



ST. JEROME'S UNIVERSITY

Department of Psychology
Psych 330 and LS 372
Criminal Profiling
Winter 2017

Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:30-3:50pm, Classroom SJ2 1002

Instructor and T.A. Information

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HEFTY DISCLAIMER: The material covered in this class includes images and descriptions of crimes that are both **graphic and disturbing** – especially because many of them are real. I will never present this material in a gratuitous way: Case details will be presented only as much as they are regarded as essential to the profiling process. If you are squeamish, or if you have been (or are close to someone who has been) the victim of a violent crime, you need to make a **careful, considered decision** about whether to remain in this class. On the other end of the spectrum, I have **ZERO desire** to glamorize any of this material, so if you are the sort of person who really “gets off” on this sort of thing, please take a serious look at the source of your fascination. The last thing I would want to do by offering this course is to feed a person’s fears – or their fantasies.

Course Description

(from the UW Undergraduate Calendar): Foundational assumptions for, and basic approaches to, criminal profiling will be considered, along with a survey of relevant techniques in the context of numerous case studies. Limitations and alternatives to profiling will also be addressed.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Through a combination of lectures, videos, in-class exercises, and outside assignments, our goal will be to develop a working understanding of the process, problems, and promise of criminal profiling. In particular, we will attempt to use assumptions, principles, and techniques adapted from mainstream psychology in order to evaluate critically, and to offer constructive suggestions for improving, criminal profiling as it is currently practiced.

Profiling is an applied discipline, and crime scenes don’t come with flow-charts or fill in the blank questions, so this course has substantial “learning by doing” components. Profiling requires organizing the available information in a way that makes the most sense given the specifics of a case. Thus, you will

be asked to think, think some more, and justify your thinking. If you want an easy mark or a structured course that places little demand on you as a student, then this is not the course for you. It IS possible to be successful in this course, but you will have to work for it.

Required Readings

Assigned readings are on e-reserve (see schedule below), accessible through the UW Library system. For those of you who may be unfamiliar with accessing e-reserves, a help sheet will be available on LEARN.

Course Requirements and Assessment

Assessment	Date of Evaluation	Weighting
Test 1	January 31 2017	20%
Evidence Assessment Training Assignment	February 16 2017	20%
Test 2	March 9 2017	20%
End of Term Profile	March 28 2017	40%
Total		100%

Test 1 and Test 2

Test 1 (20%) and Test 2 (20%) – These will be in-class and traditional-format (multiple-choice); they are intended to assess your retention and comprehension of the information and principles covered in lecture and the assigned readings. Scannable computer cards will be used, so please bring a couple of pencils and an eraser on test days. Also, be prepared to present your WAT card during tests. Tests are weighted proportionally to the material that they cover; they are not cumulative. The mark received for a test stands, so if you have documented circumstances that may unfairly affect your performance, you need to address this BEFORE rather than after the test is written (see missed test policy below). Marks will be posted on LEARN as soon as they are available.

Evidence Assessment Training Assignment

Evidence Assessment Training (20%) – As a hands-on exercise in physical evidence analysis, particularly as it relates to recognizing the appropriate limits of logical inference, you will be asked to go through someone's trash. PLEASE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY, AND FOLLOW THEM TO THE LETTER.

0) Because collaboration is one of the essential practical skills that profiling requires, you are REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THIS ASSIGNMENT IN GROUPS of 3-6 individuals. Group members are expected to act responsibly: to show up for scheduled meetings, do their fair share of tasks, meet agreed-upon deadlines, etc. If a group member shows signs of unwillingness to meet his or her obligations, then the other group members should first try to resolve the situation informally by respectfully reminding that group member of his/her responsibilities. Should the group member prove unresponsive, a second approach would be to set up a meeting between (ideally ALL) group members and myself, in the hope that we can resolve the situation informally. Obviously, it will be important to attempt any resolutions well in advance of the assignment deadline – otherwise, we end up in a “too little, too late” situation.

As a third “line of defense,” students will be expected to complete peer evaluations of all group members' contributions AFTER the assignment has been submitted. In order to ensure confidentiality,

the evaluation form will be posted on LEARN to be downloaded, completed, and returned to the instructor. Whether or not you choose to complete an evaluation form, other group members can still complete one in reference to you. Thus, unless everyone in your group is happy and agrees that everyone contributed equally, it is in your best interest to complete an evaluation form. If the evaluations show a clear indication that a group member did not make a fair contribution to the submitted assignment – especially if there is evidence that the group attempted to resolve the situation before the assignment was submitted (for example, e-mail exchanges among group members or meetings with me) – then that group member will be subject to a mark deduction of no less than 10% for the submitted assignment. Alternatively, if there is clear consensus that a group member “went above and beyond,” then s/he may receive a 10% bonus.

