PSY 339- Forensic Psychology
Tuesday 4:30 pm – 7:10 PM Henderson 206

COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2015

Instructor: Natalie Saladino, MS
Virtual Office Hours: 4-430 pm and 7-8 pm (Tues)
University Email Address: natalie.saladino@tamuc.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required


Course Description
In 2001, the American Psychological Association (APA) officially recognized Forensic Psychology as being a viable concentration as a specialty field for psychologists. APA has favored the narrow definition of forensic psychology as “the application and practice of psychology in the legal system, particularly in courts.” The main areas in the legal system where a person can find a forensic psychologist, according to authors of the course text include: Police/Law enforcement, criminal and delinquent behavior/psychology, victimology and victim services, courtrooms, and in correctional facilities and/or prisons.

This course will cover a broad spectrum of the various areas that involve law and psychology. This course will focus on some interrogation techniques. This course will also briefly discuss behavior. The course will depict visual aids that may be graphic (gore, gruesome) in nature to demonstrate various crimes (i.e., rape, homicide, mutilation, and so forth) that a forensic psychologist/psychiatrist would encounter with their job function.

Student Learning Outcomes
1. Understand and identify the operational application of forensic psychology
2. Better understand the various functions of the legal system and psychology
3. Increase awareness of behavioral patterns that are criminalistics
4. Explain the origins and reasons behind forensic psychology
5. Discuss the dimensions of forensic psychology and related fields.
6. Better understand one’s self and abilities to use skills to be an effective listener and observer of behavior

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Complete 4 Research Credits via Sona-system research via TAMUC –or- complete a 1-2 page research paper per credit. 1 paper = 1 research credit
- Interview project
- Quizzes and Tests
- Microsoft word (2007 or newer)
- ALL assignments will need to be in .doc or .docx formatting. Unless otherwise stated by professor
- Regularly check your University email – I do tend to send a lot of information about important exam and other related information
- Please, read the research manual before emailing me – it has a FAQ section that more than likely will have the answers you may need.
- Please – post generic questions on the virtual office so that other students can gain insight. It is from my experience that many benefit from others who are willing to ask the questions. The virtual office is via eCollege under course tools.

GRADING

In Class Projects/Assignments will be completed in class with varying points/values and will occur randomly. If you miss class – there will be no make up for in-class items.
**Homework** will be assigned throughout this course with each assignment varying in points/values. Be sure to turn ALL assignments in on time.

**Chapter Tests and Quizzes** may consist of true/false, multiple-choice, short answer, fill-in-the-blank, or other question formats as indicated by the instructor. It is the responsibility of the student to secure their schedule to meet the testing guidelines. Typically, exams are online via the eCollege portal system and usually available for a period of a couple days, which are *always* announcement in a formal letter to your university email system.

*Notice: tests may include questions that come from the text book, lectures, power points, videos and other lessons. (75% of material is dedicated to my lectures; 25% textbook definitions and related info)*

**Crime Scene Teams:** At the end of the semester, there will be a staged reenactment of a crime that members of the class will have to solve. You will be competing against one another. In addition, you will receive credit. There will be 3 members per team divided up over 2 class periods. Each team will have 15 minutes in the room to collect evidence, interview suspects/witnesses, etc. There will be more information about how to prepare you for this in November. Note: This is completely voluntary – If you happen to decide not to participate, no worries. There will be an alternative assignment for you to complete, worth same value. –

**Discussion Board Questions:** There will be several questions that will be posted throughout the semester in regards to the class and current topics. Please, be respectful to your peers. This will allow another form of communication to emerge within the classroom that is more indirect and passive. It is located under Course Home – Discussion.

**Individual Projects:** This assignment will involve actively interviewing 4 individuals and 1 reflection paper about your own experience. You will be required to interview 4 strangers to better understand the idea of forensic psychology. These interviews will establish a good foundation as a student who is interested in the field. It will do one of two things: (1) help you gain skills to becoming a forensic psychologist or (2) clearly confirm that forensic psychology may not be for you. The individual should be someone that the student does not know (i.e., stranger). In addition, the 4 individuals should be of varying ages (see below). **Do not interview a family member, spouse, child, or close friend.**

A rubric for grading the project will be provided. The quality and quantity of your work will be evaluated. During class, the instructor will provide you with several examples and in class practice sessions prior to the beginning of this assignment.

