



PSY420 – Psychology & Law



Summer 2007
CRN: 41610 (4 credits)
Monday & Wednesday 8:00am - 9:50am, 107 ESL
06/25/07 – 08/17/07

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will focus on the examination of topics that are of interest to both those that study psychology and those that study the law. We will discuss many issues that arise during the different stages of the legal process and examine how social science methods can be applied in legal contexts. For example, we will cover topics concerning identity (interrogation, lie detection, eyewitness identification, profiling), state of mind (competence, insanity), the trial process (jury selection, jury decision making) and social policy (legal sanctions).

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

This 8-week summer course will cover the same amount of material that is normally presented over the course of a regular term. During a normal 10-week course, it is expected that you spend approximately 3 hours per credit each week attending class and completing course-related work (for a standard 4-credit class, this translates into a total of 12 hours per week and 120 hours over the course of the term). Because this course condenses 10 weeks into 8, it is expected that you will spend approximately 15 hours per week engaged in course-related activities (attending class, reading, completing assignments, preparing for exams, etc.). The pace at which information is covered and the amount of reading assigned each week will reflect this expectation.

COURSE MATERIALS

Blackboard

A blackboard site has been created for this course. The site will contain announcements, general course information, lecture slides, lab materials, study guides, grades, etc. You should make yourself familiar with the course site immediately (be sure to ask me if you have any questions about accessing/using blackboard). It is your responsibility to monitor Blackboard *frequently* for new information and announcements (I would recommend that you check Blackboard on a daily basis). **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR READING ALL ANNOUNCEMENTS POSTED ON BLACKBOARD.**

Readings

The required text for this course is available at the campus bookstore:

Greene, E., Heilbrun, K., Fortune, W., & Nietzel, M. (2007). *Wrightsmen's Psychology and the Legal System* (6th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Additional readings will also be assigned and posted on blackboard.

The textbook has been placed on reserve in the Knight Library.

NOTE: The outlined reading for each day should be completed *before* you come to class.

Lectures

I will make my lecture slides available on blackboard each day *after* class. Note that these slides serve to outline the lecture and are by no means comprehensive. You should not rely on these slides for your course notes; rather, you should use them as a way to organize the notes that *you* take during class.

COURSE EVALUATION

Grades will be awarded based on (1) the requirements that you choose to complete and (2) the quality of your work. In addition, your grade will be determined by your *average* performance across the different course requirements. This means that you cannot simply combine points to determine your grade; an “A” student is one that does well in all aspects of the course (not just the exams or the papers, but both).

- C (Pass)** To earn a C/Pass in this course, you must (a) earn at least 65% of the participation points, AND (b) average 65% or higher on the two exams.
- B** To earn a B in this course, you must (a) earn at least 75% of the participation points, (b) average 75% or higher on the two exams, AND (c) average a B- or better on two out of the three case papers.
- A** To earn an A in this course, you must (a) earn at least 85% of the participation points, (b) average 85% or higher on the two exams, AND (c) average an A- or better on two out of the three case papers.
- + / -** Only “whole” grades can be *earned*. However, I do reserve the right to *award* pluses and minuses on a case by case basis if there is a discrepancy in student performance across the different components of the course. A plus/minus will only be awarded if it will benefit the student.

Participation

Participation points may be earned in a variety of ways. You may be asked to participate in class discussions and/or activities, seek the answer to a question posed during lecture, submit questions prior to class, write short reactions to the material presented in class, complete feedback surveys, etc. Participation opportunities are *not* predetermined, so it is important that you attend class and monitor blackboard announcements to learn about these opportunities as they arise.

Examinations

There will be both a midterm and a final examination in this course. The midterm will address the material (from readings, lectures, videos and guest speakers) covered through July 18. The final will be comprehensive and will cover material presented over the course of the entire term. Both exams *may* be composed of multiple-choice, true-false, and/or short-answer questions.

Case Papers

If you are aiming for an A or a B in this course, you must complete the case paper requirement. Throughout the course of the term we will discuss several court cases. Three of these cases will be selected as the focus of the case papers. While there are three opportunities to write the papers, only two out of the three will be used to calculate average performance (your average will be calculated using your two highest scores). It is ***highly recommended*** that you complete the first two case papers and then decide whether or not to complete the third (based on your average performance at that point). See the section entitled “Case Paper Requirements” for a detailed explanation of what the paper assignments entail.

EMAIL POLICY

Make sure that the email address listed for you on duckweb/blackboard is correct. You will need to check this account frequently because I may communicate with you outside of class. If the email address that is listed on duckweb/blackboard is not the account that you regularly use, you can change your primary email address by going to <duckweb.uoregon.edu>, selecting <personal information>, selecting <change email address> and then following the instructions. **YOU WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL INFORMATION THAT IS SENT TO YOU VIA EMAIL.**

POLICY ON CLARIFICATION OF INFORMATION

It is your responsibility as a student in this course to ask questions and clarify any points that you find confusing. “I didn’t know that...” or “I wasn’t sure about...” will not excuse you from completing any of the requirements for this course.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Academic Dishonesty

Students are responsible for reading and understanding the University’s policies on academic dishonesty. This information is available at the following web site: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~conduct/sai.htm>.

