

# Psy 472: Psychology of Trauma

Winter Session 2007

**Instructor:**

S. Shin Shin Tang, M.S.

Email: [stang@uoregon.edu](mailto:stang@uoregon.edu)

Phone: 346-4950 (messages)

Office hours: Tues 1-2, Thurs 11-12

358 Straub Hall

**Contacting Shin Shin Tang:** I am best reached by email at [stang@uoregon.edu](mailto:stang@uoregon.edu). I check my email at least once a day on weekdays. I will do my best to respond promptly. I also invite you to visit during my office hours.

**Class meeting times:** Monday & Wednesday 10-11:20 a.m. in 302 Gerlinger

**Course Web Site:** <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu/>

It is important to check this site regularly for announcements and online readings and you will also need blackboard access to participate in online discussions. You will also need to have an active email account that is listed through U.O. that you check daily. Be sure that the email account you use is the one that is listed in Blackboard.

## Overview

This course is designed to introduce students to the field of traumatic stress studies. We will review the history of the field, as well as current approaches to understanding trauma from cognitive, neuropsychological, developmental and clinical viewpoints. The course will combine research and applications from the growing field of traumatic stress, looking at responses to a variety of traumas including childhood trauma, adult sexual assault, combat, domestic violence, and natural disasters. An important focus of the course will involve considerations of how socio-political contexts affect trauma research and treatment. We will also consider various approaches to the treatment of trauma.

We will use current research to explore questions from a variety of perspectives, such as:

- *Developmental Psychology:* How does lifetime development influence coping with trauma? What can we learn about treatment based on the developmental literature?
- *Social Psychology:* How do we respond when the social contract between people is violated through betrayal? How does social response to trauma impact victims? How do we as society take or avoid responsibility for traumas?
- *Cognitive & Neuro Psychology:* How can cognitive psychology and neuropsychology inform our understanding of how traumas are processed and remembered? What role does dissociation play in processing traumas? Are particular brain regions involved in distress after trauma?
- *Clinical Psychology:* What effects do traumatic experiences have on mental health? What is an appropriate response to trauma (and who decides)?
- *Interdisciplinary:* What dimensions best differentiate reactions to trauma? How do we apply research to prevention programs? How do people in the field of traumatic stress cope with secondary trauma? How does the use of a developmental framework influence the ways in which we define treatment success and healing?

## **Course Requirements**

The course requirements include doing the reading, attending class, writing 2 essays, reading an on-line electronic discussion, taking 2 exams, and completing a final project. Note: this is a time-intensive 4 unit course. Plan on spending an average of 12 hours per week on this course, including class attendance.

## **Contact Hours and Class Attendance**

We will meet each Monday and Wednesday 10:00 -11:20 AM and your attendance is expected. This is not a course to take if you anticipate missing more than one class meeting. Absences should be explained in a note to the instructor. During class meetings we will combine a variety of activities: lecture, documentaries about trauma or traumatic stress, and small group and class discussion. Films and documentaries are an important part of this class, as many aspects of trauma and traumatic stress are best communicated in a rich medium like film. Some of the documentaries and films that I will show are also available for viewing in the University media center, but the majority of the films I plan to show are not available to view outside of class meeting. Sometimes we will have a guest lecturer with expertise in a particular aspect of the psychology of trauma. You will be responsible for all of this material covered in class (it will be tested on the exams).

## **Required Readings**

Readings are assigned on a weekly basis. Readings are to be completed **BEFORE** the Monday class meeting for which they are assigned except for week 1 when they are due Weds.

### **Textbooks (available at the UO bookstore):**

Freyd, J. J. (1996). *Betrayal trauma: The logic of forgetting childhood abuse*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Herman, J. L. (1997). *Trauma and recovery*. Binghamton, NY: Hayworth Press.

Shay, J. (1994). *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat trauma and the undoing of character*. New York: Touchstone Books.

## **Online Readings**

Many of the assigned readings will be available on-line. That is, you will be given a web address (URL) that leads you to the required article or web site to explore. In some cases when copyright permits, readings will be available to download or print on the Blackboard site under Course Documents, Electronic Articles. On-line readings will be assigned as we go along. To find the on-line article assignment for the upcoming week, check the "Assignments" section of Blackboard. There you will find a folder called "On-line reading assignments" with details about what you should read for the next week.