**Interview requirements for ages:**
Interview two subjects between ages: 3 – 18 (elementary school aged to high school aged)
Interview two subjects between ages: 19 +

*More information about interview project will be presented in class and available in DocShare on eCollege*

**Due Date:** Final project due December 1st or earlier
Reflection paper:
- 1-2 pages about your experience interviewing others
- 1 paragraph Must include positive things that you learned
- 1 paragraph Must include negative things that you learned
- Lastly, answer this question: Did this assignment help you decide your career goals? If so, please explain. If not, then please explain. Either way you will need to dedicate a paragraph to answering this question
- Typed, 12 point font, Times new roman
- Turned in with the interview project

Requirement for Course Research Participation:

Requirement for Course Research Participation: A goal of this class is to help you familiarize yourself with research methods. One manner to obtain this goal is to have you participate in research studies. Participating in research studies contributes to students and faculty at TAMU-C, your understanding of how research is conducted, and human knowledge in general. All students in this class will be required to participate in the psychology department’s participant pool or complete alternative assignments (see appendix for more information on alternative assignments).

Students must complete a total of at least 4 experiment credits.

- The 3 experiments must be completed online
- The 1 experiment must be complete in person
- In order to receive credit, I must receive a confirmation page from the researcher stating that you attended/received credit and the amount of credit (Sona-system)
- When you first sign into the experiment management system (EMS) you will be asked to take a prescreen. The prescreen takes about 20 minutes to complete.
- If you complete the prescreen in the first two weeks of the semester you will receive ½ free experiment credit. This can be combined with later experiments that are worth ½ credit.
- If you cannot complete them online or in-person, there is an alternative research paper assignment. They must be submitted via dropbox for research credit, if you decide on paper option(s). The deadline is listed below.
  - 1 alternative paper = 1 credit
  - So in essence if you have 3.5 credits, you will still need to complete a paper in order to reach 4 credits.

Due by November 30, 2015 all 4 credits (online - or – in-person) and/ or Alternative paper assignment. You must print your completion page via Sona-system completion page and bring them to class by December 1st at classtime.

- The page must list the course listed as receiving credit for this semester course
- It must be legible and a copy from Sona-system
- Papers must follow guidelines listed

If you fail to complete this portion of the class your grade will be lowered by one full grade. In effect, if you have an A in the class but fail to complete your research participation (either through participating in research studies, alternative assignments, or a mixture of both) your final grade in the class will be a B. More information about participating in research, such as how to log in to the EMS, is given at the end of this syllabus (Appendices).

**GRADERS**

A = 90 – 100%
B = 80 – 89%
C = 70 – 79 %
D = 60 – 69%
F = 59 and below

Point Values:
- Quizzes 10 – 20 points
- Syllabi Quiz – 20 points
- Discussion Board questions – 10 points
- Exams – 100 points
- Self interview: 25 points
- Interviews 1 – 4: 50 points each
- Reflection paper – 50 points
- Final interview project – 100 points
- Re-writes – will add some addition points to original document (1-5 additional points)
- Crime Scene/ Alternative Assignment – 45 points

*Any item added/ not included will be an amendment to syllabi*

**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements for the Epic Web Client are:
  - Any current Flash-compliant browser (e.g., Internet Explorer 7 or Firefox 3.0)
  - 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
  - Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive
  - Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution
- A sound card and speakers or headphones
- Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date
- Most home computers purchased within the last 3-4 years meet or surpass these requirements.
• You will need some additional free software for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:
  o Adobe Reader
  o Adobe Flash Player
• At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2003, XP, 2007 or Open Office. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement

My primary form of communication with the class will be through Email and Announcements. Any changes to the syllabus or other important information critical to the class will be disseminated to students in this way via your official University Email address. It will be your responsibility to check your University Email and Announcements regularly.

