San José State University
Psychology Department
PSYC 153 Psychology in the Court Room, Fall 2011

Instructor: Roger Karlsson, PhD, ABPP
Office Location: DMH 232
Telephone: (408) 924-
Email: roger.karlsson@sjsu.edu (preferred line of communication)
Office Hours: Tuesdays 17:00 – 18:00 and 20:45 – 21:00
Class Days/Time: Tuesdays 18:00 – 20:45
Classroom: DMH 353
Prerequisites: Psyc 1 (Introductory Psychology)

Course Description
Role of psychology in the legal system: legal procedure and adversary system, jury selection, jury decision-making, eyewitness testimony, mental health law, criminal responsibility and legal insanity, expert psychological testimony, and criminal profiling.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

- The objective of this course is to provide an introduction to various subjects that interface psychology and the law. After completing the course, participants should be able to understand the basics of the practice of forensic psychology in the court room, the basics of how the court system functions, usual forensic issues that a forensic psychologist work with, and understand various controversies that are related to the use of expert witnesses in the court system.

- The course will cover forensic psychology practice and research in regards to both criminal and civil law, with an emphasis on mental health related issues. Examples of mental health issues are competency to stand trial, the insanity defense and risk assessments of violent and sexual offenders. Various clinical phenomena concerning forensic psychology, such as psychopathy, antisocial personality disorder, stalking behaviors, and battered woman syndrome will be discussed in length. The course will also cover how forensic psychology can assist in investigating crimes, criminal profiling, child custody evaluations, jury selection, and help establish the occurrence of discrimination and sexual harassment.
Required Texts/Readings

Required Textbooks


The two books should be available at the Spartan Bookstore and also easily accessible through internet booksellers.

Other Required Readings that will be the basis for both the special topics seminars and the three papers. These articles can be found on PsychInfo, which is accessible through the MLK Library Homepage.


Classroom Protocol

As it benefits the level of this course, the lectures will cover a broad range of topics, some of which will expand well into areas outside the core content covered in the textbook. It should be obvious that you will need to read the relevant texts before they are covered in class. The lectures are your chance to integrate what you have read and ask questions if there is something you don’t understand or need clarified.
Forensic psychology is a new subject for most of you. Periodically, it might appear as if the amount of information is overwhelming. It might help to read the texts before class and to look through the lecture material a second time, right after class, to enhance learning and better prepare yourself for the tests.

Disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated and will result in a lower grade (this might be one of the few classes where it will be obvious that the future of humanity must be built on following social rules and show each other respect). Late arrival is not tolerable. If you plan to be late frequently, you should contact the instructor to explain your situation. Unless otherwise noted, tardiness will affect your grade severely (see above note about disrespectful behavior).

Cell-phone use (including text messaging) is not allowed inside the classroom during lectures. Using your laptop to make lecture notes is acceptable, but not for writing e-mails, playing computer games, communicating on the messenger, cruising on Ebay or match.com, checking your Facebook page etc. Unauthorized use of cell phones and laptops will affect your grade severely (see above note about disrespectful behavior).

Classroom discussions are encouraged and will affect your grade in a positive direction. In general, a fair involvement in the classroom will result in an increase in final grade (i.e., from C to C+). An extensive involvement in the classroom might affect your grade to a larger degree. You are not expected to participate in discussions as if you already were a forensic psychologist. You are predominately neophyte students of forensic psychology and, hence, expected to discuss the subject at a beginner’s level. Disagreements with the instructor based on common sense or actual knowledge are encouraged and indicates prefrontal brain activity and may result in a higher grade.

Dropping and Adding
Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. Information on add/drops are available at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-298.html. Information about late drop is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

Papers and Grading Policy
The course is primarily lecture based. Grading will reflect your performance on three formal in-class exams and three papers. The papers should be no more than three pages long, in APA format, and must be printed out and brought into the class room and handed to the instructor prior to the beginning of the class. Any variation from these instructions will result in dropped points. The papers should review one of the articles that have been selected as readings for each of the three special topics seminars about Sex Offenders, Stalking, and Serial Killers. The instructions: select ONE article that is mandatory reading for that particular special topic seminar. Review the article and address the following issues: (1) What are the author(s) main points/findings; (2) what kind of evidence/reason do he/she/they present in support for their points/findings; (3) what would be a reasonable critique of their findings/points? To answer question (3), you might need to read other
articles that presents a contrasting view of the same points/findings. The course will be graded out of 100 points. Each midterm is worth 20 points, the final is worth 40 points, and the three papers are in total worth 20 points.

