

Forensic Psychology

(PSY 494-28772) Spring 2016

T Th 9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

West Campus, West SANDS Classroom 231

Instructor: Tess M.S. Neal, Ph.D.

Office Hours: T Th 10:15 – 11:15 a.m. & by appointment

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Prerequisites

PSY 101 (PGS 101) with C or better; Minimum 45 hours or PSY 290 with C or better.

Required Book

Ewing, C.P. & McCann, J.T. (2006). *Minds on Trial: Great Cases in Law and Psychology*. Oxford University Press. ISBN: 0-19-518176-x

Highly Recommended Book

Huss, M. (2013). *Forensic Psychology* (2nd Ed). Wiley. ISBN: 978-1118554135

You can purchase a hard copy or e-copy of these books through the [ASU Bookstore](#) or through an online retailer like Amazon.com.

Additional Readings:

I'll also likely assign some supplemental readings throughout the semester. I'll provide access to these.

Course Description (from the ASU catalog)

Covers topics of immediate or special interest to a faculty member and students. 3 Credit Hrs. General Studies: No

Course Overview

This course will provide you with an introduction to the clinical practice of forensic psychology – the assessment and treatment of people who interact with the legal system. “Forensic” comes from the Latin word for “court,” and “forensic psychologists” are psychologists who help courts make decisions about people when some question of mental state is involved. Thus, forensic psychologists typically are involved in cases “pre-adjudication,” which means before the legal decision is made. This course focuses on the ways in which psychologists do clinical work (assessment and treatment) to help courts make informed decisions about cases. We will learn about how forensic psychology developed as a field and the major ways in which psychologists are involved in both the criminal and civil court systems. For example, in the criminal justice system, psychologists help resolve legal questions about defendants’ competency to stand trial, sanity at the time of offense, risk of future violence, and risk of future sex offenses. In the civil justice system, psychologists help resolve cases involving sexual harassment, child custody, and personal injury, among other issues.

Course Objectives

- Demonstrate an ability to think critically and analyze the issues presented in forensic psychology.
- Identify and discuss landmark cases that demonstrate the practical role of forensic psychology (such as the impact of intelligence testing in the *Atkins vs. Virginia* case).
- Explain the unique challenges that forensic psychologists face clinically, legally, and ethically.
- Analyze how the law can be therapeutic or anti-therapeutic for the people most directly affected by it.
- Apply the concepts learned in the course to current real-life cases.
- Discover how to become a forensic psychologist and identify various careers in forensic psychology.



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Learning Outcomes. You will:	Assessment
1. Demonstrate knowledge of forensic psychology and an ability to apply what you have learned.	1. Exams, quiz, in-class activities, and class discussions.
2. Engage in exercises that facilitate immediate application of new knowledge to a new context.	2. In-class activities and question assignments.
3. Practice and refine writing skills.	3. Reading assignments and the in-class assignments with feedback.
4. Develop a basic familiarity with the process of psychological research.	4. Research exposure requirement.

Class Format

This paragraph contains secret information that will only be helpful to *homo sapiens* (i.e., humans). If you are not a member of this group, feel free to skip this paragraph. Research indicates that people learn material better and retain it longer when they actively participate in the learning process, so I encourage you to do just that. You will not learn as much by sitting in your classes passively listening to teachers and mindlessly reading the text or memorizing definitions. I strongly encourage you to talk about what you are learning with others, write about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to your daily life. To encourage this kind of learning, we will be asking questions, engaging each other in conversation, watching videos clips of clients showing the symptoms of the disorders we learn about and discussing the legal and ethical issues involved in these cases, and reading voraciously. Please note that classes will not always closely follow the books. Although I will discuss some of the concepts covered in the book, most class time is intended to get you more involved with the material and to give you additional information. Thus, we'll do a variety of things in class: lectures, small group discussions and activities, classroom exercises and demonstrations, brief writing assignments, and videos among other things.

