



St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo

Department of Psychology

Psych 230 held with LS 272

PSYCHOLOGY AND LAW

Winter 2018

Tuesday, Thursday 2:30 – 3:50, SJ2 1002

Instructor and T.A. Information

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Course Description

Psychological principles drawn from a variety of subdisciplines (e.g., social, clinical, cognitive) will be surveyed in terms of their relevance and application to the legal system. Topics may include jury selection and decision-making, eyewitness testimony, insanity defense, competency assessment, risk assessment, and attitudes toward law and the legal process.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

This course is a general overview of psychology and law. The goal is to provide you with basic information and a working vocabulary about psychological concepts and principles as they pertain to phenomena encountered in the criminal justice system. This course will look at important research and examine the contemporary methodologies being used in social and forensic psychology. This course is designed to develop the ability to use scientific methods to examine behaviors that occur in a legal context and to lay the foundations for further study in the areas of psychology and law.

Required Text

- Pozzulo, J., Bennell, C. & Forth, A. (2018). Forensic Psychology, 5th Edition. Toronto, ON: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Readings available on library course reserves

Research Methods
Values and Gender article
Theories of Criminality article

Option 1: Course Requirements and Assessment

Assessment	Date of Evaluation	Weighting
Test 1	Jan 23	25%
Test 2	Feb 13	25%
Test 3	Mar 13	25%
Test 4	Apr 3	25%
Optional Research Experience bonus grade		3%
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Total		100%

Option 2: Course Requirements and Assessment

Assessment	Date of Evaluation	Weighting
Test 1	Jan 23	17%
Test 2	Feb 13	17%
Test 3	Mar 13	17%
Test 4	Apr 3	17%
Research Paper	Apr 6	32%
Optional Research Experience bonus grade		3%
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Total		100%

I will let the text provide a general overview of the material for a given topic and I will use class time to add new material, amplify important issues, and focus on specific topics in more depth. Thus, although there will be some overlap between class and text material, there will be a lot of different material in each.

Assessment Option 1

First, you may base your course grade entirely on your performance on four regular term multiple choice tests (January 23, February 13, March 13, April 3). Each test will be worth 25% of your final grade. In general, the four term tests will be based equally on lecture and textbook material, and will primarily include material covered after the previous test. All tests will make use of scannable computer cards, so please bring a pencil and an eraser.

Test results will be posted as soon as they are available. Please check your mark after each test, as we do not generally release marks over the phone or by e-mail, and university policy prohibits final grades from being posted prior to the end of the examination period.

The mark received for a test stands – it will not be dropped or re-weighted because you weren't feeling well, had a lot on your mind, etc., nor will "extra" assignments be given to students who are dissatisfied with their grades. My goal is to be fair to everyone – please don't ask for special treatment. Of course, it is fair for a test to be rescheduled for legitimate medical, compassionate, or religious grounds.

Students requesting accommodation for course requirements (assignments, midterm tests, final exams, etc.) due to illness should do the following:

- seek medical treatment as soon as possible and obtain a completed uWaterloo Verification of Illness Form: <https://uwaterloo.ca/health-services/student-medical-clinic/services/verification-illness>
- submit that form to the instructor within 48 hours.
- (preferably) inform the instructor by the due date for the course requirement that you will be unable to meet the deadline and that documentation will be forthcoming.

In the case of a missed assignment deadline or midterm test, the instructor will either:

1. waive the course component and re-weight remaining term work as he/she deems fit according to circumstances and the goals of the course, or
2. provide an extension.

In the case of bereavement, the instructor will provide similar accommodations to those for illness. Appropriate documentation to support the request will be required.

Students who are experiencing extenuating circumstances should also inform their academic advisors regarding their personal difficulties.

Assessment Option 2

As a second grading option, you may base a portion of your grade on a research paper. With this option, you are still required to write the four term tests. However, each test will be worth 17% of your final grade, and the remaining 32% of your grade will be based on a research paper written on a topic of your choice related to psychology and the law. The paper is due as an email attachment on Monday, December 4 at or before 11:59 p.m. Papers submitted after this time will not be graded. You may choose to write the paper at any time prior to the due date, but once you hand it in, you will be graded according to the second grading option.

For this paper, you are required to focus on a very narrow, specific topic within the empirical research literature (i.e. journal articles that present original data). You can get ideas for a topic by scanning the research literature (e.g. using PsycINFO or looking through the journals directly), but you must discuss the topic with me prior to writing the paper. Much of the work for this paper will involve finding a topic that is narrow enough that there are only 2 to 4 empirical articles (original academic journal articles in which data is collected and analyzed) dealing with your specific topic. Keep narrowing down your topic until ALL of the available empirical articles on your topic number between 2 and 4. For your paper you are required to write a brief introduction to your topic, summarize the articles (approximately one article per page), and then write an integrative analysis and conclusion (one page or less) in which you describe the state of knowledge on this topic and identify a direction for future research.

Bonus Grades: Research Experience Marks

Experiential learning is considered an integral part of the undergraduate program in Psychology. Research participation is one example of this, article review is another. A number of undergraduate courses have been expanded to include opportunities for Psychology students to earn grades while gaining research experience.

Since experiential learning is highly valued in the Department of Psychology, students may earn a **"bonus" grade of up to 3%** in this course through research experience. Course work will make up 100% of the final mark and a "bonus" of up to 3% may be earned and will be added to the final grade if/as needed to bring your final grade up to 100%.

The two options for earning research experience grades (participation in research and article review) are described below. Students may complete any combination of these options to earn research experience grades.

