

## **DEREE COLLEGE SYLLABUS FOR:**

### **PS 4249 FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY-LEVEL 6**

(Revised Spring 2015)

**3/0/3**

**UK CREDITS: 15**

#### **PREREQUISITES:**

PS 3018 Research methods in Psychology-Level 5

PS 3032 Testing and Assessment-Level 5

#### **CATALOG**

##### **DESCRIPTION:**

A systematic examination of the applications of psychology to legal issues including criminal profiling, insanity defence, competency to stand trial, commitment to and release from mental institutions, jury selection, eyewitness testimony, expert witness testimony as well as child custody disputes.

##### **RATIONALE:**

This course is expected to serve as a resource for students in their effort to attain a more in-depth understanding of how psychological expertise can be applied to problems faced by judges, attorneys, police officials, and, in general, anyone who must deal with issues related to justice. Designed primarily (but not exclusively) for psychology majors, the course examines the psychologist's role in a number of processes related to civil, criminal, or administrative justice.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** As a result of taking this course, the student should be able to:

1. Define the areas of testimony and expertise of forensic psychologists
2. Critically discuss controversial professional matters such as certification and licensing of forensic experts.
3. Discuss the basic issues pertaining to the commitment to and release from mental institutions, insanity defence, competency to stand trial, jury selection, and expert witness testimony
4. Critically evaluate and analyse the methodology and application of criminal profiling
5. Understand and evaluate custody disputes where the doctrine of "the best interests of the child" is being applied
6. Compare the psychological profiles of victims and violators
7. Compare and analyse the differences between children and adults as eyewitnesses.
8. Synthesize their knowledge of legal doctrines and psychopathology to discuss the legal rights of offenders who present some type of psychopathology

#### **METHOD OF TEACHING**

##### **AND LEARNING:**

In congruence with teaching and learning strategy of the college, the following tools are used:

- Classes consist of lectures, discussions, in-class activities, and case study discussions.

- Office hours
- Use of Blackboard site

#### ASSESSMENT:

In-class practical exercises - <b>formative</b>	0%	Review, analysis and discussion of case studies
Case analysis and preparation of Amicus Brief (approximately 3,000 words) (approximately 3,000 words) - <b>summative</b>	60%	Describe a legal case and synthesize evidence to defend a particular party with convincing arguments.
In-class final examination (2 hours, comprehensive) - <b>summative</b>	40%	Essay questions (choice: 3 out of 5)

The formative assessment relates to learning outcomes 1, 4-7

The case analysis assesses learning outcomes 3, , 6, 7 ,8

The final exam assesses learning outcomes 1-5

#### READING LIST:

##### 1. Required Material

Wrightsmann, S.L., & Fulero, S.M. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). Forensic Psychology

**2. Further Reading:** Readings to supplement the basic material covered in the textbook.

American Psychiatric Association(APA). (2000) Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (4<sup>th</sup> ed.Text Revision) Washington, DC:American Psychiatric Association

Melton, GB, Petrila, J., Poythress, NG & Slobogin, C. (2007) Psychological Evaluations for the Courts: A Handbook for Mental Health Professionals and Lawyers. New York: The Guilford Press

Weiner, I.B., Hess, A.K. (2006). The Handbook of Forensic Psychology. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Heilbrun, K., Marczyk, G.R., Dematteo, D. (2002). Forensic Mental Health Assessment: a casebook. Oxford University Press.

Ackerman, M.J. (2006). Clinician's Guide to Child custody Evaluations. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Goldstein, A.M. (Ed.) (2006). Forensic Psychology: Emerging Topics and Expanding Roles. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Perera, A.L., Van Hasselt, V.B., Baker, M.T., Ramano S.J., Shlessinger, K.M., Zucker, M & Dragone, R. (2006). Crisi (hostage) negotiation training: a preliminary evaluation of program efficiency. Criminal Justice and Behavior. 33(1), 56-69.

Sheridan, L.P. , Grant, T. (2007) Is cyberstalking different? Psychology, Crime and Law 13(6)., 627-40.

#### RECOMMENDED MATERIAL:

Law and Human Behavior

International Journal of Forensic Psychology  
Journal of Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology  
American Journal of Forensic Psychology  
Criminality and Behavior  
Psychology, Public Policy and Law  
International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative  
Criminology  
Criminal Justice and Behavior  
Journal of Applied Psychology

**WWW RESOURCES:**

American Psychological Association  
[www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)

APA, Division on Psychology & Law  
[www.unl.edu/ap-ls](http://www.unl.edu/ap-ls)

British Psychological Association  
[www.bps.org](http://www.bps.org)

National Institute of Mental Health  
[www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)

World Health Organization  
[www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

American Academy of Forensic Psychology  
[www.aafp.ws](http://www.aafp.ws)

American Board of Forensic Psychology  
[www.abfp.com](http://www.abfp.com)

- INDICATIVE CONTENT:**
1. The Science of Forensic Psychology
  2. Correctional psychology and the Police
  3. Commitment to and Release from Mental Institutions
  4. The Insanity Plea
  5. Competency to Stand Trial
  6. Children and Adults as Eyewitnesses
  8. The Role of Psychology in Domestic Disputes
  9. Criminal Profiling
  10. Psychopathology and Crime
  11. Discrimination