Course Requirements

1. **Attendance and Participation:** Classroom attendance and regular participation are fundamental to your success in this course. Active participation in classroom discussions will improve the quality of the course for everyone, and has also been demonstrated to improve learning. Attendance is important for a number of reasons. For one, it's impossible to learn from class discussions and activities if you're not in class. Class notes will tell you facts... class attendance will enable you to synthesize those facts into new knowledge that will transfer into many other areas (such as better understanding other classes and even your ability to critically evaluate T.V. commercials). In addition, class time provides an ideal opportunity to raise questions and ask for clarification. Please take discussions, activities, and writing assignments seriously and ask questions. You should also ask questions. Oh yeah, did I mention to ask questions? I will do my best to answer them, and if I can't, I'll find the answer.
 - a. **Tardiness: Please be on time.** It's a simple matter of professionalism and courtesy. If you are late, enter quietly and sit in the back to minimize disruption. Consistently walking into class late is disruptive and disrespectful to me and to your fellow students. Besides, being on time *is cool*.
 - b. **Policy:** Attendance is expected and necessary in order for you to do well in this class, though formal attendance will not be taken. Your in-class participation will be vital to not only your ability to learn and enjoy this class, but also your letter grade. In lieu of passing around a sheet everyday, there will be unannounced in-class activities and reading assignments that count toward your grade, and I will pay attention to who pays attention. For details, check out the list of Assignments below.

2. **Assigned Readings and Reading Questions (10%):** Forensic psychology is a fascinating application of psychology every single day in courtrooms around the world. To help you learn to understand how psychologist help inform legal decisions, you will be reading the assigned readings and answering reading questions as "homework" on selected topics. (This is also a way to help you digest the material.) I will provide reading prompts/questions for 10 of the assigned readings. You need to complete all 10 of these assignments for full credit (each is worth 1% of your final grade). Your responses have to be printed out and handed in at the end of class. Hand-written responses will not be accepted (i.e., they have to be completed before class and printed out). These assignments cannot be emailed to me or made up later (except for excused absences related to religious observances/practices ([ACD 304-04](#)) or university sanctioned events/activities ([ACD 304-02](#))). The majority of these assignments will ask you to focus on a topic from the section and explain an example of the concept in real life. So, for example, when we cover the "Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity" defense, I might ask you to find a current

or recent news story about a defendant claiming this defense, and to analyze the information available about the defendant’s mental state at the time of the crime – what information is consistent with mental illness and inability to recognize right from wrong, and what information is inconsistent with those criteria? In grading these assignments, I will look for a concise, accurate, and sophisticated analysis based on the reading material. And oh yeah – the material covered in our course is often both thought provoking and awesome, so feel free to clap a little or do a little dance when we cover something cool.

3. **In-Class Activities (10%):** In-class activities are brief assignments (such as reading quizzes, short writing assignments, small group activities, class debates, and games) that will be given throughout the semester. In-class activities are designed to encourage you to keep up with the readings, give you an opportunity to illustrate your preparation for class meetings, and apply what you’ve learned in the readings to everyday situations. Often, these activities will be given during the first 5 minutes of class and they cannot be made up (except for excused absences related to religious observances/practices in accord with [ACD 304–04](#), “Accommodation for Religious Practices” or university sanctioned events/activities in accord with [ACD 304–02](#), “Missed Classes Due to University-Sanctioned Activities”). If you are late for class or absent, your score will be recorded as a zero. Each activity is worth 2 points. There will be 6 “for credit” in-class activities offered, and you are expected to complete 5 for full credit. Participation in the 6th available activities will result in extra credit.

