

## PSYC 3310 3.0 A PSYCHOLOGY AND LAW

**Course Director** Professor Regina Schuller  
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### Teaching Assistants:

Surname	A - L	M to Z
TA	Kashmala Qasim	Alisha Salerno-Ferraro
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Office Hours	Thursday 12:00 – 1:00 pm	schedule by appointment

**Email protocol** When you email Dr Schuller or Alisha or Kashmala include your Student ID and full name in the body of your email with “PSYC3310 Psychology and law” on the subject line. We will not answer emails regarding issues covered in this syllabus – read the syllabus before emailing.

**Class Time** Thurs 10:00-11:00 (schedule this period weekly in your agenda)

**Course Prerequisite** HH/PSYC 1010 6.0 (Introduction to Psychology), with a minimum grade of C and completed at least 54 credits.

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

You have several options to purchase the text:

The campus bookstore has an ebook price at \$53.65. You will enjoy free access for 14 days by clicking the link in the course shell. Each time you access, it will tell you how many days of free access are left and will give you a purchase option to click on. After 14 days, the free access option disappears, and a purchase is required to continue access. When you click to purchase, it will take you to the bookstore website to make a purchase and then access will automatically continue.

Hard copies of the text are also available from the campus book store at \$187.45, with many second hand copies available.

Digital access to the text book may be obtained directly from the publisher, including options to rent the book for a significantly reduced fee. Click the link below for more information:

<https://www.vitalsource.com/referral?term=9781464193941>

You may also find copies from third party vendors (e.g., amazon.ca), but be sure to get the Canadian edition rather than the American version. There are critical differences between the two texts.

**Technical Requirements:** This course depends on remote teaching and learning. There will be no in-person interactions or activities on campus. As such, there are technical requirements for taking the course. First off, a computer equipped with a webcam and microphone, as well as high speed internet access are musts. If you do not have access to any of these technological requirements, let us know within the first week of classes so that we can find a reasonable solution to help you complete the course. Several platforms will be used to support this course (Moodle, Zoom, Turnitin). These platforms will allow you to interact with the course materials, the course director/teaching assistant, as well as with one another.

**Moodle:** All course materials will be available on the course Moodle site, unless otherwise indicated by Dr. Schuller. This site will be your central access point for course information and materials.

**Zoom:** Zoom will be used for class meetings. It is hosted on servers in the U.S. This includes recordings done through Zoom. If you have privacy concerns about your data, provide only your first name or a nickname when you join a session. The system is configured in a way that all participants are automatically notified when a session is being recorded. In other words, a session cannot be recorded without you knowing about it.

**Turnitin:** To promote academic integrity in this course, you will be required to submit your written work (i.e., mini-assignment, exam answers) through Turnitin (within the course Moodle). Turnitin reviews textual similarity and helps in the detection of possible plagiarism (see below). By using this software, you are allowing your submitted material to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used only for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. Terms applying to the University's use of the Turnitin service are described on Turnitin.com. Following are some useful links for you regarding computing information, resources and help:

[Student Guide to Moodle](#)

[Zoom@YorkU Best Practices](#)

[Zoom@YorkU User Reference Guide](#)

[Computing for Students Website](#)

[Student Guide to eLearning at York University](#)

**Remote Exam Proctoring:** This course may use a remote exam proctoring program, Proctortrack, for exams scheduled during exam period in December. Proctortrack has been approved for exams being held during these periods by the Senate of York University. Proctortrack may be used during exams to promote academic integrity. If this online service is used, you will need to become familiar with it at least five days before a scheduled exam. For technology requirements, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and details about this proctoring service can be found at <https://registrar.yorku.ca/proctortrack-faq> . As noted earlier, students are required to share any IT accommodation needs with the instructor within the first week of class.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVE**

The purpose of this course is to provide you with a solid foundation in the field of psychology and law. As you will see in the weekly schedule posted below, psychology is a broad discipline that addresses behaviour at many different levels of analysis.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The legal system governs our lives from the time before we are born until years after we die, with rules and laws touching on every aspect of life in between. In doing so, the law relies on a number of assumptions about how people think and behave, many of which are faulty. This course examines how psychological science can test these assumptions, explore the consequences of faulty assumptions, and offer solutions for improvement. Students will be exposed to a wide range of topics derived from work in social, clinical, cognitive, and developmental psychology. Major topics include false confessions, wrongful convictions, police interrogation, lie detection, eyewitnesses, jury behaviour, sentencing and incarceration, “insanity” and psychopathy.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate in-depth knowledge in psychology and the law.
2. Articulate trends in psychology and the law.
3. Express knowledge of psychology and the law in written form.
4. Describe and explain limits to generalizability of research findings in psychology and law.
5. Demonstrate ability to relate information in psychology and the law to own and others’ life experiences.

## **SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Students will develop skills to think critically about how psychology applies to law, and whether our assumptions about human behaviour and cognition are accurate. This will include considering controversial topics related to psychology and law, such as the effect of mandatory minimum sentences, whether police ever coerce confessions, whether recovered/repressed memories are real, whether innocent people are ever convicted, whether juries can hear a case with true impartiality, and how to respond to mentally ill defendants. Many of these topics are covered widely in media outlets, often in inflammatory and inaccurate ways. Upon completion of this course, students should be able to consider media coverage with a critical lens and may develop an understanding of the strengths and limitations of the Canadian legal system.

## **SPECIAL CONCERNS REGARDING ONLINE LEARNING & COVID-19**

### **Course Delivery Method**

The format of the course will use a blended format of synchronous (i.e., live) presentations and asynchronous (i.e., recorded presentations). Because there is a good likelihood that some of us

will experience technical difficulties at times, there will be more recorded presentations than live presentations.

Each week will begin with a brief live interaction at 10:00 am on Thurs mornings to get you started on the topic reading for the week. This synchronous portion of the lecture will be used to introduce you to the topic of the day. This period will also allow you to ask any questions or raise any concern's that you have regarding the course content and delivery. This "live period" will involve the use of Zoom and you will receive an invitation to join the class meeting ahead of time.

Following the weekly live component of the course, each "lecture" will be broken down into a series of pre-recorded segments that touch on some of the content related to the week's lecture topic. These recoded lecture segments are designed to stimulate your interest in the field of psychology and law, by highlighting some of the topics that are elaborated upon in your textbook. Partial lecture slides will be posted to the course Moodle. These consist of the slides presented in recorded segments of the lecture. But be prepared to take notes! Research shows that note taking (particularly when the notes are in your own words) is an effective learning strategy.

At a few points in the term, links to brief surveys will be sent to you. These surveys ask for demographic information (e.g., age, gender) as well as information related to the topics covered in the lectures (e.g., research methods, views on crime). Your responses will be anonymous and class data will be statistically summarized and integrated into lectures.

After careful consideration and discussion with colleagues, I have elected to run the course primarily via asynchronously rather than by live lecture. There are a few reasons for this:

Asynchronous learning is more accessible and inclusive. Due to COVID-19, many students find themselves in difficult situations. Some may be at home with young children and no childcare. Some may be experiencing illness. Some may be living in poverty with precarious living situations. Some may have learning challenges that make live sessions overwhelming and hard to follow. Allowing students to learn at their own time and speed is much more accessible and increases student retention.

Asynchronous learning is more practical for many students. Many students work to support themselves or their families and are not able to access live lectures. Many students lack access to childcare. Many students lack access to reliable internet connections, and may be unable to stay logged in to live lectures. Many international students have left the country and may be in different time zones. Allowing students to access the content around their availability makes it more likely they will be able to take part in the class and remain enrolled.

Unfortunately, live online lectures can be hacked and your personal information accessed. Students may not have a safe or quiet place to access live lectures, such that some will miss out on learning opportunities. Pre-recorded content prevents this form of disruption.

Rest assured, you will still receive the same lecture content via pre-recorded lectures that you

would have received in person. My goal is to ensure that you receive the best possible educational opportunity while working within the parameters of social distancing. For those students who wish to have interpersonal communication, your teaching assistants and I are available for online office hours via zoom. We would love to hear from you, so please don't be shy! We are also available for correspondence through email as usual, whatever you prefer.

When watching the lecture videos, you should take notes as you would during a regular lecture. The benefit here is that you can pause, rewind, or re-watch lectures as often as you need. You can also jump to lecture content within videos for ease of access.

Important: Not all of the information presented in your textbook will be covered in the recorded lectures. **You are responsible for reading the text in its entirety.** Lectures are designed to highlight some aspects of the weekly topic and to motivate you to learn. Moreover, **some of the lectures will contain information that is not in the textbook** and questions pertaining to such information may appear on exams. Any video or other material linked within a course slide or on Moodle is also subject to examination on the tests.

