San José State University  
Psychology Department  
PSYC 153 Psychology in the Court Room, Section 01, Spring 2013

Instructor: Roger Karlsson, PhD, ABPP
Office Location: DMH 232
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Office Hours: Mondays 17:15 – 18:00 and 20:45 – 21:00
Class Days/Time: Mondays 18:00 – 20:45
Classroom: DMH 359
Prerequisites: Psyc 1 (Introductory Psychology)

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

Course Learning Objectives (CLOs)
Upon successful completing the course, participants should be able to understand:

CLO1: the basics of the practice and science of psychology in a forensic setting
CLO2: the basics of how the court system functions
CLO3: usual forensic issues that a forensic psychologist assesses and testifies about
CLO4: various controversies that are related to the use of expert witnesses in the court system.

Course Goals
- The objective of this course is to provide an introduction to various subjects that interface psychology and the law. 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. 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.

**Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)**

Upon successful completion of the psychology major requirements:

**PLO1 – Knowledge Base of Psychology** – Students will be able to identify, describe, and communicate the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.

**PLO2 – Research Methods in Psychology** – Students will be able to design, implement, and communicate basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretations.

**PLO3 – Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology** – Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach to address issues related to behavior and mental processes.

**PLO4 – Application of Psychology** – Students will be able to apply psychological principles to individual, interpersonal, group, and societal issues.

**PLO5 – Values in Psychology** – Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society.

**Required Texts/Readings**

**Required Textbook:**


This book should be available at the Spartan Bookstore and also accessible through internet booksellers.

Your writing assignments will consist of reviewing and critiquing the following two articles that can be found through PsychInfo (use MLK library website):


Definition of a Credit Hour

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty-five hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practicum. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

The credit hour is defined as "the amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than:

1) one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester..."

2) a credit hour is assumed to be a 50-minute (not 60-minute) period.

In courses (e.g., online) in which in-class "seat time" does not apply, "a credit hour may be measured by an equivalent amount of work, as demonstrated by student achievement."

As an example, the expectation of work for a 3-credit course is 150-minutes of direct faculty instruction and six hours of out-of-class student work each week.

Classroom Protocol

- Common courtesy and professional behavior dictates that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. In fact, recording a person without his or her permission in California might be a violation of California Penal Code 632(a) and result in an up to $2500 fine and/or up to a year in jail. Hence, you must obtain the instructor’s permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. This permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.

- Permission for recording lectures will only be granted after a written request, clearly stating why the student need to record lectures, and whether the student wants to record a particular lecture or every lecture for the semester.
• When recording lectures that involves active participation of students or guests, permission of those students or guests must be obtained as well.

• **Course material developed by the instructor** is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor-generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.

• **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 are late, enter the class room discreetly. If you plan to be late frequently, you should contact the instructor to explain your situation. Unless otherwise noted, tardiness will affect your grade.

• **Cell-phone use** (including text messaging) is not allowed inside the classroom during lectures. Also, turnoff your ringer. If you absolutely need to take a phone call or send a SMS, go outside the classroom discreetly.

• **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 regarding disrespectful behavior).

• **Students tend think their instructor doesn't know what they are doing in class** when they are not participating. They get a surprise when they see their final grade.

• **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 usually result in a higher grade.

**Dropping and Adding**

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester’s Catalog Policies section at http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic calendar web page located at
http://www.sjsu.edu/academic_programs/calendars/academic_calendar/. The Late Drop Policy is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the Advising Hub at http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/.

**Paper and Grading Policy**

The course is primarily lecture based. Grading will reflect your performance on three formal in-class exams and two shorter papers. Each individual paper should be no more than 4 pages long, double-spaced, 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 on the date of the deadline (see due dates below). Do not include an abstract, but do cite the article correctly. Use your 4 pages wisely. Ideally, after thoughtfully reading the articles a few times, you will have more to say than what can be contained within four pages and you must pick and choose the most poignant arguments. The papers should review and critique the two articles listed above by addressing the following issues: (1) What are the author(s) main points/findings; (2) what kind of evidence/reason does s/he/they present in support for their points/findings; (3), what would be a reasonable critique of their findings/points? What would be the take-home message for a forensic psychologist? Do not use numbers or describe statistical procedures in the papers, instead state, “The results of the study indicated that….” Any significant variation from these instructions will result in dropped points, 1 point for each infraction, and 1 point for each day the paper is late (since the maximum score is ten points, losing points is not advisable).

The course will be graded out of 100 points. Each midterm is worth 20 points, the final is worth 40 points, and the papers are worth in total 20 points (10 points each). The final will roughly consists of 60% of questions from Chapters 9-13 and 40% from Chapters 1-8. Extra credit is not available. 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**

Your commitment as a student to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The University’s Academic Integrity policy, located at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm, requires 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 Student Conduct and Ethical Development website is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/.
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 your assignment or any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU’s Academic Policy S07-2 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 [Disability Resource Center](http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/) (DRC) at [http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/](http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/) to establish a record of their disability.
**PSYC 153 Psychology in the Court Room, Spring 2013, 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* **The readings assigned for each class below is referred to as Huss and chapter #**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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| 1    | 01/28/13| • 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    | 02/04/13| • What is Forensic psychology?; Huss Ch. 1 |
| 3    | 02/11/13| • Assessment, Treatment, and Consultation; Huss Ch. 2 |
| 4    | 02/18/13| • Expert Testimony and the role of the expert; Huss Ch. 3 |
| 5    | 02/25/13| • Psychopathy; Huss Ch. 4  
• Paper 1 (Rufino, Boccaccini et al.) due |
| 6    | 03/04/13| • MIDTERM 1: 18:00 – 19:00 (Chapters 1-4 and Rufino paper)  
• Violence Risk Assessment; Huss Ch. 5 |
| 7    | 03/11/13| • Sex Offenders; Huss Ch. 6 |
| 8    | 03/18/13| • Insanity and Criminal Responsibility; Huss Ch. 7 |
|      | 03/25/13| • Spring Break – No Class |
|      | 04/01/13| • Cesar Chavez Day – No Class |
| 9    | 04/08/13| • Criminal and Civil Competence; Huss Ch. 8 |
| 10   | 04/15/13| • MIDTERM 2, 18:00 - 19:00 (Chapters 5-8)  
• Civil Commitment; Huss Ch. 9 |
| 11   | 04/22/13| • Domestic Violence and Stalking, Huss Ch. 9 |
| 12   | 04/29/13| • Juvenile Delinquency and Juvenile Justice; Huss Ch. 10 |
| 13   | 05/06/13| • Child Custody; Huss Ch. 12  
• Paper 2 (Owens & Rhoades) due |
| 14   | 05/13/13| • Personal Injury and Discrimination in Civil Law; Huss Ch. 13 |
| FINAL EXAM | 05/20/13| • CUMULATIVE FINAL EXAM  (Chapters 1-13, Rufino and Owens papers)  
DMH 359, 17:15 – 19:30 |