Students who Email me outside of regular office hours can expect a reply within 72 hours M-F. Students who Email me during holidays or over the weekend should expect a reply by the end of the next regularly scheduled business day or within a reasonable amount of time.

eCollege Student Technical Support

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of eCollege. The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

• Chat Support: Click on ‘Live Support’ on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.
• Phone: 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representative.
• Email: helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

Help: Click on the ‘Help’ button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e. how to submit to dropbox, and how to post to discussions, etc.)

Policy for Reporting Problems with eCollege

Should students encounter eCollege-based problems while submitting assignments/discussions/comments/exams, the following procedure MUST be followed?

1. Students must report the problem to the help desk. You may reach the helpdesk at
2. helpdesk@online.tamuc.org or 1-866-656-5511
3. Students **MUST** file their problem with the helpdesk and obtain a helpdesk ticket number
4. Once a helpdesk ticket number is in your possession, students should Email me to advise me of the problem and to provide me with the helpdesk ticket number
5. At that time, I will call the helpdesk to confirm your problem and follow up with you

**PLEASE NOTE:** Your personal computer/access problems are not a legitimate excuse for filing a ticket with the help desk. You are strongly encouraged to check for compatibility of your browser **BEFORE** the course begins and to take the eCollege tutorial offered for students who may require some extra assistance in navigating the eCollege platform. **ONLY** eCollege-based problems are legitimate.

**Internet Access**

An Internet connection is necessary to participate in discussions and assignments, access readings, transfer course work, and receive feedback from your professor. View the requirements as outlined in Technology Requirements above for more information.

**COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/Policies**

**Course Specific Procedures**

**Academic Honesty**

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including (but not limited to) receiving a failing grade on the assignment, the possibility of failure in the course and dismissal from the University. Since dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. In **ALL** instances, incidents of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Department Head. Please be aware that academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) cheating, plagiarism, and collusion.

*Cheating* is defined as:
- Copying another's test of assignment
- Communication with another during an exam or assignment (i.e. written, oral or otherwise)
- Giving or seeking aid from another when not permitted by the instructor
- Possessing or using unauthorized materials during the test
- Buying, using, stealing, transporting, or soliciting a test, draft of a test, or answer key

*Plagiarism* is defined as:
- Using someone else's work in your assignment without appropriate acknowledgement
- Making slight variations in the language and then failing to give credit to the source
Collusion is defined as:

- Collaborating with another, without authorization, when preparing an assignment

If you have any questions regarding academic dishonesty, ask. Otherwise, I will assume that you have full knowledge of the academic dishonesty policy and agree to the conditions as set forth in this syllabus.

Cell Phones
If you need to make a call or you receive a call, please step into the hallway away from the door. Set the phone ringtone to vibrate or silent or turn it off. The class does not need to be interrupted. If you work in a profession where readiness to your phone is part of your job functions, please let me know. Other reasons, please advise me. Respect the right that after repeated measures, students who abuse this cell phone right will be asked to leave class for that day. Any quizzes or work during after subsequent removal will not be allowed to be made up.

*E-Cigarettes/ Vapors/ Chewing/ all related Tobacco products*
Per University new* policy rules these items (e-cig/vapor/chewing tobacco/cigarettes/any tobacco product) are restricted from use inside the university building. Any student seen using such items will be removed from class and not allowed to return for the remainder of that class nor make up any items missed in the absence (i.e., in-class assignments). If you must use these items, please find the designated smoking area to do so.

Attendance Policy
Students are expected to attend class and actively participate. Failing to attend class regularly will most likely affect your overall final grade. Refer to University handbook for requirements. Attendance is reflected upon the student’s readiness and preparedness for coursework. Under such University obligations, as an instructor I may have to DROP a student for lack of attendance or if such a student requests per the deadlines set by University.

APA Citation Format Policy
It is very important that you learn how to cite properly. In some ways, citations are more important than the actual text of your paper/assignment. Therefore, you should take this task seriously and devote some time to understanding how to cite properly. If you take the time to understand this process up front, it will save you a significant amount of time in the long run (not to mention significant deductions in points).