### **Course Materials Copyright Information**

These course materials are designed for use as part of the PSYC 3310 course at York University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law. Copying this material for distribution (e.g. uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law. See: Intellectual Property Rights Statement. All lecture recordings and power point slides are the intellectual property of the instructor, Regina Schuller, and may not be disseminated or posted online without consent.

### **Course Evaluation:**

**Exams:** Exams will be based on all course material that is associated with the section of the course that is being tested. This includes the assigned chapters in the textbook. There will be two exams. Each is worth 30% of your final grade. The 1<sup>st</sup> exam will be given in October 22 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> will be given during the December exam period. Each exam will consist of a series of short answer and/or essay style questions.

**Written Assignment:** You will also have one paper to write for the course. This paper is worth 35% of your final grade. The deadline for the ONLINE submission will be November 19, 11:59 pm (online submission to TurnItIn). More information regarding the paper will be provided later in the term.

**Active participation:** Every week, a discussion question, or discussion point will be posted to the Moodle forum the day the lecture is made available. You can earn participation marks through responding to the forum or through engaging with one of your classmates' responses in a brief, 250-word response. In order to earn participation marks, you must participate in the forum discussion before the synchronous session on Thursday morning. Five of the ten forums (we're

excluding the first week) will be randomly selected for evaluation.

### Grade Breakdown:

Test 1: 30% October 22  
Essay: 35%  
Participation: 5%  
Test 2: 30% Dec 9 – Dec 23

### Drop Deadlines:

**Nov 6, 2020** -- Last date to drop the course without receiving a grade on your transcript.  
**Nov 7-Dec 8** – Withdrawal period, withdraw from the course & receive a grade of “W” on transcript.

### Grading as per Senate Policy

Letter	Point Value	Percentage	Definition
A+	9	90-100	Exceptional
A	8	80-89	Excellent
B+	7	75-79	Very Good
B	6	70-74	Good
C+	5	65-69	Competent
C	4	60-64	Fairly Competent
D+	3	55-59	Passing
D	2	50-54	Barely Passing
E	1	40-49	Marginally Failing
F	0	0-39	Failing

**Missed exams:** The only legitimate reason for missing an exam (i.e., one for which a make-up will be scheduled) is because of *medical problems or exceptional circumstances*. If you miss an exam, **you must contact the course instructor by e-mail within 48 hours of the missed exam**. Clearly state your name, student number, and course number in your message. Failure to contact the course instructor within this 48 hour period will result in a grade of 0. You will then need to have a private Zoom meeting with Dr. Schuller to explain your absence. He will then decide whether a make-up opportunity will be allowed.

*Exams missed on the grounds of medical circumstances must be supported by an Attending Physician’s Statement or a statement from a registered professional.* The Attending Physician’s Statement must include (i) the full name, mailing address and telephone number of the Physicians, (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 your ability to study and perform over the period in question.

***Exams missed on the ground of exceptional non-medical circumstances must be supported by appropriate documentation***, i.e., obituary notice, automobile accident report, airline/train/bus tickets/receipt for emergency travel (with date of booking and travel).

**Make up exams:** Although the content coverage of a make-up exam is the same, the format may be different. All make up exams will be scheduled by Dr. Schuller at the **end of the course (late December)**.

**Accommodation for students with disabilities:** If you are registered with the Accessibility, Well-Being and Counselling Centre at Glendon, please provide us with your documentation ASAP so that we can prepare to accommodate your needs for your exams. If you have yet to register, please do so as soon as possible. Please refer to the following link.

<http://www.glendon.yorku.ca/academic-services/exams/alternate-accommodation-for-students-with-disabilities/>

**Religious Observance Accommodation:** Please refer to the following link.

<http://www.glendon.yorku.ca/academic-services/exams/religious-accommodation/>

**Important general information for all students.** You are expected to familiarize yourself with the following information, available on the Senate Committee on Academic Standards, Curriculum & Pedagogy web page (see Reports, Initiatives, Documents) -

<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/senate/committees/ascp/index-ascp.html>

**Student Rights and Responsibilities:** Inform yourself of your rights and responsibilities using the following link. <http://oscr.students.yorku.ca/csrr>

### **Student Etiquette**

You may sometimes be asked to engage with other students in forums and small group exercises on the course Moodle. This will allow you to share your thoughts and questions about the course with one another. Some general rules around appropriate behaviour in group discussions and with the online forum need to be followed. Follow are the guidelines to adhere to in order to insure a safe space for all of you

*Respect others.* You, your peers, and the teaching team are real people who are affected by what you write. Be mindful of the opinions and feelings of others, even if they differ from your own. Rule of thumb: Don't write anything online that you would not say publicly.