**Grades:**

Notecards	3 points
In class activities	7 points
Essays (2 essays worth 30 pts each):	60 points
Take-home exams (2 exams worth 40 pts each):	80 points
Final Project (Includes plan, project, self-evaluation)	70 points

---

Total possible points:	220 points
------------------------	------------

Also up to 10 points extra credit can be earned for participation in Blackboard discussion, meeting with course assistants, and for presentation of the final project.

Final letter grades will be determined from point totals as follows:

Points	Letter grade	What do grades mean at the UO?	Percentage of students likely to get this grade based on prior department averages
198-220 (90-100%)	A	Excellent	about 27%
176-197 (80-89%)	B	Good	about 37%
154-175 (70-79%)	C	Satisfactory	about 25%
132-153 (60-69%)	D	Inferior	about 5%
Below 132	F	Unsatisfactory	about 1%
	Other (P,I,Y)		about 5%

Note: While we give some -s and +s for grades near a border, we give A+s only very rarely. We expect to give at most one or two A+s in a term, *if any*. Please see the Psychology Department's Guidelines for Teaching and Learning at <http://psychweb.uoregon.edu/guidelines/> for more on grading and expectations.

## Grading and Requirements - More Details

### Exams 80 points

You will have two exams each worth 40 points. Exams will cover material from readings and in-class material and will be cumulative. Exams will require essay answers and will be used to evaluate your understanding and integration of class material.

Take Home exams: These exams are due in class. Five points (over one letter grade) per day will be deducted for late exams (thus after 8 days you will automatically receive a 0). Weekends are counted as days late. All exams must be typed in black ink; hand-written exams will not be accepted. You may use class material to answer the questions (including notes, books and course web pages); however, you may not consult with any person regarding the exam. Exam questions will be posted on the blackboard web site under "assignments."

## **Essays: 60 points**

Two essays will be due. They must be typed and turned in at the beginning of class on the due date. Each essay should show that you have put thought into the reading material. Think of the essay as an opportunity to think deeply about the readings and to reflect on the meaning of the material to you, your life, society, and scholarship. Essays will typically be about three typed pages. Each essay will be worth up to 30 points and are due at 10 am at the beginning of class. Three points (one letter grade) will be subtracted for each day late, including weekends. Topics for each essay will be posted on Blackboard.

## **Final Project: 70 points**

The final project will be a research proposal or public policy proposal due on March 7 at 10 AM. In addition you must turn in a one-page typed project plan by Jan. 31 and you must turn in a self (& other) evaluation on March 12. You will have points deducted from the final project if any of these required components are late as follows: 1 point per day late will be deducted for the project plan and the self-evaluation and 7 points per day (1 letter grade) for the final project. Weekend days are counted in deducting points. (Assignments are due at 10 AM. We give a 5 min grace period and after that count the assignment as late.)

The project will present material you have learned and synthesized about the Psychology of Trauma as well as your creative ideas for future research and/or public policy. Your source of information can primarily be based on the assigned readings, although most likely A and B quality projects will incorporate some additional material you have found at the library or on-line. All sources must be properly cited using APA style.

You may choose the specific topic of your final project. It should be a topic that shows you have mastered important material within the field of the Psychology of Trauma and shows you can think creatively about this area of research and/or how to apply it. Your project should do at least one of the following:

- propose a new experiment or empirical study that would address a research question(s) you identify. This could be one in which you are testing a treatment or intervention, or researching a basic question about trauma. Your research proposal should make new predictions (or extend existing predictions).
- propose new public policy regarding trauma prevention or treatment or education. You should explore the public policy implications of the reading and propose new public policy based on the readings or research literature in psychology of trauma.

Each student will have the choice of working alone on the final project, or, instead, with one other person. I encourage the teamwork approach, because working cooperatively is a challenge, and very educational in its own right. The projects will be graded on the same criteria whether produced by one or two people (thus it would really seem a good idea to work in teams!). If you decide you want to work with a partner, you may select your own partner, or you may ask the instructor to help you pair up with someone. Project partners must make a commitment to work together by Jan. 31 (plan is worth 5 of the 70 points).

**Self (& Other) Evaluation Required:** All students will be required to turn in a one-page project work evaluation at the end of the term. If you work on the project alone you will evaluate your own work. If you work with a partner you will evaluate separately your and your partner's contribution and work. (evaluation is worth 5 of the 70 points).

Your grade on the final project will be lowered 10% per day if it or the evaluation is at all late. You may earn extra credit if you create a web page or do an optional in-class oral presentation based on your project.

### **Extra Credit for Participation: Up to 10 points**

If you make valuable contributions on-line discussions and/or attend office hours with the course assistants (see below), you may earn extra points. You may also earn points for presenting your final project in class or for creating a web site about your final project. Maximum extra credit is 10 points.

### **Meetings with Course Assistants**

Course assistants will hold office hours after class on Wednesdays, from 11:30-12 pm, beginning in Week 2. Although meeting with them is not mandatory, it may be useful in clarifying paper and exam questions and in discussing material presented in class, as well as for planning your final project. I highly encourage you to utilize this valuable resource.

### **Course Web Site and On-line Discussion**

Key information, including updated assignments and grades, will be posted on the course web site. Plan on checking it at least twice a week.

We will have an electronic discussion as part of this course on the course web site. You are expected to read the on-line discussions. Posting your own messages is optional. You may earn extra credit for thought-provoking messages. However, in order to avoid having the on-line discussion become unmanageable, any given message should be no longer than 50 lines of text.

### **On writing and discussions**

**Writing quality:** Be sure to proofread all papers and plan on writing multiple drafts. Treat these assignments as formal papers, that is, avoid clichés, contractions, run-on sentences, and other grammatical errors. Also be sure to organize the content of the information with the reader in mind. A substantial portion of the paper grades will be devoted to quality of writing.

**APA Style:** A prerequisite for this course is PSY 303, Research Methods in Psychology, which includes detailed instruction in writing in APA style. You will be expected to cite references using APA style. For a refresher, the following links may be helpful:

<http://www.docstyles.com/apacrib.htm>

<http://www.thewritesource.com/APA/APA.HTM>

**Academic Honesty:** All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly

acknowledged and documented. For the consequences of academic dishonesty, refer to the Schedule of Classes published quarterly. Violations will be taken seriously and are noted on student disciplinary records. If you are in doubt regarding any aspect of these issues as they pertain to this course, please consult with the instructor before you complete any relevant requirements of the course. (Text adopted here as recommended from the UO web site regarding academic honesty at: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~conduct/>). Because some students are not entirely sure what counts as academic dishonesty, we encourage you to read the discussion of plagiarism and other forms of dishonesty at <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~conduct/sai.htm>.

### **Important Information on Class Discussions:**

In this class we will be discussing issues which may have, at times, intense personal significance for some members of the class. There are no taboos for discussion topics in this course. We will exercise and respect freedom of speech. At the same time, we must take responsibility to ensure that we are respectful of everyone's opinion and that we stay on topic. We will be focusing especially on critical thinking and the use of empirical data to evaluate theories about gender. If you find you are troubled by material while taking this course, and need support or counseling, please be sure to pursue that external support by seeking out a supportive friend, counselor, and/or a social service.

The following is a partial list of area mental health and counseling resources (Disclaimer: we do not assume responsibility for the quality of the following services):

#### ***Crisis Lines (24 hours)***

U of O Crisis Line	346-4488
Sexual Assault Support Services Crisis Line	343-7277 or 1-800-788-4727
Whitebird Clinic Crisis Line	687-4000
Womenspace Domestic Violence Crisis Line	485-6513

#### ***Local Counseling***

U of O Counseling Center	346-3227
Center for Community Counseling	344-0620
Options Counseling Services	687-6983

#### ***Additional Campus Resources***

U of O Women's Center	346-4095
Office of Affirmative Action	346-3123
Multicultural Center	346-4207
LGBT Educational and Support Services	346-1134

### **Special Note for Students with Disabilities/International Students:**

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with the instructors immediately. Also please request that the Counselor for Students with Disabilities send a letter verifying your disability. (Counselor for Students with Disabilities: Hillary Gerdes, 346-3211, TTY 346-1083, [hgerdes@uoregon.edu](mailto:hgerdes@uoregon.edu))

This class will require a large amount of reading, writing, and speaking. If for any reason you anticipate difficulties with these course requirements, please speak with the instructors as soon as possible! There are several on-campus resources to help students in all three areas. A good place to start is Academic Learning Services, 346-3226,