4. **Research Exposure (5%):** Participating in a research activity or reading and analyzing research papers elates to favorable perceptions of science and research and greater knowledge of procedures associated with participation involved in research. Gaining direct exposure to research will help you better appreciate how the psychological research findings we read and talk about came to be. This rich experience of immersion right into real research will enhance your understanding of the process of psychological research and may help you to develop critical thinking skills about the limitations of psychological research. Please see the “research requirement information” handout for all the details you will need to complete this requirement. Credit for research exposure is an all-or-none deal. If you do *all* of the **required 6 “units”** of exposure (see handout for more details), you get the full 5% credit on your final grade. If you don’t do *all* of the required units, you will receive a 0% for research exposure. To register and sign up for research studies visit: <http://asuw.sona-systems.com/>

5. **Exams (75%):** There will be **two exams** and a **non-cumulative final exam (three total)**. The final exam is scheduled for Thursday, May 5th from 7:30 am – 9:20 am (yes, it’s obscene. I agree. But this is the time the university scheduled us for, and we’ve got to do it. So let’s rally. I’ll provide coffee ☺). Any of the material covered in class lectures, class activities, and assigned readings will be fair game for the exams. Each exam is worth 25% of your final grade. I will provide you with a study guide for each exam. You will come to love these study guides. In the past, the study guides have been the subject of love poems. Ok, not really. But they help on the exams.
 - a. **Make-up Exam Policy.** No make-up exams will be given except in the case of extreme circumstances such as serious illness or accident requiring hospitalization or death in the family. Common illnesses and prior travel arrangements do not qualify. Proper documentation **will** be required for missing an exam. Proper medical documentation includes (a) date and time of visit, (b) clear description of why you could not take the exam at the scheduled time, and (c) name and phone number of the physician. Further documentation may be requested. Make-up exams can be provided if the reason for absence was related to religious observances/practices ([ACD 304–04](#)) or university sanctioned events/activities ([ACD 304–02](#)). Make up tests may be in a different format than the original exam. To qualify for a make-up exam, I must be notified either prior to the exam (highly preferable) or as soon as possible afterward. If you miss an exam without appropriate documentation, you will receive a score of zero for the exam.

Extra Credit

There are 6 opportunities for in-class assignments and only 5 are required for full credit, so you may earn up to 2 points of extra credit on your final grade if the 6th activity is completed. This extra credit is worth raw credit toward your final grade in the class. So come to class and participate!

Grading Scale

A+..... 97-100	B+ 87-89	C+..... 77-79	E ≤59
A 93-96	B 83-86	C 70-76	
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	D 60-69	

Grading System

Final grades consist of participation during in-class activities (10%), completion of reading questions (10%), research exposure (5%), and 3 exams (75% total). Grades can be determined with this chart:

	Points Earned		Raw Final Grade Percent
Reading questions	_____ (out of 10)	=	_____
In-class assignments	_____ (out of 10)	=	_____
Research Exposure	_____ (out of 5)	=	_____
Exam 1	_____ x .25	=	_____
Exam 2	_____ x .25	=	_____
Exam 3 (Final Exam)	_____ x .25	=	_____
FINAL GRADE (total from above) =			_____

The Grade of Incomplete: A grade of incomplete will be awarded only in the event that a documented emergency or illness prevents a student who is doing acceptable work from completing a small percentage of the course requirements at the end of the semester. The guidelines in the current general ASU catalog regarding a grade of incomplete will be strictly followed. **A grade of incomplete will NOT be awarded unless there is documented evidence of extreme personal or immediate family hardship.** Changes in work hours, child-care emergencies, or other similar personal problems will not be approved as reasons for awarding incompletes. The Director of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences must approve all incomplete grade requests.

