PSYCHOLOGY AND THE LAW

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Books:


Articles will be available on Blackboard (See calendar).

OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE

The purpose of the present course is to take an overview of the contributions of Psychology to the field of Law. This course is intended as an upper level course for Psychology majors or minors. The format of the course will be a combination of lectures and discussions. It is expected that everyone in the class will participate by keeping up with the readings and attending all classes. The whole course is organized around the following four dilemmas: 1) the rights of individuals versus the common good, 2) equality versus discretion, 3) discovery of truth versus resolving conflicts, and 4) science versus the law as a source of decisions. In the first part of the course, we will focus on the American jury. The second part of the course will focus on three special issues of the law: insanity plea, death penalty, and victims.

Class Etiquette/Expectations

The classroom is meant to be a learning environment for both the students and the instructor. Although the following guidelines might be obvious, I am putting them in writing in order to better facilitate a beneficial environment for all of us.

Keep up with the readings for the class. For most classes, you will be reading one chapter in the Greene book, 1 or 2 journal articles, and one or two cases. In order to help you think about the readings, you will turn in a reaction paper the first day we cover each new topic (with a few exceptions). The requirements for the reaction paper are listed below.

Please do not use cellphones, IPODs, etc… Please try your best to be attentive in class. This will make you a better classmates and a more successful student. It is distracting to your fellow classmates (and to my teaching) if you are engaging in texting or online activities.
Please do not use laptops. I understand that for some students, a laptop is a necessity. If this is the case, you should come see me to sign an agreement stating you will not use your laptop to access facebook, twitter, myspace, or any other non-class related site.

Be On Time: Please arrive to class on time. Given the short period of time we are able to spend together, I will not be able to repeat material if you do come in late. Occasionally coming in late cannot be helped. If you must come late, please enter the room quietly. After class, make sure that you get the notes you missed from a fellow classmate.

Respect your classmates: You are in a diverse college setting. Often you will find that your fellow students do not share your background or opinions. This is the wonderful thing about college! I will be very disappointed if you show disrespect (i.e., eye rolling, smirking, blatantly teasing) for your fellow students.

Late Assignments:
The only assignments that can be turned in late are the reaction papers and the jury observation paper. Given the nature of the thought blogs, these cannot be posted late. Late assignments will lose 5 points PER DAY they are late. Accepting late assignments is at my discretion based upon length of time elapsed since due date.

GRADING

Below are the requirements and percentages of your grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>50 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction paper for each topic</td>
<td>200 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought Blog</td>
<td>100 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jury observation paper</td>
<td>200 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Exams</td>
<td>300 points</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>850 points</strong></td>
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Grading Scale

A = 791-850  B+ = 740-764  C+ = 655-679  D+ = 570-679  F= Below 510 points
A-= 765-790  B = 706-739  C = 621-654  D = 536-569
B- = 680-705  C- = 595-620  D- = 510-535
Participation/Attendance
A large part of the learning in this course comes from attending and participating in the class discussions. Missing more than 3 classes will drop your grade a letter point (i.e., 4 = B+, 5 = B, 6 = B-; etc…). I only give excused absences for family emergencies, documented illness (with a note), and athletics. Please notify me if you are going to miss class for an extended period of time due to one of the aforementioned events.

Reaction Papers
Submit a one to two page reaction paper for each new topic. The reaction paper is due the same day the reading is due. A reaction paper is a one to two page reaction to the readings. It is not a summary of the readings but your critical response to what you read. In your reaction paper do the following: 1) point out the strengths and weaknesses of the studies and/or chapters that you read for the week, 2) show how the articles and/or the chapter are related, and 3) relate the readings to the cases you read (if there are not cases for the topic, relate the chapters and articles to something you know from reading, observing, watching and/or listening). You might relate the readings to something else you read in this course or another course. You might relate the readings to something you read in the newspaper or in a magazine or saw on television or in a movie. The lowest reaction paper grade will be dropped or you can choose to not turn in one reaction paper.

Thought Blog
Several times during the semester, you will need to go onto the Blackboard course blog and write a thought-provoking question about the topic. You should answer your own question and also respond to the questions of 2 other students. Thought provoking questions cannot be answered by yes/no responses, but require further reflection or critical thinking about the topic. These will be graded based upon the critical thought you show as well as the depth of your responses to questions posed by other students.

Jury Observation Paper
Write a 3-4 page paper based on your observations of at least one day in court observing one trial. For example, you might observe a case at the Orleans Parish Criminal District Court (http://www.criminalcourt.org/Default.aspx) or the Louisiana Supreme Court (http://www.lasc.org/default.asp). The paper will include a summary of your observations in court. Then you will select an aspect of juries discussed in the course (e.g., jury selection). Analyze whether the trial you described was consistent or not consistent with the current literature in the area and why. TAKE NOTES IN COURT! This paper is due on __________.