1) Find a CONSENTING individual to participate in this task. You MUST ask them to provide a signed statement that they agree to have their trash analyzed as “evidence” for a class assignment, and this signed statement MUST be included when you submit your report. Ideally, you should not know the donor at all: Having a third-party “mediator” who is willing to collect the trash to keep the source anonymous to you is therefore strongly recommended. If prior knowledge of the donor is ABSOLUTELY UNAVOIDABLE, then you should state up front what you already know about the donor, and what specific measures you took to prevent prior knowledge from biasing your evidence analysis.

2) Empty the trash, spread it out (presumably on a dropcloth, newspaper, etc.). As part of your writeup, make an inventory of each piece of “evidence.” (Feel free simply to state the number of repeated items: “approx. 100 pumpkin seeds” versus “booger-filled tissue #24”). Then, spend some time looking at each piece (or set of pieces), both separately and in relation to other pieces. What does this tell you about the person(s) -- their habits, interests, recent experiences, etc.? How confident are you? On what basis?

The rest of your writeup consists of whatever inferences you are making about the person(s) involved, how confident you are, and on what basis. In essence, you are to talk me through your reasoning, from physical evidence to the arrived-at conclusion. You will be marked on the reasonableness of your inferences, and whether you have demonstrated awareness of what the evidence can and cannot tell you. The mechanical use of jargon is discouraged. Your writeup should be typed, and as long as it takes to do a thorough job.

3) Only one “set” of trash per group needs to be analyzed. Ideally, no other people, especially the donor, should be present during the analysis itself, once again to minimize bias.

4) Although not required, you are encouraged to discuss the results of your analysis with the donor as an informal check on your accuracy. If you do so, please include a brief summary of this discussion in your report.

5) PLEASE RESPECT THE PRIVACY OF THE DONOR throughout this process. If there is any sensitive information that should not be part of your report – credit card numbers, etc. – PLEASE do not include it in your report, simply list it as “undisclosed.” When in doubt, check with the donor before submitting

the report.

End of Term Profile

End-of-Term Profile (40%) – The final will consist of an annotated profile based on case materials to be distributed in class. You will get the basics: a crime scene illustration and some evidential details. You will then come up with questions that you will present to the “talking case file.” They must be phrased so as to require “Yes/No” or short answers, and answerable based on physical evidence or testimony of survivors (eyewitnesses, people who had contact with the victim), not on private knowledge (“What did the fly on the wall see?”). Two classes will be devoted to question-and-answer sessions for the various “task force” groups that have assembled themselves. Because profiling is a team effort, working in a group of 3-6 individuals is REQUIRED. (The membership need not be the same as the membership for the trash assignment – although this would be natural and sensible if you all work well together.) THE SAME PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH A GROUP MEMBER WHO IS NOT DOING HIS/HER FAIR SHARE APPLY HERE, INCLUDING PEER EVALUATIONS.

Each group will prepare a profile of the presumed offender (if applicable) based on the initial and subsequent information. This document should be typed, and as long as necessary to do a thorough job. Additional details regarding the execution, submission, and marking scheme will be discussed when the case is distributed in class.

Extra Credit

Extra Credit: Up to 4% extra credit is available via research participation in the SONA system. Detailed instructions appear in the “W17 SONA INSTRUCTIONS” handout available for download via the course website. On a personal note, as an active researcher myself, I would ask that you PLEASE TAKE ANY RESEARCH PARTICIPATION SERIOUSLY – careless completion of a study’s materials is a waste of everyone’s time and seriously undercuts the research process.

Course Outline / Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings Due
Jan 3	Profiling the instructor, the Course and Yourself	Egger, S. (1999). Psychological profiling: Past, present, and future. <i>Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice</i> , 15, 242-261.
Jan 5	Profiling Profiling I (History, Goals, Limitations & Mythologies)	
Jan 10	Profiling Profiling II (History, Goals, Limitations & Mythologies)	Snook, B., Cullen, R. M., Bennell, C., Taylor, P. J., & Gendreau, P. (2008). The criminal profiling illusion: What's behind the smoke and mirrors? <i>Criminal Justice and Behavior</i> , 35, 1257-1276.
Jan 12	Profiling Profiling III (History, Goals, Limitations & Mythologies)	
Jan 17	Profiling the Profiler I (Bias, Backgrounds, Egos)	Bennell, C., Corey, S., Taylor, A., & Ecker, J. (2008). What skills are required for effective offender profiling? An examination of the relationship between critical thinking ability and profile accuracy. <i>Psychology, Crime, and Law</i> , 14, 143-157.
Jan 19	Profiling the Profiler II	

