Psychology 458
Fall, 2012
The Mind and the Law

Time: Wednesday 12:30 – 2:20
Place: ML 246
Instructor: Jennifer Stolz
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Course Objective
The goal is to introduce the student to some of the ways in which cognition has very important consequences for the application of law. The main emphasis is on preparing the student to read and evaluate primary source research papers, review articles, and chapters illustrating the importance of cognition on legal issues. As such, a major component of the course involves writing short critiques or thought papers related to the weekly readings. A second aspect of the course will involve communicating these ideas to others. Towards this end, each student will give presentations on the weekly readings. Most importantly, I hope that this course will engender a great deal of lively discussion and argument, meaning that we should all come to class each week ready to express ourselves, even if we are not responsible for the presentations, per se.

Course Components and Grading
Each student will make a presentation the course of the term. The presentation will be based on assigned readings, and will comprise 30% of the course mark. On the weeks in which a student is not presenting, s/he will prepare a brief (~2 pages) thought paper on the readings assigned for that week. Thus, each student will prepare 10 of these papers. These papers will be due on the Monday before class (at or before 4 p.m.), so that I and the student(s) presenting have time to read through the papers and incorporate students’ thoughts into the class on Wednesday. Of these 10, the best 7 will be selected to contribute to the student’s grade. Therefore, each paper will be worth 10% of the final course grade. Although I have not included a specific category for class participation, I do expect that everyone here will take an active role in their education, and I will “keep track” of the types of contributions that each student makes. In cases of borderline course grades, class contributions will factor in on the decision of whether or not to “bump” the student to the next highest letter grade.
Summary of Grading Scheme
Presentation 30%
Thought Papers (7/10 @ 10%) 70%

Message from the Faculty of Arts Council (This must now be included on all syllabi)
All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offense is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (p. 1:11). If you need help in learning how to avoid offenses such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean.

Topic Schedule

Date Topic
Sept. 12 Introduction - How could cognition be important for the law? Divvying up the work load.


Sept. 19 Eyewitness Identification; Line-ups; Other-race effect


Sept. 26 Eyewitness Memory; Eyewitness Testimony


Oct. 3 Eyewitness Memory: The “Misinformation effect”


Oct. 10  Repressed/Recovered Memories- Pro


Oct. 17  Repressed/Recovered Memories- Con


Oct. 24  Jury Behaviour


Oct. 31 Childhood Memory/Childhood “Misinformation”


Nov. 7 Children’s Testimony: Anatomical Dolls, Memory for Medical Procedures


Nov. 14 Forensic Linguistics


Nov. 21  Paul Ingram Case; Confession Evidence


Wright, L. (1993). Remembering Satan, Part II. *The New Yorker, 69* (14), 54-76. (everyone reads, no formal presentation)

Nov. 28  Case Studies- convicted murderer; O.J. Simpson Trial; summary