*Proofread.* Before sending an email, sending a message to a chat or responding to a discussion, review your response to ensure that it is clear, concise and respectful.

*Avoid strong language, all caps, and excessive exclamation points.* It is very easy for written text to be misread and misunderstood. Watch out for strong language, and try to identify and avoid potential confusions in your wording before sending messages.

*Avoid slang and use standard English.* This is a work environment so please avoid slang terms (e.g., wassup) and texting abbreviations (e.g., u instead of you).

*Avoid the use of emoticons*

*Be careful with humour and avoid sarcasm.* The tone of a message is often lost in a written message and do not assume that everyone understands where you are coming from.

*Personal information and confidentiality.* Do not reveal confidential information about yourself or others. You are, of course, free to share some personal anecdotes about your life if they are

relevant to the question being discussed, but keep in mind that the online spaces provided by Moodle are public spaces that are shared and viewed by others.

*Don't post or share inappropriate material.*

*Be forgiving.* Be mindful that for many students in this course, this will be a new way of interacting and that some may have more difficulty communicating in English. Be kind, patient, and understanding with your peers.

### **Academic Integrity for Students**

You will be demonstrating academic integrity in your behaviour when you are being honest about your knowledge and your work. A student who engages in academically dishonest behaviour such as cheating and plagiarism is said to lack academic integrity.

**Learning about Academic integrity:** Go to the following website and complete a learning module about academic integrity. Some of its highlights are provided below.

<https://spark.library.yorku.ca/academic-integrity-what-is-academic-integrity/>

**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.

<http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/academic-honesty-senate-policy-on/>

*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 exam before it is officially available or learning an examination question before it is officially available; copying another person's answer to an exam question; consulting an unauthorized source during an exam; obtaining assistance by means of electronic or other aids during an exam.

*Impersonation:* It is a breach of academic honesty to have someone impersonate you in an examination. Both the impersonator and the individual impersonated may be charged.

*Plagiarism:* 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. Paraphrasing another's writing without proper acknowledgment is also a form of plagiarism.

*Test banks.* Selling or buying or attempting to sell or buy test banks (banks of test questions and/or answers related to the course), or any course specific test questions/answers is breach of the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. In particular, buying and attempting to sell banks of test questions and/or answers may be considered as "Cheating in an attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation" (article 2.1.1 from the Senate Policy) and/or "encouraging, enabling or causing others" (article 2.1.10 from the Senate Policy) to cheat.

**Sanctions for Academic Misconduct:** When verified, a violation of academic integrity may lead to a range of penalties ranging from an oral or written disciplinary reprimand to the withholding or rescinding of a York degree, diploma or certificate.

***Copyright rules:*** Course materials including recording and lecture slides are designed for use in PSYC3310 A and are the property of Dr. Schuller unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (e.g., journal articles, music, videos) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law. Copying this material for distribution (e.g. uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law. [Intellectual Property Rights Statement](#).

## COURSE TERM OUTLINE

<u>EXPECTED DATE</u>	<u>LECTURE TOPIC</u>	<u>ASSOCIATED CHAPTER</u>
September 10	Introduction to Psychology & Law & Wrongful Convictions	Chapter 1
September 17	False Confessions & Police Interrogations	Chapter 2
September 24	Lie Detection and Polygraphs	Chapter 3
October 1	Criminal Profiling	Chapter 4
October 8	Eyewitnesses	Chapter 5
October 15	<i>Reading week</i>	
October 22	<b>EXAM 1</b>	<b>Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5</b>
October 29	Child Witnesses and False Memories	Chapter 6 & 12 (303-315)
November 5	Jury Selection and Bias Screening	Chapter 7
November 12	Jury Deliberation Processes	Chapter 8
November 19	Mental Illness in the Courts	Chapter 9
November 26	Psychopathy and Risk Assessment	Chapter 10
Dec 3	Sentencing	Chapter 11
Dec 9 – Dec 23	<b>EXAM 2</b> <b>10, 11</b>	<b>Chapters 6, 7, 8, 9,</b>