisions.
- Describe how forensic psychologists assess criminal responsibility.
- Define the Dusky standard used to evaluate competency and describe the different types of competency.

Assignments:

Assignments	Due No Later Than
Read Chapters 3 and 4 from textbook	
Explore the recommended websites	
Complete the matching activity	
Post your response to the Module 2 Discussion Question	11:59 PM Thursday EST/EDT
Respond to your classmates' discussion postings.	11:59 PM Sunday EST/EDT
Complete the Review Questions	
Complete the Module 2 Quiz	11:59 PM Sunday EST/EDT

Module 3**Police Psychology and Correctional Psychology****Outcomes:****After completing this module the student will be able to:**

- Detail procedures used in selecting police recruits.
- Identify 3 personality inventories used for police selection and describe the validity of each one.
- Describe the activities of a psychologist employed by a police department.
- Discuss career opportunities in Police Psychology.
- Provide an overview of the duties of a correctional psychologist.
- List and describe the goals of incarceration.
- Identify some of the unique challenges faced by correctional psychologists in the performance of their duties.

Assignments:

Assignments	Due No Later Than
Read Chapters 5 and 6 from textbook	
Explore the recommended websites	
Post your response to the Module 3 Discussion Question	11:59 PM Thursday EST/EDT
Respond to your classmates' discussion postings.	11:59 PM Sunday EST/EDT
Complete the Review Questions	
Complete the Module 3 Quiz	11:59 PM Sunday EST/EDT

Module 4**Topic Paper Draft and Midterm****Outcomes:****After completing this module the student will be able to:**

- Complete the objectives from Modules 1 through 3

Assignments:

Assignments	Due No Later Than
Review Chapters 1 through 6	
Use the Midterm Review document to prepare for the Midterm Exam	
Submit the Topic Paper Draft	11:59 PM Sunday EST/EDT
Complete the Mid-term Exam	11:59 PM Sunday EST/EDT

Module 5**Personal Injury and Child Custody Evaluations****Outcomes:****After completing this module the student will be able to:**

- List and define elements of tort law.
- Discuss models used by courts regarding emotional damages.
- Discuss employment litigation and types of damages including sexual harassment and discrimination.
- Describe the forensic examination in personal injury cases.
- Define dual relationship and give examples.
- Give an historical overview of standards used to determine custody including the tender-years doctrine, the best interests of the child standard, and the least detrimental standard.
- According to the Uniform Marriage and Divorce Act, detail the factors a judge may consider when reaching a custody decision.
- Define types of custody arrangements.

Assignments:

Assignments	Due No Later Than
Read Chapters 7 and 8 from textbook	
Explore the recommended websites	
Post your response to the Module 5 Discussion Question	11:59 PM Thursday EST/EDT
Respond to your classmates' discussion postings.	11:59 PM Sunday EST/EDT
Complete the Review Questions	
Complete the Module 5 Quiz	11:59 PM Sunday EST/EDT

Module 6**Trial Consultation and Criminal Investigative Psychology****Outcomes:****After completing this module the student will be able to:**

- Distinguish between trial consultant and litigation consultant and give examples of the trial consultant's role in voir dire and change of venue.
- Discuss the ethical issues involved in psychologists assisting in jury selection and describe the psychologist's role and ethical issues related to witness preparation.
- Define scientific jury selection and traditional jury selection.
- Define and give examples of criminal profiling.
- Describe how hypnosis is used in criminal investigations and its effectiveness and how the polygraph is used in criminal investigations.
- Describe the purpose and procedure of a psychological autopsy.

Assignments:

Assignments	Due No Later Than
Read Chapters 9 and 10 from textbook	
Explore the recommended websites	
Post your response to the Module 6 Discussion Question	11:59 PM Thursday EST/EDT
Respond to your classmates' discussion postings.	11:59 PM Sunday EST/EDT
Complete the Review Questions	
Complete the Module 6 Quiz	11:59 PM Sunday EST/EDT

Module 7**Eyewitness Testimony; Emerging Trends in the Field****Outcomes:****After completing this module the student will be able to:**

- Apply the concept of social framework testimony on eyewitness accuracy.
- Distinguish between system variables and estimator variables.
- Distinguish between a lineup, photo array, and show up and discuss problems associated with the use of a showup.
- List techniques law enforcement can use to preserve eyewitness evidence.
- Discuss the increased growth and sophistication of the field of forensic psychology.
- Identify ways in which there is increased cooperation between law and psychology and discuss future training models for forensic and legal psychology.
- Define Therapeutic Jurisprudence and give two examples.

Assignments:

Assignments	Due No Later Than
Read Chapters 11 and 12 from textbook	
Explore the recommended websites	
Post your response to the Module 7 Discussion Question	11:59 PM Thursday EST/EDT
Respond to your classmates' discussion postings.	11:59 PM Sunday EST/EDT
Complete the Review Questions	
Submit the Topic Paper	11:59 PM Sunday EST/EDT
Complete the Module 7 Quiz	11:59 PM Sunday EST/EDT

Module 8**Topic Paper and Final Exam****Outcomes:****After completing this module the student will be able to:**

- Illustrate the managed care continuum and its evolution.
- Explain the characteristics of the economic model of managed care, and contrast vertical disintegration and horizontal integration.
- Define customer satisfaction drivers on health care.
- Outline the economics of a health care organization.
- Forecast the future of managed care.

Assignments:

Assignments	Due No Later Than
Review Chapters 7 through 12 from textbook	
Use Final Exam Review to prepare for Final	
Submit Topic Paper Presentation to the Discussion Board	11:59 PM Thursday EST/EDT
Respond to at least two classmates' presentations	11:59 PM Sunday EST/EDT
Complete the Final Exam	11:59 PM Sunday EST/EDT