

Argosy University/San Francisco Bay Area
Special Topics in Counseling Psychology
Psychology and the Law – C6470
Fall2006

Instructor: Dr. Arinn Olson, Psy.D

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Required Texts:

Curt R. Bartol & Anne M. Bartol, 2004. Psychology and Law: Theory, Research, and Application (3rd edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning

Robert Hare, 1999. Without Conscience: The Disturbing World of the Psychopaths Among Us. New York, NY: Guilford Publications.

Course Description:

This course is designed to be an introduction to the role of psychologists in the forensic context. While many psychologists never intend to work in the areas where psychology and the law interact, clients end up in legal cases and psychologists may be called upon to present information to legal bodies. The contribution of psychology to such legal topics as insanity, civil commitments, assessments, family law and correctional psychology will be surveyed. Selected topics will be covered in more detail including psychopaths, juvenile delinquency and ethics. How to write a clinical report will be the final topic.

Course Objectives:

1. Students will become familiar with the different roles that psychologists may play within the legal and correctional systems.
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of how certain psychological constructs are defined by the legal system (e.g., competency to stand trial, insanity, civil commitment).
3. Students will come to understand how psychological assessments are used for forensic purposes (e.g., risk assessments, family evaluations).

4. Students will demonstrate familiarity about how certain psychological disorders are viewed by the legal system (e.g., psychopathy).

5. Students will acquire knowledge of the impact of current legal standards and ethical considerations on psychological practice.

Course Evaluation:

*Your grade in this course will be based on the following requirements:

1. A mid-term exam (25%) This exam will be based on the readings and discussions pertaining to the first 7 topics outlined below. The exam will be multiple choice questions. It will be scheduled in the week of October 16th.

2. Online assignments (30%) Students will have to complete online assignments and exercises related to assigned readings. Readings must be completed for thoughtful participation in the online discussions.

3. A final exam worth (25%) This exam will be based on the readings and discussions pertaining to the last 8 topics outlined below. It will not be cumulative so will not cover material examined in the midterm. The exam will be multiple choice questions. It will be scheduled in the week of December 11th.

4. Autobiographical Statement (10%). Tell the class and me about yourself in 450-600 words. Describe your goals, achievements and expectations of this course. Be creative. Your writing should reflect that of the graduate student level. It will be scheduled in the week of September 4th.

5. Reaction Paper (10%). The paper will be *your* reaction to the text, not a summary or book report. I will expect you to draw upon your professional and personal experience to complement the readings. The paper must be typed in APA format and emailed to me at DrArimnOlson@gmail.com by midnight of the date it is assigned. It will be scheduled in the week of November 20th.

Course Outline:

1– week of September 4
Introduction to Law & Psychology
Bartol & Bartol – Chapter 1

2– week of September 11
Psychological assessment, testing, and the law
B& B – Chapter 2

3– week of September 18
The legal system and being an expert witness

B& B – Chapter 3

4– week of September 25

Mental health law: Competency to stand trial

B& B – Chapter 4

5– week of October 2

Mental health law: Civil commitments

B& B – Chapter 5

6– week of October 9

The psychology of the jury

B& B – Chapter 6 & 7

7– week of October 16

The psychology of evidence: Eyewitness testimony

B& B – Chapter 8

***MIDTERM EXAM**

8– week of October 23

Correctional psychology

B& B – Chapter 10

9– week of October 30

Psychology and family law

B& B – Chapter 11

10– week of November 6

Juvenile delinquency

B& B – Chapter 12

11– week of November 13

Psychology of criminal behavior

B& B – Chapter 13

12– week of November 20

Psychopathy

Hare

13– week of November 27

Psychology of law enforcement

B& B – Chapter 14

14– week of December 4

Ethical considerations in forensic psychology

15– week of December 11

***FINAL EXAM**

Class Participation:

Class attendance at all sessions is mandatory. Attendance is defined by weekly postings on the Discussion Board. I certainly understand there are emergencies in life, but unless you have received an extension **directly** from me **prior** to the due date you will not receive any credit for the missed assignment.

GRADING:

Autobiographical Statement	10%
Class Participation	30% (includes all discussion board postings)
Hare Reaction Paper	10%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%

*Extra Credit will be offered in the final week of the course.

Grading Criteria

93-100	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
69 below	

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism

In an effort to foster a spirit of honesty and integrity during the learning process, Argosy University requires that the submission of all course assignments represent the original work produced by that student. All sources must be documented through normal scholarly references/citations and all work must be submitted using the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Edition (2001)*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association (APA) format. Please refer to Appendix A in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Edition* for thesis and paper format. Students are encouraged to purchase this manual (required in some courses) and become familiar with its content as well as consult the Argosy University catalog for further information regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism.

Additionally, Argosy University considers resubmission of a work produced for one course in a subsequent course or the submission of work done partially or entirely by another to be academic dishonesty. It is the student's responsibility to seek clarification from the instructor regarding how much help may be received in completing an assignment, exam or project and what sources may be used.

Scholarly writing:

The faculty at Argosy University is dedicated to providing a learning environment that supports scholarly and ethical writing free from academic dishonesty and plagiarism. This includes the proper and appropriate referencing of all sources. You are responsible for maintaining an electronic copy of any work submitted, because you may be asked to submit your course assignments through "Turnitin," (www.turnitin.com), an online resource established to help educators develop writing/research skills and detect potential cases of academic dishonesty. Turnitin compares submitted papers to billions of pages of content and provides a comparison report to your instructor. This comparison detects papers that share common information and duplicative language.

ADA Policy

It is AU/San Francisco Bay Area Campus policy not to discriminate against qualified students with a documented disability in its educational programs, activities or services. If you have a disability-related need for accommodations in this class, contact the Campus Director of Student Services at 510-215-0277.

Your instructor is responsible for delivering this curriculum in a format that will ensure the objectives are met and measured. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways depending upon the experience, orientation, technological acumen, emphasis and preferences of the instructor as well as the resources available. Your instructor is also required to ensure that the course Outline include details regarding assignments and method of instruction.