CJ 497.001 Serial Murder
COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring, 2013
Tuesday (only) 4:30pm – 7:10pm
Rm BA 106

Instructor: Dr. Willie Edwards
Office Location: Ferguson Bldg., Rm 217
Office Hours: MWF 11:00am – 12:00pm
& Tues (only) 3:00pm – 4:15pm
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COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Textbook(s) Required:


Research Articles (Required Readings):

Course Description:
This course as you see from the title is a very specific and focused topic - serial killers. It is a senior level class and the professor expects students be familiar with the basic theoretical explanations of deviant behavior and criminal acts. This course assumes or requires that a student is already familiar with the elementary areas of criminology and criminal justice, and that he or she is prepared to engage in a higher level of investigation and explanations of criminal behavior, specifically serial killers. We will investigate a wide array of explanations for the behavior or action of the serial killers, men and women. The class will depend on students having read the assignments and attending class prepared to make a worthwhile contribution to the discussion or topic(s) covered during that time period. We will embroil ourselves in the literature of this topic. We will practice communicating our ideas through our writings of class assignments and participation in class discussions. This course will permit us to expose ourselves to a large portion of literature, through lectures, class discussions, reading of recent research articles, and we will avail ourselves to the video material associated with this topic.

Course Design:
Much of the class will focus on discussions and lectures initiated by the professor. Students will be expected to have read the appropriate material for each class so they may intelligently participate in the investigation of the topic for that specific class period.
In this course we will be digesting two books at the same time. We will match chapters as much as possible and it will require that students stay up on their readings and participate accordingly.

Probably in most cases the exams (two of them) will be essay. Any form of testing for this class will involve application and inferences, and not so much recall or memorization of class material. Learning names, numbers and dates are not emphasized, except a student may want to have some familiarity with which serial killer may have done what.

**Student Learning Outcomes (students should be able to or be familiar with):**
1. demonstrate knowledge of the difference between mass killer/murder, spree killer/murder, and serial killer/murder
2. understand and recite some of the typologies of murder
3. understand and employ the various explanations for such types of murders – using biochemical, psychological, and sociological theories
4. elaborate on the etiology of serial killers
5. establish a familiarity with terms such as sociopath, psychopath, and personality disorder
6. become acquainted with areas such as sexual homicide and paraphilia
7. identify qualities of characteristics in the profiling of serial killers
8. develop an understanding and be able to discuss (in written or oral forms) the literature on female and racial minority serial killers
9. be acquainted with and able to state the traits or vulnerability of serial killers’ victims
10. possess information or some knowledge of the major serial killers and their period of activity

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments**

There will be a total of five grades to earn during the semester. The grades will be earned in this fashion:

- two exams (worth 100 points each) will be given during the semester, one about mid-semester and the other as the final exam; those dates will be as follow –
  - Mid-semester exam scheduled March 6, 2013
  - End of semester, Final exam scheduled May 1, 2013
- an objective exam will be administered during the final exam week May 8, 2013 worth 50 points; this exam will be over the entire course
- one open exercise exist at the writing of this syllabus, which will complete the scoring for the objective exam (worth 50 pts.)
- five research articles selected by the professor will be read outside of class and discussed in class for a grade; 20 points will be available for each article (no makeup work will be permitted for the missing of this exercise, regardless of excuse or reason); there will be a discussion grade and a written exercise immediately after the discussing of the article (points will resemble 5/15)
- a research paper pertaining to some aspect of the class topic; the paper will be worth 70 points and a format for the research paper will be discussed and handout provided
- in order to make a complete grade of the research paper 39 points will be earnable during the semester coming from the participation of students in class discussions as the chapters within the textbooks are covered (this discussion is separate from the one to occur with the digesting of the research articles and book review); we have 13 class periods during which time class contributions should occur, beginning January 23, 2013 and ending April 24, 2013; 3 points
will be available each class period for those who make a worthwhile contribution to the class, in the covering of class material

**Grading Information**

Course Possible Points:
- 2 Essay Exams @ 100 pts. each = 200 pts.
- 1 Objective Exam = 50 pts.
- 1 Open Exercise = 50 pts.
- 5 Research Articles Exercises @ 20 pts. each = 100 pts.
- 1 Research Paper = 70 pts.
- 13 Class Participations @ 3 pts., each = 39 pts.
- 1 Extra pt. = 11 pts.

The following grade scale will be used:
- A = 90 – 100 500 – 450 pts.
- B = 80 - 89 449 – 400 pts.
- C = 70 - 79 399 – 350 pts.
- D = 60 - 69 349 – 300 pts.
- F = 59 or below 299 or less pts.

All criminal justice majors must make at least a grade of a C in all classes required for the major.

There will be no individual extra credit work. If extra credit is given it will be done for the entire class. These opportunities will not be many and they cannot be made up if missed by a student. If an exam is missed the student must take a comprehensive exam. This exam will be administered near the end of the semester. If a student misses more than one exam he or she should drop the course.

Graded discussions or written exercises cannot be turned in late or made up. **Late work is unacceptable.**

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**COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

**Interaction with Instructor Statement:**

**Contact of Professor:**
Students wishing to contact the Professor should visit his office during the stated office hours or make an appointment. Students may also contact the Professor using the office telephone number or the email, both are provided on the first page of this class syllabus.

**Research Assistance:**
For research assistance, students should contact: Ms. Emily Witsell Reference Librarian at James G. Gee Library Room 218; 903-886-5719 emily.witsell@tamuc.edu
http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/library

**Tips on How to Be Successful in this Class:**
1. Students must commit serious time to reading the textbooks, and other assigned readings.
2. Students should ask questions of the professor if there is any information they do not understand.
3. Students should attend class regularly.
4. Students should take good, clear and understandable notes from the lectures or discussion, especially if that information will be on a test or you are to be held accountable for it.
5. Students must commit a serious amount of time to preparation for the exams.
6. Students must make the most of the “easy” grades so they help to balance or soften the more difficult grades.
Course Specific Procedures:

Class Policy:
Class attendance and participate are expected. Tardiness is reacted to in an unfavorably manner. Students will not be permitted to enter the class after the professor has initiated the focus for that class period.

Telephone and pagers must be placed on vibrate but should not be answered unless you work for some type of emergency agency (medical or law enforcement, etc.) or you know it to be an emergency call.

A scantron answer sheet (blue) and a number two pencil should be brought to class for each exam, unless instructed differently by the professor.

This department has a strong policy and a low tolerance for cheating. Plagiarism is disliked and treated very seriously. Texas A&M University-Commerce does not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. “Academic dishonesty” includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one’s own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing or removal) of resource material.

Sites that address plagiarism and how to avoid it: http://www.plagiarism.org or http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/hanouts/plagiarism.html.

A student may drop a course by logging into their MYLEO account and clicking on the hyperlink labeled ‘Drop a class’ from among the choices found under the MYLEO section of the Web page.

It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of the rules or policies relating to withdrawal or “X.” You are encouraged to follow the appropriate procedures of the university as they relate to this matter. I will be as helpful and understanding where possible, but please be aware that this professor does not like to give an incomplete as a grade.

University Specific Procedures:

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu
Student Disability Resources & Services
Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook).

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR