

PSYC 3310 3.0 M(W) PSYCHOLOGY AND LAW

Instructor

Regina Schuller
BSB245
(416) 736-2100 x33190
schuller@yorku.ca
Office Hours: Monday 10:30-11:30
(or by appointment)

Teaching Assistant

David Li
BSB264
(416) 736-2100 x4027
lidavid@yorku.ca
Office Hours: Tuesday 2:30-3:30pm
(or by appointment)

Time: Thursday 11:30 AM - 2:20 PM

Location: Curtis Lecture Hall E

Textbook: The readings for the course are contained in a **customized text for PSYC3310** that is available in the bookstore – the nine chapters have been selected from the following text: J. Pozzulo, C. Bennell, & A. Forth (2012). *Forensic Psychology* (3rd Edition). Pearson Prentice Hall: Toronto. You can purchase the entire text if you like, but not all chapters will be covered in the course.

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.

Class Format

The course format consists of one 3 hour lecture session each week. Each week we will have a lecture, which may include a research demonstration, some video, and some class discussion. The lecture will be related in part to an assigned chapter from the textbook as well as an additional journal article. 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 text and any additional readings in their 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 research demonstrations 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.

Requirements

Your final grade will be out of 100% and will be based on your scores on the *in-class midterm*, the *final exam*, and a *written assignment*. The midterm and final exam will consist of multiple choice questions, as well as a series of short answer questions. Each test will focus on the material covered since the last test. 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 March . More information regarding the paper will be provided within the first 2 weeks of the course.

There will be no make-up tests, except under extraordinary circumstances (see below regarding Guidelines for Missed Tests/Exams).

Important Dates to Keep in Mind:

- Thursday February 14, 2013 – Midterm (40%)
- Thursday February 28, 2013 – Written Assignment (20%)
- Final Exam – Test (40%)

Drop Date: The last date to drop course without academic penalty is **March 15, 2013**

Exam Schedule: April 10 -26

Grading

Percentage	Letter Grade
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

General information

Important information for students regarding University policies, including Academic Honesty/Integrity (see below as well) can be found at: <http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/>

Guidelines for Missed Tests/Exams

1. You must contact me (in-person, by telephone or by E-mail) within 48 hours of the test. If you do not speak to me directly (i.e., leave a message on my voicemail or with my secretary, Zehra Bandu at 416-736-2100 ext. 66232), be sure to clearly state your name, student number, course, and a number/time at which you can be reached. If you are unable to contact me during this 48 hour period, subsequent documentation accounting for the delay must be provided.

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 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 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 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).

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. It is also 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

Weekly Topics & Readings

- 1) **January 10** – An Introduction to Forensic Psychology.....Chapter 1
- 2) **January 17** – The Psychology of Police Investigations.....Chapter 2
- 3) **January 24** – The Psychology of Police Investigations continued..... Chapter 2 +

Moore, T.E., Copeland P., & Schuller, R.A. (2009). Deceit, betrayal and the search for truth: Legal and psychological perspectives on the “Mr. Big” strategy. <i>Criminal Law Quarterly</i> , 55, 358-413. [YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE ONLY FOR SECTION 4 ‘PSYCHOLGICAL PERSPECTIVES’ (pp. 388-413)]

- 4) **January 31** – Deception.....Chapter 3
- 5) **February 7** – Eyewitness Testimony..... Chapter 4
- 6) **February** – Midterm: *Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, assigned readings, lectures/films*

Reading Week –February 16 -22

- 7) **February 27** – Child Victims and Witnesses..... Chapter 5
- 8) **March** – Juries: Fact Finders.....Chapter 6 +

Schuller, R.A., Kazoleas, V., & Kawakami, K. (2009). The impact of prejudice screening procedures on racial bias in the courtroom. <i>Law and Human Behavior</i> , 33, 320-328.

- 9) **March** – Juries: Fact Finders continued.....Chapter 6 +

Schuller, R.A. & Hastings, P. (2002). Complainant sexual history evidence: Its impact on mock jurors’ decisions. <i>Psychology of Women Quarterly</i> , 26, 252-261.
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- 10) **March 15** – The Role of Mental Illness in Court.....Chapter 7
- 11) **March 22** – Psychopaths.....Chapter 8
- 12) **March 29** – Sentencing and Parole in Canada : Practices and Public Opinions.....Chapter 9

Final Exam: Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and assigned readings, lectures/films
To be held in the Final Examination Period (April 10th-26st)