Date	Topic	Readings Due
Jan 24	Profiling the Victim I (Why him/her?)	Young, T. J. (1992). Procedures and problems in conducting a psychological autopsy.
Jan 26	Profiling the Victim II	<i>International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology</i> , 36, 43-52.
Jan 31	TEST 1	Readings and Lectures from Jan 3-Jan 26
Feb 2	Profiling the Offender I (General Model)	Crabbé, A., Decoene, S., & Vertommen, H. (2008). Profiling homicide offenders: A review of assumptions and theories. <i>Aggression and Violent Behavior</i> , 13, 88–106.
Feb 7	Profiling the Offender II	
Feb 9	Profiling the Offender III	EVIDENCE ASSESSMENT TRAINING DUE FEB 9
Feb 14	READING WEEK NO CLASS	
Feb 16	READING WEEK NO CLASS	
Feb 21	Profiling the Offender IV	
Feb 23	Profiling the Offender V (Typologies)	Canter, D. V., Alison, L. J., Alison, E., & Wentink, N. (2004). The organized/disorganized typology of serial murder: Myth or model? <i>Psychology, Public Policy, and Law</i> , 10, 293-320.
Feb 28	Profiling the Offender VI (Geographic Profiling)	Snook, B., Taylor, P. J., & Bennell, C. (2011). Geographic profiling: The fast, frugal, and accurate way. <i>Applied Cognitive Psychology</i> , 18, 105-121.
Mar 2	Profiling the Offender VII	
Mar 7	Profiling the Offender VIII (Linguistic Profiling)	Woodhams, J., & Grant, T. (2006). Developing a categorization system for rapists' speech. <i>Psychology, Crime, and Law</i> , 12, 245-260.
Mar 9	TEST 2	Readings and Lectures from Feb 2-Mar 7
Mar 14	Profiling the Offender IX (An Extended Case Example)	
Mar 16	Profiling the Offender X	FINAL CASE ASSIGNED
Mar 21	Profiling the Final I (Evidence Analysis)	In Class Final Case Group Work
Mar 23	Profiling the Final II	In Class Final Case Group Work
Mar 28	FINAL CASE DUE	
Mar 30	Go. Be happy ☺	

Information on Plagiarism Detection

Turnitin.com: Text matching software (Turnitin®) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. Students will be given an option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin®. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course.

Electronic Device Policy

Please TURN OFF cell phones and other electronic devices while in class. Please do your social media, gaming, shopping etc. elsewhere.

Attendance Policy

Class Attendance: LECTURE SLIDES WILL NOT BE PROVIDED. This is not a distance education course. Whether or not you choose to attend class is entirely up to you, BUT you are responsible for all material covered. Should you miss class, for whatever reason, it is your responsibility to find a classmate who would be willing to provide you with the notes you missed. If your absence is legitimate, then I will be happy to answer questions about the missed material once you have consulted with a fellow student. To make the most of consultation time outside of class, come prepared with specific questions regarding whatever material you may be having trouble with, and be prepared to discuss what you know (or think you know) about a topic -- that can speed up and simplify the clarification process tremendously.

Important Information

UW Policy regarding Illness and Missed Tests: UW Examination Regulations

(www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/exams/ExamRegs.pdf) state that: 1) A medical certificate presented in support of an official petition for relief from normal academic requirements must provide all of the information requested on the "University of Waterloo Verification of Illness" form or it will not be accepted. This form can be obtained from Health Services or at www.healthservices.uwaterloo.ca/Health_Services/verification.html. 2) If a student has a test/examination deferred due to acceptable medical evidence, he/she normally will write the test/examination at a mutually convenient time, to be determined by the course instructor. 3) The University acknowledges that, due to the pluralistic nature of the University community, some students may on religious grounds require alternative times to write tests and examinations. 4) Elective arrangements (such as travel plans) are not considered acceptable grounds for granting an alternative examination time.

Thus, you are entitled to test rescheduling for *legitimate* medical, compassionate, or religious grounds. Alternate test dates/times will not be granted because you forgot, overslept, were in a bad mood, had a plane to catch, didn't come to class or read the course outline, had a bird poop on your head, etc. Whenever possible, please inform me PRIOR to the scheduled test to arrange an alternate writing time. A make-up test should be written as quickly as possible upon your return to classes, with the obvious provision of access to missed material (see Class Attendance above). When arriving to write a make-up test, please have the appropriate documentation in hand to support a medical, compassionate, or religious claim. Make-up exams may differ in format from the original.

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.

Making an INFORMED CHOICE: Criminal Profiling – as a third-year psychology course – will demand a lot of you, especially in terms of thinking and people skills. Know what you are getting into, and decide – EARLY – whether you wish to commit yourself to it. If you have decided to do so, then welcome aboard. If not, I hope you find a course that better suits your expectations.

Cheating: I think cheating is lazy, disrespectful, and immoral. It is very sad that some people may try to get a course mark without having earned it honestly. I hope you’re not one of them.

Note: Consultation with anyone other than the course instructor or the course TA with regards to a specific assignment will be considered cheating