Guidelines for Teaching & Learning at the UO, Psychology Department

The Undergraduate Education Committee (UEC) has drafted a set of guidelines that outlines the responsibilities of (1) the psychology department, (2) undergraduate psychology students and (3) course instructors. This information includes sections on (a) the mission of the undergraduate program in psychology, (b) best practices for students, (c) best practices for instructors, (d) special student concerns, and (e) where to get help and additional information. All of this information is available at <http://psychweb.uoregon.edu/guidelines/>.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and need accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me during the first week of classes.

READING, ASSIGNMENT & EXAM SCHEDULE

NOTE: While the exam dates and case paper due dates will *not* change, it is possible that the list of topics may need to be adjusted as we proceed throughout the course. Any changes to the syllabus regarding topic coverage and/or reading assignment modifications will be announced in class and/or posted on blackboard.

WEEK 1

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|------|---|
| 6/25 | Course Overview
Introduction to the Legal System |
| 6/27 | Introduction to the Legal System (continued)
Reading: Textbook – Chapter 2 (pgs 33-48) |

Blackboard – US Bill of Rights Summary

WEEK 2

7/2 Dilemmas in Psychology and Law
Psychologists and the Legal System
Reading: Textbook – Chapter 1
Blackboard – Federal Rules of Evidence Summary

7/4 **NO CLASS** – Independence Day

WEEK 3

7/9 Eyewitness Identification
Reading: Textbook – Chapter 5
Blackboard – Police Preparation & Conduct of Lineups

7/11 GUEST SPEAKER: Ray Broderick, Child Advocacy Center – Forensic Interviewing
“The Child Advocacy Center of Lane County helps lessen the trauma experienced by abused children going through the judicial process by providing a warm, child-friendly setting where children can be interviewed, receive medical exams to help criminal investigations and testify before Lane County’s specially-convened grand jury for child abuse cases.” (Excerpt taken from the Child Advocacy Center’s website: <http://www.co.lane.or.us/ChildAdvocacyCenter/>).
WARNING – Ray will be showing a video of a forensic interview with a child that was sexually abused by her father. Please contact me before class if you are not comfortable viewing this video.
Reading: Oregon Interviewing Guidelines (pages 3, 7-9, 13-15, 25-30, 35-44 & 59-66; also read over the subject headings for the sections that are not included in the required reading (pgs 17, 49, 69, 89, 105, 123, 131, 139, 159, 173, 185, 197 & 203); reviewing these outlines will give you an overview of the other topics that are discussed in this document)

7/13 Case Paper 1 DRAFT Due by 9:00am (you may turn in a rough draft of your paper if you would like feedback before submitting the final draft). Drafts will be returned in class on Monday (7/16).

WEEK 4

7/16 Lie Detection & Interrogation
Reading: Textbook – Chapter 6 (pg 162-186)

7/18 Interrogation & False Confessions
Reading: Blackboard – On the Psychology of Confessions

7/19 **CASE PAPER 1 DUE** by 9:00am

7/20 Midterm Exam Review Session: 9:00am-10:00am in STB143

WEEK 5

7/23 **MIDTERM EXAMINATION**

7/25 Profiling
Reading: Textbook – Chapter 6 (pgs 155-162)
Blackboard – Violent Crime Scene Analysis

7/27 Case Paper 2 DRAFT Due by 9:00am (you may turn in a rough draft of your paper if you would like feedback before submitting the final draft). Drafts will be returned in class on Monday (7/30).

WEEK 6

7/30 Profiling (continued)
Reading: Blackboard – Empirical Research on Offender Profiling Accuracy

8/1 Competence & Insanity
Reading: Textbook – Chapter 8

8/2 **CASE PAPER 2 DUE** by 9:00am

WEEK 7

8/6 Other Legal Defenses

8/8 Jury Decision Making
Reading: Textbook – Chapter 11

8/10 Case Paper 3 DRAFT Due by 9:00am (you may turn in a rough draft of your paper if you would like feedback before submitting the final draft). Drafts will be returned in class on Monday (8/13).