Withdrawals: I CANNOT withdraw students for any reason. Specifically, students should be aware that non-attendance will **NOT** automatically result in their being dropped from the course. Therefore, if a student does not attend class during the first week or for any extended period of time during the semester, they should not presume that they are no longer registered. **It is the student's responsibility to be aware of their registration status.**

Please note the following dates:

Session Date & Deadlines	Session C (15 Week Session) Jan 11 – April 29, 2016
Classes Begin	January 11, 2016
Drop/Add Deadline (w/out College approval)	January 17, 2016
Martin Luther King JR. Holiday Observed – University Closed	January 18, 2016
Tuition & Fees 100% Refund Deadline	January 24, 2016
University 21 st Day	February 1, 2016
Deadline to Apply for Graduation	February 15, 2016
Spring Break	March 6 – 13, 2016
Course Withdrawal Deadline	April 3, 2015
Complete Session Withdrawal Deadline	April 29, 2015
Classes End/Last Day to Process transactions	April 29, 2016
Final Exams	May 2 – 7, 2016
Final Grades Due	May 2 – 9, 2016
Degree Conferral Date	May 9, 2016

Any withdrawal must be completed by the deadline date in accordance to the appropriate session at the registrar's office. If not, you will still be officially enrolled and you will receive a grade based on your work completed.

*As part of a complete session withdrawal a student must withdraw from all classes in a session. Beginning the first day of classes, undergraduate students are required to work with a Student Retention Coordinator to facilitate the withdrawal process. Please refer to <http://students.asu.edu/StudentRetention>

For additional information about ASU's withdrawal policy and the possible consequences of withdrawing from a class, contact Registration Services or your academic counselor.

Students are responsible for their registration status!

Policy against Threatening Behavior: Don't do it - <http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/ssm/ssm104-02.html>

Reasonable Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides information and services to students with any documented disability who are attending ASU West (www.west.asu.edu/drc/ UCB Room 130; 602-543-8145). Individualized program strategies and recommendations are available for each student as well as current information regarding community resources. Students also may have access to specialized equipment and supportive services and should contact the instructor for accommodations that are necessary for course completion.

Academic Integrity and Code of Conduct:

Academic Integrity Policy: <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>. *Code of Conduct:* <http://students.asu.edu/srr/code>
Scholastic dishonesty is uncommon and will be dealt with harshly by the University. Each student has an obligation to act with honesty and integrity, and to respect the rights of others in carrying out all academic assignments. A student may be found to have engaged in academic dishonesty if during or in connection with any academic evaluation, s/he:

- Engages in any form of academic deceit;
- Refers to materials or sources or employs devices (e.g., audio recorders, crib sheets, or commercial research services) not authorized by the instructor for use during the academic evaluation;
- Possesses, buys, sells, obtains, or uses, without appropriate authorization, a copy of any materials intended to be used for academic evaluation in advance of its administration;
- Acts as a substitute for another person in any academic evaluation;
- Uses a substitute in any academic evaluation;
- Depends on the aid of others to the extent that the work is not representative of the student's abilities, knowing or having good reason to believe that this aid is not authorized by the instructor;
- Provides inappropriate aid to another person, knowing or having good reason to believe the aid is not authorized by the instructor;
- Engages in plagiarism;
- Permits his or her work to be submitted by another person without the instructor's authorization; or
- Attempts to influence or change any academic evaluation or record for reasons having no relevance to class achievement.

PSY 494 / 28772 follows the ASU Academic Integrity Policy in the administration of all course examinations and assignments. Violations of the University Academic Integrity policy will not be ignored. Penalties include reduced or no credit for submitted work, a failing grade in the class, a note on your official transcript that shows you were punished for cheating, suspension, expulsion and revocation of already awarded degrees. The university requires that the implementation of any of these penalties for violations of the academic integrity policy be reported to the Dean's office. The Integrity Policy defines the process to be used if the student wishes to appeal this action.

Course/Instructor Evaluation

The course/instructor evaluation for this course will be conducted online 7-10 days before the last official day of classes of each semester or summer session. Your response(s) to the course/instructor are anonymous and will not be returned to your instructor until after grades have been submitted. The use of a course/instructor evaluation is an important process that allows our college to (1) help faculty improve their instruction, (2) help administrators evaluate instructional quality, (3) ensure high standards of teaching, and (4) ultimately improve instruction and student learning over time. Completion of the evaluation is not required for you to pass this class and will not affect your grade, but your cooperation and participation in this process is critical. About two weeks before the class finishes, watch for an e-mail with "**NCIAS Course/Instructor Evaluation**" in the subject heading. The email will be sent to your official ASU e-mail address.