Exams
Complete three exams that will be based on the class discussions as well as the readings. Questions will be mostly short answer.

Writing assignments should be clearly organized and concise. Papers will be graded on content, organization, use of social psychological terms, and editing. I require APA (American Psychological Association) formatting, 12-point font and standard margins. Please make sure pages are numbered so I can effectively follow.
**Computer problems will not count as an excuse for incomplete work. There are computers available all over campus, including at the library. If you wait until five minutes before class to print your paper and your printer does not work, your work will still be counted as late.**

**All assignments should be typed and stapled/clipped;** no hand written assignments, loose documents will be accepted. Do NOT email me your assignment. **Please upload late assignments to the Blackboard drop box.**

*Please see me at any time during the course of the semester with concerns or questions. I value your input and will take any suggestions you offer seriously.*

**STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is a form of cheating, punishable (at the discretion of the instructor) by failure in the course in which it occurs and possibly (at the discretion of the dean) by suspension or dismissal from the University.

Plagiarism can take a number of forms, including the re-use of your own written work without appropriate modifications and/or without the permission of your instructor.

Plagiarism most commonly occurs when material is taken from a source without proper citation. Whenever material is quoted directly, it must appear in quotation marks and be properly cited either in the text or in a footnote. A citation without quotation marks is not adequate since it implies that the material quoted is your wording. It is even less acceptable to simply put the source of material in a bibliography at the end of your paper, with neither quotation marks nor references made in the text or notes.

Indirectly quotations— that is, points taken from some source but restated in your own words— should not appear in quotation marks, but the source from which they come should be cited in the text or in a footnote, depending on the reference style your instructor prefers.

If necessary, ask me for further clarification. Remember that a course grade or even your undergraduate career could be jeopardized by ignorance in this matter. **Ignorance does not constitute an excuse for plagiarism.**
## COURSE CALENDAR

**PART I: Introduction**
**PART II: The American Jury**
**PART III: Witnesses & Evidence**
**PART IV: Special Concerns of the Law**
**PART V: Psychology of Crime & Police**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading &amp; Assignments Due at the Start of Class</th>
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| Week 1     | Introductions and Overview of Psychology & the Law | 1. G, Chapter 1, 2  
2. EM, Chapter 6, p. 69-80 (Dan White)                                      |
| Week 2     | Introducing the jury and the trial process  | 1. G, Chapter 10  
2. EM, Chapter 9, p. 103-113 (Judas Priest)  
| Week 3     | Jury selection and pretrial bias            | 1. G, Chapter 11  
| Week 5     | Criminal Investigation: Witnesses          | 1. G, Chapter 5  
3. EM, Chapter 7, p. 81-90 (Cameron Hooker)                                      |
3. EM, Chapter 4, p. 45-55 (Guildford Four)                                      |
| Week 7     | Between Arrest and Trial                   | 1. G, Chapter 7 |
| Week 8          | Competence and Insanity                                                                 | 1. G, Chapter 8  
3. EM, Chapter 8, p. 91-101 (John Hinckley)  
4. EM, Chapter 19, p. 229-240 (Andrea Yates)  
**BLOG #2 due** |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 9         | Punishment and Sentencing                                                              | 1. G, Chapter 15  
2. EM, Chapter 18, p. 217-228 (Daryl Atkins)  
**Exam 2**     |
| Week 10        | Psychology of Victims                                                                  | 1. G, Chapter 13  
3. EM, Chapter 3, p. 31-43 (Patricia Hearst)  
**Blog #3 due** |
| Week 11        | Children & Adolescents                                                                 | 1. G, Chapter 14  
**JURY PAPER DUE!** |
| Week 12        | Psychology of Crime                                                                     | 1. G, Chapter 3  
2. EM, Chapter 12 (Jeffrey Dahmer)  
**Final Blog due** |
| Week 13        | Psychology of Police                                                                    | 2. G, Chapter 4  
**Mandatory Final Exam** |

This calendar is subject to change. If class is canceled, any tests or papers will be due the following class day and the professor will update the class calendar.

**IN THE EVENT OF AN EVACUATION:**

In the case of evacuation, all class material will be posted on blackboard and all students will be expected to keep up with the class material. We will keep in contact with each other via the class blog.

University policy requires that students be online within 48 hours of an evacuation. I realize that sometimes this is not possible. If you are not able to get online, you will be given one week to complete the work your classmates worked on during evacuation.