

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

### **Instructor**

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### **Teaching Assistant**

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Office Hours: Mondays 1:30-2:30  
(or by appointment)

**Time:** Thursday 8:30-11:20pm

**Location:** CLH-B

**Textbook:** Costanzo, M., Krauss, D., Schuller, R. A., & McLachlan, K. (2014). *Forensic and Legal Psychology, Psychological Science Applied to Law (First Canadian Edition)*. New York: Worth Publishing.

### **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, sentencing, and the role of mental health in the law.

### **Class Format**

The course format consists of one 3 hour lecture session per week. Each week we will have a lecture, which may include a research exercise/demonstration, some video, and some class discussion. The lecture will be related in part to an assigned chapter from the textbook. 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 textbook reading in its 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 demonstrations/exercises also may appear on exams. Please note that lectures, as well as other relevant materials, will be posted on Moodle (<https://moodle.yorku.ca/>) although not usually before the lecture (you will need to sign in to access the

postings). If you are unfamiliar with Moodle, it is encouraged that you check the student resources that are made available to you on their main webpage.

### **Evaluation**

Your final grade will be out of 100% and will be based on your performance on two tests, one *in-class midterm*, and one *final* during the *final examination period*. The tests will consist of multiple choice questions, as well as a series of short answer questions and/or essay question. The tests are non-cumulative.

Students are expected to write each test on the dates specified. To be clear, there will be one in-class midterm (**40%**) and a second test during the final examination period (**TBA**). Each test is worth 40% of your final grade. 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 **Monday November 16th**. More information regarding the paper will be provided later in the term.

There will be **no make-up tests**, except under extraordinary documented circumstances. **If you miss a mandatory piece of course work for no documented reasons, you will receive a grade of zero** (see below regarding Guidelines for Missed Tests/Papers).

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

- Test 1: Thursday, October 15, 2015 – (40%)
- Paper: Thursday November 12th, 2015 (20%)
- Test 2: During Final Exam Schedule – (40%)

**Drop Date:** The last day to drop the course without academic penalty is **Monday November 9, 2015**.

### **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

## Weekly Topics & Readings

<b>September 10</b> – Psychology and Law: A Cautious Alliance.....	Chapter 1
<b>September 17</b> –Interrogations and Confessions.....	Chapter 2
<b>September 24</b> – Interrogations continued / Lie Detection... ..	Chapter 2 & 3
<b>October 1</b> – Lie Detection / Criminal Profiling.....	Chapter 3 & 4
<b>October 8</b> – Eyewitness Identification.....	Chapter 5
<b>October 15</b> — <b>Midterm: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, lectures, demos, and film clips</b>	
<b>October 22</b> – Child Witnesses/IPV .....	Chapter 6 & 12
<b>October 29-November 1 – No Classes</b>	
<b>November 5</b> — Fitness to Stand Trial and the NCRMD defence.....	Chapter 9
<b>November 12</b> – Risk Assessment & Psychology.....	Chapter 10
<b>November 19</b> – Juries I: Selection.....	Chapter 7
<b>November 26</b> – Juries II: Jury Decision-making .....	Chapter 8
<b>December 3</b> – Sentencing.....	Chapter 11
<b>Test 2: Chapters 6, 12, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, lectures/films</b>	
<b>TBA: To be held in Final Examination Period, December 9 – 23</b>	

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

1. You must **contact me (in-person, by telephone or by E-mail), cc'd to your TA, at least one day in advance of the test** and **provide documentation** in order to be permitted to take a make-up. In the case of an emergency, **contact me, cc'd to your TA, as soon as possible. In this email, please (a) outline the reason for your absence, and (b) confirm that you have medical or other relevant documentation to support this reason. Be sure to note the course name/number, your full name and student number in the subject header of your email.**

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 can be found at <http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/exams/deferred/>). 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 (e.g., 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 will receive confirmation of the make-up examination date from your TA; you should be back in touch within a few days with your TA if you have not heard back. 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 and the TA 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). Note that there will be one set date for the make-up tests. If you are unable to make this date, other arrangements might not be possible – so please make every effort to make this date and we will do our best to provide graded feedback before the drop date. Please note however, that if you miss a test(s) and the make-up of the test prior to the drop date, regardless of your reason, you have waived the right to have a specific percentage of graded feedback available to you prior to the drop date.

## **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. This may be done inadvertently when summarizing research for papers. Be very careful when taking notes – even inadvertently plagiarism may result in a failing grade. It is 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