In the social and behavioral sciences (including Criminal Justice), we use APA (American Psychological Association) format. As a rule of thumb, one cites whenever they are paraphrasing other people’s words or when they quote other’s words directly. You may learn to cite from a variety of different sources including the APA Tutorial and the sources listed below and in the Getting Started section of your course.

www.apastyle.org
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/02/
www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/apa

Late Work
In principle, I do not accept late work and do not believe in allowing students to turn in work after the due date. My position is that everyone knows the rules of engagement at the beginning of the term and that it is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they plan accordingly to
submit their assignments in a timely manner. However, life happens from time to time, so if you happen to need to turn an item in late, the grade will be significantly lower and begin at a 70 or a ranking of a “C” – in regards to pass/fail items (some points will be rewarded that will negate a “C”). Students will have a window of 5 days after the due date to turn in items. Please, email me if your situation is more serious and it will be handled appropriately.

Drop Course Policy
Students should take responsibility for dropping themselves from the course according to University policy should this become necessary.

University Specific Procedures

ADA Statement -Students with Disabilities:
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- Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Go to the following email address: StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu
Go to the following link: 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). Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR
Every effort will be made to adhere to the course schedule as noted below. However, unforeseen circumstances may require changes to the schedule. In that case, changes will be announced via University Email and in Announcements. The professor reserves the right to change the schedule if necessary and depending on the progress of the class.

Assignments

Due by end of 2nd week by 11:59 PM Sunday – September 13th

1. Introduce yourself online via Discussion Board
2. Enroll in Sona-system research portal
3. Quiz over related definitions from book and lectures (available Sept 11-13)
4. Quiz over syllabi – Scavenger Hunt (can retake as many times until deadline)
Due by September 20 by 11:59 PM Sunday

1. Interview yourself
2. Quiz over related definitions related to court and psychological interviews (available Sept 18-20)

Due by September 27 by 11:59 PM Sunday

1. Interview a classmate (it will be assigned after 12th day in academic semester)
2. Discussion Board question

Due October 11th by 11:59 PM Sunday

1. Turn in your first interview – subject 1
2. Discussion Board question

Due October 18 by 11:59 PM Sunday

1. Turn in second interview – subject 2
2. Re-write first interview (if instructed)

Due October 25 by 11:59 PM Sunday

1. Discussion Board
2. Rewrite second interview (if instructed)
3. Quiz over definitions about serial offenders, case examples, etc.

Due November 1st by 11:59 PM Sunday

1. Turn in 3rd interview – subject 3

Due November 15th by 11:59 PM Sunday

1. Turn in 4th interview – subject 4
2. Discussion Board question
3. Rewrite 3rd interview (if instructed)

Due November 22 by 11:59 PM Sunday

1. Quiz over forensic science and CSI related information
2. Must decide on crime scene teams (3 per team) – or- alternative assignment
3. Must notify me if you choose alternative assignment

**Research Credits last day November 30th**

- Last day to obtain research credits per deadline
- Due in class December 1st or before or email me a copy of completion page that has a detail list of information
• If you decide to turn in research paper the deadline still applies, please turn in via proper dropbox. 1 research paper = 1 research credit

Due December 1st – Final Interview (decide the best interview that was conducted and written, choose only 1 from the 4) – Even if you are not participating in the Crime Scene Activity – you will still need to turn in the assignment on campus to designated person. More information will be released when it is closer to time.
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Syllabus Receipt and Confidentiality Statement

I understand that due to the nature of psychology and related psychology classes that some individuals may share personal and private information. I agree not to share or repeat any personal or private information shared within this classroom, outside the classroom or with anybody else in any way, shape or form. This includes not only all verbal communication but also all media, social networking sites, text messaging, etc.

In addition, signing this agreement indicates that you understand all the rules and policies stated on thus syllabi and you agree to abide by the rules and procedures listed. You also understand that the syllabi may be altered by the instructor at any time throughout the course. At times this may be due to inclement weather and so forth. Although, this is a rare occasion, it still must be understood and accepted.

This confidentiality is a required portion of the course. If you disagree with any or all portion, you may bring it to the instructor’s attention. At that moment, the proper steps will be taken to ensure integrity and ease of the student. Thank you for your time.

_____(Initial here) I have received a copy of the syllabus, read it, and understand the requirements of this course.

Signature/Name   Date

Print name   Date