WEEK 8

8/13 Legal Sanctions
Reading: Textbook – Chapter 15

8/15 Course Wrap-Up
GUEST SPEAKER: Ted Lewis, Restorative Justice Program Manager – Mediation Services
Reading: Blackboard – Basics of Restorative Justice
Comparing Traditional Justice and Restorative Justice
Opportunities & Pitfalls Facing the RJ Movement

CASE PAPER 3 DUE by 4:00pm

8/16 Final Exam Review Session: 9:00am-10:00am in STB139

8/17 **FINAL EXAM** – 8:00am-10am (ESL 107)

CASE PAPER REQUIREMENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Papers are due on their respective due dates by the deadline specified on the syllabus (see the assignment schedule for due dates and deadlines). **UNEXCUSED LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** If you are unable to turn a paper in on time, you should plan on submitting it early or you should speak with me directly concerning the issue *before* the deadline has expired.

Papers can either be turned into the psychology department main office (Straub 131) or emailed directly to me. If you are turning the paper in at the main office, make sure that my name is in a visible place somewhere on the front page. If you plan to email your paper, it should be emailed from your UO email account, and you must email it as a Microsoft Word attachment (.doc). Also, the name of your attached file should include your last name as well as the case paper number (e.g., Shepler – Case Paper 1).

FORMATTING GUIDELINES

In the past, papers have ranged from 8-12 pages in length. All papers should be double-spaced, typed in Times New Roman size 12 font, and the margins should be 1" all the way around.

CONTENT

Papers should be divided into the following 8 sections (be sure to label each section in your paper):

- I. **FACTS** – This section should provide a *brief* overview of the relevant facts leading up to the case. This includes not only the information concerning the events in question (e.g., who, what, where, when, etc.), but also the case history (e.g., appeals, previous rulings, etc.).
- II. **LEGAL ISSUE(S)** – This section should outline the main *legal* issue(s) raised by the case. What is/are the main legal question(s) that the court is addressing?
- III. **SOCIAL SCIENCE ISSUE(S)** – This section should contain a discussion of the main *social science* issues that pertain to the case. These issues may or may not be explicitly addressed by the court, but will be relevant from a psychological standpoint. In this section you should discuss the relevant issue(s) in detail by drawing on information presented in the case and/or covered in the lectures and readings. [NOTE: *This is an important section!* The length should range from 3-5 pages.]
- IV. **HOLDING(S)** – The holding is the court's determination of a matter of law based on the issue(s) presented in a particular case. This section should contain a discussion of how the law has changed or been amplified by the court's decision.
- V. **OUTCOME** – In many cases, the holding and the outcome are aligned. However, there are times when the outcome of a case runs counter to the holding(s) due to the particular circumstances of the case. In this section, you should briefly discuss what the outcome was for the particular parties involved.

- VI. **MAJORITY ARGUMENT** – This section should include a discussion of the reasoning used by the *majority* to reach its decision. You should outline the key points of the majority argument and discuss how the majority supports its conclusions (e.g., precedence, social science, etc.). [NOTE: While you *state* the holding(s) and outcomes(s) in the previous sections, this is where you *explain* the court’s reasoning.]
- VII. **DISSENT ARGUMENT (If Applicable)** – This section should include a discussion of the reasoning used by the *minority* to reject the majority argument. You should outline the key points of the dissenting argument and discuss how the minority supports its conclusions (e.g., precedence, social science, etc.).
- VIII. **DISCUSSION** – In this section you should analyze the decisions of the court (both holding(s) and outcome). Discuss what would have happened if the court had decided differently; in other words, what would some of the potential ramifications be had the court interpreted the law differently or decided in favor of the opposing party (think “big picture” here...)? Considering all you know about the issue(s) at hand, discuss whether you think the court’s decision was or was not appropriate. [NOTE: Again, this is an important section...don’t skimp!]

GRADING CRITERIA

Papers will be graded by combining your score from three different categories:

- WRITING** Writing should be clear, concise and grammatical. Make sure that you only use words that you are comfortable with and do not rely on the spell-check/grammar function of your computer to catch errors. Taking the time to proofread your paper is essential, as this section accounts for one-third of the paper score.
- CONTENT** Each section of the paper should be covered thoroughly. It is expected that you will use resources other than the case opinion itself in your presentation and analysis of the issues, so be sure to properly cite all of the references that you use.
- ANALYSIS** Analyses should be based on clearly stated assumptions and/or cited facts. Each step in each argument should be based on previous stated assumptions/cited facts or be a logical deduction from the assumptions or facts that have already been discussed in your paper.

Each category will be scored on the 5-point scale below, and the values will be summed to produce a total score for the paper (15 points are possible).

- 5 – EXCELLENT (no major faults that need to be corrected)
 4 – VERY GOOD (there are minor faults but no major faults that should be corrected)
 3 – GOOD (some major faults, but good overall)
 2 – NEEDS IMPROVEMENT (many major problems that must be corrected)
 1 – POOR (large number of problems, a major rewrite would be necessary)

Case paper scores will translate into the following grades:

15 – A	10 – B-	5 – D
14 – A	9 – C+	4 – D
13 – A-	8 – C	3 – F
12 – B+	7 – C-	2 – F

11 – B

6 – D

1 – F