This grading system will be based on a normal curve distribution and the following guidelines are highly tentative and will be subjected to revisions pending statistical analysis of the test results: <60 is a fail; 60-62.5 D-; 67.5 D; <70 D+; 70-72.5 C-; <77.5 C; <80 C+; 80-82.5 B-; <87.5 B; <90 B+; 90-92.5 A-; <97.5 A; >97.5 A+

University Policies

Academic integrity

Students should know that the University’s Academic Integrity Policy is available at Academic Integrity Policy is availabed at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf. Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University’s integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person’s ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU’s Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.
**PSYC 153 Psychology in the Court Room, Fall 2011, Course Schedule**

**The schedule is subject to change with fair notice ahead of time through e-mail by your instructor and/or by announcement in class – If you are not in class you might miss the information**

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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| 1    | 08/30 | • General Introduction: Structure of the Course  
       |       | • Movie: *A Place for Paedophiles* – A visit to Coalinga State Hospital – California’s high security state hospital for sexually violent predators |
| 2    | 09/06 | • Psychology and the Law – the justice system and rules of expert testimony Part I  
       |       | *Ch. 1* |
| 3    | 09/13 | • Psychology and the Law - the justice system and rules of expert testimony Part II  
       |       | *Ch. 1* |
| 4    | 09/20 | • *Special Topic*: Psychopathy and Antisocial Personality Disorder: Research and Theory  
       |       | *Hare, R. (1993).* [The whole book] |
| 5    | 09/27 | • Interrogations  
       |       | • Lie Detection  
       |       | *Ch. 2 and 3* |
| 6    | 10/04 | • The psychology of forensic identification  
       |       | • Criminal profiling and psychological autopsies  
       |       | *Ch. 4 and 5* |
| 7    | 10/11 | **MIDTERM 1: 18:00 – 19:00**  
       |       | • *Special Topic*: Stalking: Facts, Fiction, and Theories  
       |       | *Articles 1, 6 and 8, PAPER 1 DUE* |
| 8    | 10/18 | • Jury Selection  
       |       | • Eyewitness identification and testimony  
       |       | *Ch. 6 and 7* |
| 9    | 10/25 | • Competence to stand trial  
       |       | • The insanity defense  
       |       | *Ch. 8 and 9* |
| 10   | 11/01 | • Battered Woman Syndrome, Rape trauma syndrome and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder  
       |       | • Interviewing Children and memories of sexual abuse  
       |       | *Ch. 10 and 11* |
| 11   | 11/08 | • Child Custody disputes and parental competence  
       |       | • Juries and judges as decision-makers  
       |       | *Ch. 12 and 13* |
| 12   | 11/15 | **MIDTERM 2, 18:00 - 19:00**  
<pre><code>   |       | • *Special Topic*: Sex Offenders; laws, typologies, and |
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<td><em>Articles 2 and 4; <strong>PAPER 2 DUE</strong></em></td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>11/22/11</td>
<td><strong>Predicting Violent Behavior: The psychology of Risk Assessments</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Workplace Law: Harassment, discrimination and fairness</strong></td>
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<td><em>Ch. 14 and 15</em></td>
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<td>11/29/11</td>
<td><strong>Corrections: Sentencing, Imprisonment, and Alternatives</strong></td>
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<td><strong>The Death Penalty</strong></td>
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<td><em>Ch. 16 and 17</em></td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>12/06/11</td>
<td><strong>Special Topic: Serial Killers: Facts, Fiction, and Theory</strong></td>
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<td>*Articles 3, 5, 7 (also rehearse Ch 5); <strong>PAPER 3 DUE</strong></td>
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<td>FINAL EXAM</td>
<td>12/13/11</td>
<td><strong>FINAL CUMULATIVE EXAM</strong></td>
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