Useful Websites

Blackboard: For easy access to announcements, assignments, handouts, grades, and the syllabus.

ASU Academic Success Programs

ASU provides an amazing number of free services to help students succeed, including tutoring, writing support, and more for your courses. See <https://tutoring.asu.edu/> for more info.

ASU Counseling Services Website

ASU Counseling Services offers confidential, personal counseling and crisis services for students experiencing emotional concerns, problems in adjusting, and other factors that affect their ability to achieve their academic and personal goals. <https://eoss.asu.edu/counseling>

Psychology as a major and/or career: <http://www.apa.org/topics/psychologycareer.html>

Forensic Psychology and Psychology-Law Graduate Programs and Careers – explore the American Psychology-Law Society website: <http://www.apadivisions.org/division-41/>

Avoiding Plagiarism: <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/files/plagiarism.pdf>

Classroom Expectations

- **Electronic Devices:** Please turn off or silence cell phones and electronic devices for class...I start off every class by turning my own off. Do not send texts or check email, Facebook page, etc. during class. I really can see you no matter how fast your thumbs are and it's not too difficult to notice when you aren't paying attention. During exams, electronic devices of any kind will not be allowed on your person or near your desk.
- **Class Time:** I will not keep you after class time is up. But please do not begin packing up until I dismiss you. This is distracting and disrespectful to me and your fellow students. If you have a reason to leave class early tell me prior to the start of class and sit in the back to minimize distractions as you leave.
- **Classroom Civility:** One of the most valuable aspects of college is exposure to a variety of life experiences and differing viewpoints. Please be respectful of other students. Some topics of discussion may be sensitive or controversial. Keep this in mind as you share your opinions, and be considerate of others when they are sharing.
- **Social Networking Sites:** Professionalism, in part, entails maintaining fairness, equity, and impartiality in the instructor-student relationship. Social Networking Sites can blur this relationship. Therefore, I cannot accept "friend requests" or respond to messages sent via any online SN sites.
- **Course Content Copyright:** Course content, including lectures, are copyrighted material. Students may not sell notes taken during the conduct of the course (see [ACD 304-06](#), "Commercial Note Taking Services" for more information).
- **Sexual Violence and Harassment:** Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <https://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs>. As a mandated reporter, I am obligated to report any information I become aware of regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence and dating violence. ASU Counseling Services are available if you wish discuss any concerns confidentially and privately: <https://eoss.asu.edu/counseling>.

Honors Enrichment Contracts

Students taking this course for honors enrichment will participate in a "*Forensic Psychology in Literature*" reading group that will meet for one hour every other week over the course of the semester. The group will choose which book(s) to read from a list developed by Dr. Neal of literature reflecting forensic psychology issues. Each member of the honors reading group will be expected to develop questions prior to each meeting based on the reading for that segment (such as 1-2 chapter of the novel) and then pose questions to the group and participate in discussion when other group members pose their questions. Dr. Neal will participate in this reading group and will be present for every other meeting. At the end of the book / reading group, each honors student will write a 4-5 page paper about forensic psychology in the book(s).

Survival Guide for This Class

- Take the class seriously.
- Come to class. Regularly – (as in, come to class everyday).
- Read the assigned text *before* coming to class.
- Respond to the reading assignments and PRINT them out before coming to class.
- Take good notes. If you aren't sure whether your notes are good notes, ask me to look over them.
- Get organized and manage your time (do not procrastinate)
- Complete all assignments. On time.
- Be active and engaged in class discussions.
- Ask questions. There is no such thing as a "stupid" question.
- Draw examples from your personal experiences to illustrate the topics.
- Come visit me in office hours.
- Make friends. Get contact info from a few other students in case you miss a day and need notes, etc.
- Review exams. Come see your exam and the answer key in office hours to identify problem areas.
- Utilize all available resources. Each other, the instructor, campus resources, etc.
- HAVE FUN!!!

