Forensic Psychology  
Psy 292-001  
Tuesdays 3:30-6:15  

Instructor: Bryan Myers, Ph.D.  
Office: 110G SB  
Phone: 962-3636  
Email: myersb@uncw.edu  
Hours: Thursdays 12:15-1:15 or by appointment  


Additional readings: There are a series of additional readings that will be kept on reserve at the library for students. These readings are not required, but only suggested to help students learn more about the topic. If a student completes a bonus assignment, evidence they have referenced the additional readings in their paper will be critical to their grade. Readings found on my webpage: http://people.uncw.edu/myersb/.  

Course Objectives  
It is my hope that upon completion of this semester students will:  
- Have a broad understanding of the issues/areas within the field of forensic psychology.  
- Be able to relate important concepts within psychology to the forensic setting.  
- Develop critical thinking skills with regard to research findings within the field.  

Attendance and missed exams policy  
Attendance is mandatory. It is your responsibility to get missed notes from a classmate for any missed classes. Missed exams will result in a 0 for that exam unless absence is excused by instructor. See me beforehand or provide written documentation of illness. Any makeup exams will be given immediately following the final exam.  

Evaluation of Performance  
Grade will be assessed according to performance on 4 exams – each 1 hour long and consisting of 50 multiple choice questions. In addition, students may turn in a short (< 5 page double-spaced) paper, in APA format, addressing one of the bonus topics listed below (and using the suggested readings for that topic in their paper) for a maximum of 10 points. Students may also participate in psychology experiments (1 credit hour = 1 bonus point) rather than complete a paper for their 10 bonus points. Missed experiments will result in a 1 bonus penalty. More than 1 missed experiment will result in no bonus points awarded. The following scale will be used for grading:  

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Important Dates:  
Jan 17 – last day to drop  
Feb 4 – Exam 1  
Feb 27 – last day to withdraw  
Mar 6 – Holiday  
Mar 13 – Exam 2  
April 10 – Exam 3  
May 8 – Exam 4 at 3pm. Makeup exams given immediately following exam 4
Schedule of Topics*

Week 1 (Jan 16)
Introduction to Law and Psychology
Lecture topic: Review syllabus and discussion of the adversarial nature of the justice process.
Readings: ch. 1-2 Wrightsman
Film: The thin blue line.

Week 2 (Jan 23)
Psychologists and Law Enforcement I
Lecture topic: Eyewitness identifications
Readings: ch. 10 Wrightsman
Bonus Topic: Are eyewitnesses accurate?
Additional reading:

Week 3 (Jan 30)
Psychologists and Law Enforcement II
Lecture topic: Forensic hypnosis and detecting deception.
Bonus Topic: Should the polygraph test be admitted in court?
Readings: Ch. 4 Wrightsman

Week 4 (Feb 6)
Exam 1 – covers chapters 1, 2, 10, 4
Psychologists and Law Enforcement III
Lecture topic: Criminal profiling
Bonus topic: Is criminal profiling art or science?
Readings: ch. 4 Wrightsman
Additional reading:

Week 5 (Feb 13)
Psychologists and Law Enforcement IV
Lecture topic: Confessions and Miranda
Bonus Topic: How do interrogations lead to false confessions?
Readings: ch. 11 Wrightsman
Additional readings:

Week 6 (Feb 20)
Trial Consultation and Jury Decision Making I
Lecture: Trial consultation.
Readings: ch. 12 Wrightsman
Bonus: Is scientific jury selection really scientific?
Additional readings:
Week 7 (Feb 27)
Trial Consultation and Jury Decision Making II
Lecture: The evolving role of jurors and jury decision making – Sensational Trials and Pretrial Publicity
Bonus Topic: (1) Do we need tort reform? or (2) Can pretrial publicity’s effects be remedied?
Film: Inside the jury room.
Readings: ch. 12 Wrightsman
Additional readings:

Week 8 (Mar 13)
Exam 2 – ch. 3, 4, 11, 12
Science and Admissibility
Lecture: Daubert and the role of judges as gatekeepers of science
Film: DNA testing and the death penalty
Readings: ch. 7 Wrightsman
Bonus topic: Should Battered Woman’s Syndrome and Rape Trauma Syndrome Evidence be Admissible?
Additional readings:

Week 9 (Mar 20)
Recovered memory therapy and “repressed” memories of abuse.
Lecture: Repressed memories of abuse and the law
Film: Divided memories
Bonus topic: Should therapists be held liable for false memories?
Readings: Ch. 8 Wrightsman
Additional Readings:

Week 10 (Mar 27 )
Law, Psychology, and children
Lecture: Interviewing children in cases of suspected abuse.
Film: Innocence lost
Readings: ch. 9 Wrightsman

Week 11 (Apr 3)
Law, Psychology, and the workplace
Lecture: Sexual harassment, discrimination, and the law
Readings: ch. 13, 14 Wrightsman

Week 12 (Apr 10)
Exam 3 – covers ch. 7, 8, 9, 13, 14
Insanity Defense
Lecture: Insanity and competency to stand trial
Bonus topic: Should the insanity defense be abolished?
Readings: ch 5 Wrightsman
**Week 13 (Apr 17)**

**Risk Assessment**

**Lecture topic:** Expert testimony on risk assessment

**Readings:** ch. 6 Wrightsman

**Bonus topic:** Can we predict dangerousness?

**Film:** A crime of insanity

**Additional readings:**


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**Week 14 (Apr 24)**

**Victim Impact Statements and the Death Penalty**

**Lecture Topic:** Victim impact statements in capital sentencing: Are emotional jurors irrational?

**Lecture topic:** Should Victim Impact Statements be Admissible?

**Film:** The execution

**Readings:** ch. 15, 16 Wrightsman

**Additional readings:**


* Instructor reserves the right to alter the lecture/topic schedule with notice as necessary.

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**Final Exam – March 8th at 3pm.** Covers ch. 5, 6, 15, 16