Option 1: Participation in Psychology Research

Research participation is coordinated by the Research Experiences Group (REG). Psychology students may volunteer as research participants in lab and/or online (web-based) studies conducted by students and faculty in the Department of Psychology. Participation enables students to learn first-hand about psychology research and related concepts. Many students report that participation in research is both an educational and interesting experience. Please be assured that all Psychology studies have undergone prior ethics review and clearance through the Office of Research Ethics.

How to earn extra marks for your Psychology course(s) this term by participating in studies ...

- You will earn "credits" which will be converted to "marks" (1 credit = 1%)
- You can schedule your LAB and/or ONLINE studies using the "Sona" website.

Educational focus of participation in research

To maximize the educational benefits of participating in research, students will receive feedback information following their participation in each study detailing the following elements:

- Purpose or objectives of the study
- Dependent and independent variables
- Expected results
- References for at least two related research articles
- Provisions to ensure confidentiality of data
- Contact information of the researcher should the student have further questions about the study
- Contact information for the Director of the Office of Research Ethics should the student wish to learn more about the general ethical issues surrounding research with human participants, or specific questions or concerns about the study in which s/he participated.

Participation in LAB studies has increment values of 0.5 participation credits (grade percentage points) for each 30-minutes of participation. Participation in ONLINE studies has increment values of .25 credits for each 15-minutes of participation. Researchers will record student's participation, and at the end of the term the REG Coordinator will provide the course instructor with a credit report of the total credits earned by each student.

How to participate?

Study scheduling, participation and grade assignment is managed using the SONA online system. All students enrolled in this course have been set up with a SONA account. You must get started early in the term.

[Participating/SONA information: How to log in to Sona and sign up for studies](#)

**** Please do not ask the Course Instructor or REG Coordinator for information unless you have first thoroughly read the information provided on this website.****

More information about the REG program is available at: [REG Participants' Homepage](#)

Option 2: Article Review as an alternative to participation in research

Students are not required to participate in research, and not all students wish to do so. As an alternative, students may opt to gain research experience by writing short reviews (1½ to 2 pages) of research articles relevant to the course. The course instructor will specify a suitable source of articles for this course (i.e., scientific journals, newspapers, magazines, other printed media). *You must contact your TA to get approval for the article you have chosen before writing the review.* Each review article counts as one percentage point. To receive credit, you must follow specific guidelines. The article review must:

- **be submitted before the [last day of lectures](#). Late submissions will NOT be accepted under ANY circumstances.**
- Be typed

- Fully identify the title, author(s), source and date of the article. A copy of the article must be attached.
- Identify the psychological concepts in the article and indicate the pages in the textbook that are applicable. Critically evaluate the application or treatment of those concepts in the article. If inappropriate or incorrect, identify the error and its implications for the validity of the article. You may find, for example, misleading headings, faulty research procedures, alternative explanations that are ignored, failures to distinguish factual findings from opinions, faulty statements of cause-effect relations, errors in reasoning, etc. Provide examples whenever possible.
- Clearly evaluate the application or treatment of those concepts in the article.
- Keep a copy of your review in the unlikely event we misplace the original.

Course Outline / Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings Due
Jan 4	Introduction	
Jan 9	The intersection of Psychology and the Legal System	Ch. 1
Jan 11	Research Methods	Reserve reading
Jan 16	Value Systems and the Law	Reserve reading
Jan 18	Psychological Explanations of Crime	Reserve reading
Jan 23	*** Test 1 ***	
Jan 25	Police Psychology	Ch. 2
Jan 30	Criminal Profiling	Ch. 3
Feb 1	Investigations and Deception	Ch. 4
Feb 6	12 Angry Men: Movie	
Feb 8	Jury selection	
Feb 13	*** Test 2 ***	
Feb 15	Memories and Eyewitness Testimony	Ch. 5
Feb 20	*** study day – no class ***	
Feb 22	*** study day – no class ***	
Feb 27	Child Victims and Witnesses	Ch. 6
Mar 1	Courtroom Process	
Mar 6	Jury Process	Ch. 7
Mar 8	Determinations of Guilt and Sentencing	Ch. 9
Mar 13	*** Test 3 ***	
Mar 15	Sentencing Alternatives	
Mar 20	Mental Illness in Court	Ch. 8, 14
Mar 22	Risk Assessment	Ch. 10
Mar 27	Psychopathy	Ch. 11
Mar 29	Treatment of Offenders and Recidivism	
Apr 3	*** Test 4 ***	
Apr 6	*** optional research paper due ***	

Electronic Device Policy

Electronic devices are allowed in class as long as they are not disruptive.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is not mandatory however is highly recommended in order to succeed in the class.

Important Information

Academic Offenses: A word about cheating – don't. It is lazy, disrespectful, and immoral. I expect university students to be mature, responsible, accountable people who act with integrity. Students who cheat or plagiarize are 1) incompetent – they haven't actually learned the material, and 2) untrustworthy – they are willing to mislead others and take advantage of their fellow students in order to get ahead. I do not want incompetent, immoral people getting a university degree, much less a job in a position of responsibility. Therefore, if you are caught cheating I will, with little sympathy, lobby for the most severe consequences possible. Here's the official information:

Academic Integrity: To maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo and its Affiliated and Federated Institutions of Waterloo (AFIW) are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage and the Arts Academic Integrity webpage for more information](#).

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline](#). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [University of Waterloo Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances](#).

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Appeals](#).

Note for Students with Disabilities: The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.