Tentative Course Schedule*

Class dates	Topic(s)	Reading(s) to be completed
1/12 1/14	<i>What is Forensic Psychology?</i>	Ewing & McCann: Preface & Introduction Huss Ch. 1 & 2
1/19 1/21 1/26 (No Class 1/28)	<i>Expert Witnesses & Testimony</i>	Ewing & McCann: Ch. 7 "Cameron Hooker: Judging the Experts?" & Ch. 12 "Jeffrey Dahmer: Serial Murder, Necrophilia, & Cannibalism" Huss Ch. 3 Selected readings from Brodsky's testifying in court books (will be provided)
2/2 2/4	<i>Careers in Forensic Psychology</i>	American Psychology-Law Society's (AP-LS) "Careers in Psychology and Law" – four sections, including "overview," "subspecialties," "training opportunities," and "professional biographies" http://www.apadivisions.org/division-41/education/students/careers.aspx And pages 1-10 of the AP-LS Guide to Graduate Programs in Forensic and Legal Psychology http://www.apadivisions.org/division-41/education/programs/guide.pdf
2/9	<i>Review Day</i>	
2/11	Exam 1	
2/16 2/18 2/23	<i>Competence to Stand Trial</i>	Ewing & McCann: Ch. 15 "Colin Ferguson: A Fool for a Client" & Ch. 16 "Ralph Tortorici: A Question of Competence" Huss Ch. 8 p. 167-184
2/25 3/1 3/3	<i>Insanity & Diminished Capacity</i>	Ewing & McCann: Ch. 8 "John W. Hinckley, Jr.: Shooting for the Stars" Ch. 19 "Andrea Yates: An American Tragedy" Huss Ch. 9
3/15 3/17	<i>Psychopathy & Violence Risk</i>	Ewing & McCann: Ch. 5 "Prosenjit Poddar & Tatiana Tarasoff: Where the Public Peril Begins" and Ch. 17 "Mike Tyson: Predicting the Violence of a Professional Fighter" Huss Ch. 4 & 5
3/22 (group) 3/24 (group)	<i>"Brains on Trial"</i> http://brainsontrial.com/	Watch & discuss "Brains on Trial" <u>Episode 1</u> with your small group whenever you choose today (no class meeting) Watch & discuss "Brains on Trial" <u>Episode 2</u> with your small group whenever you choose today (no class meeting)
3/29	<i>Review Day</i>	
3/31	Exam 2	

4/5 4/7	<i>Child Custody</i>	Ewing & McCann Ch. 13 “Woody Allen and Mia Farrow: A Swing of King Solomon’s Sword” Read this short but fascinating real legal case decision: Painter v. Bannister, 258 Iowa 1390, 140 N.W.2d. 152 (1966) Huss Ch. 12
4/12 4/14 4/19	<i>Civil Commitment</i>	Ewing & McCann Ch. 2 “Lee Harvey Oswald: The Formative Years of an Assassin” Huss Ch. 7
4/21 4/26	<i>Sexual Offender Civil Commitment after Criminal Sentence Completion</i>	Grudzinskas, A.J. & Henry, M.G. (1997). Analysis and Commentary: Kansas v. Hendricks. <i>Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law</i> , 25, 607-612. (Will be provided on Blackboard) Read this short news article & watch this short video about recent legal challenges leading to release of civilly-committed sex offenders: http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2014/07/16/if-one-sex-offender-is-released-its-likely-others-will-be-too/ Huss Ch. 6
4/28	<i>Review Day</i>	
5/5	FINAL EXAM 7:30 am – 9:20 am (Yes, the time is obscene. I’ll provide coffee).	

* The course schedule may change (with reasonable advance notice) during the semester based on class performance.