<http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~als/index.html>. You may also wish to contact Academic English for International Students, 346-3945, <http://aei.uoregon.edu/aeis.html>

## **Re-grading Policy**

If you discover we have made an error recording your grade on blackboard please return the graded work and we will correct the error. (It is very wise to check your posted grades on blackboard on a regular basis to make sure we have entered your grades correctly.) If you feel we have graded you unfairly, you may request we regrade the assignment. In order to do this you must return your assignment with a written explanation from you regarding why you feel the grading was unfair. You must submit the material to us within 2 weeks of our having returned the materials to you. After that grades on assignments are final.

### *Additional Notes*

## **Some useful information**

- [Films for Psychology of Trauma](#)
- [Fiction and Autobiography](#)
- [Scholarly Trauma Journals](#)
- [Trauma research guide for UO library](#)
- [Trauma Psychology, APA Div 56](#)

## **Using Blackboard**

The web site for this course was constructed using "Blackboard" software. This allows the web site to be extensive and interactive. On the web site, you will find general announcements for the class, all documents for the course (including this syllabus), lecture notes, on-line discussions, links to relevant web sites, and more. We hope that this web site will be a useful tool for you in learning the material for this class, and in further exploring topics you find interesting. You can get to the course web site by going to <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu>. If you need help logging in or using Blackboard, see <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu/local/usingbbb/>. Also you can get help starting by going to the library [Information Technology Center](#) (ITC) and/or see <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/kitc/faq/blackboard.html#help>.

## **Academic Honesty**

All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly acknowledged and documented. For the consequences of academic dishonesty, refer to the Schedule of Classes published quarterly. Violations will be taken seriously and are noted on student disciplinary records. If you are in doubt regarding any aspect of these issues as they pertain to this course, please consult with the teaching assistant or the instructor before you complete any relevant requirements of the course. (Text adopted here as recommended from the UO web site regarding academic honesty at: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~conduct/>). Because some students are not entirely sure what counts as academic dishonesty, we encourage you to read the discussion of plagiarism and other forms of dishonesty at <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~conduct/sai.htm>.

## **Students with Directory Restricted Access**

This course includes group and on-line participation. If you have restricted access to your directory information and wish to have special arrangements made for this course, please notify the instructor immediately.

## **Students with Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with the instructor soon. Also please request that the Counselor for Students with Disabilities send a letter verifying your disability. [Disability Services: [disabsrv@darkwing.uoregon.edu](mailto:disabsrv@darkwing.uoregon.edu), 346-1155; <http://ds.uoregon.edu/> ]

## **Message from Peer Advisors**

If you have questions about course requirements, graduation, graduate school or anything else related to a degree in psychology, check with the peer advisors in room 141 Straub first! They are there most days 10-4, so drop by to have your questions answered.



## Weekly Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

Book chapter to reads are assigned in the weekly schedule list below (e.g., when it says "Herman 3-4" that means Herman Chapters 3 and 4). On-line readings will be assigned as we go along. To find the on-line article assignment for the upcoming week, check the "Assignments" section of Blackboard. There you will find a folder called "On-line reading assignments" with details about what you should read for the next week.

<b><u>Week</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Topic</u></b>	<b><u>Reading</u></b>	<b><u>Assignments Due</u></b>
1	Jan 8	Introduction; what is trauma?	Herman: Introduction & 1- 2 (by Weds)	
1	Jan 10	How to study trauma; history of trauma studies		
2	Jan 15	Martin Luther King Jr Holiday	Freyd 1- 2, and online reading: DePrince & Freyd, 2002 ("The harm of trauma"); Violence Against Children	Index cards due
2	Jan 17	Three theories of trauma		
3	Jan 22	Betrayal trauma theory: Gender and Research	Freyd 3-4, Herman 3- 4, Shay Intro	
3	Jan 24	Dissociation		Paper 1 due 10 am
4	Jan 29	Dissociation	Herman 5-6, Shay 1 & 10 and online reading: the ACES study	
4	Jan 31	PTSD		Project proposal due
5	Feb 5	PTSD	Freyd 5-6, Online reading: Bryant-David & Ocampo (2005) The trauma of racism	
5	Feb 7	Racism and trauma		Exam 1 due 10 am
6	Feb 12	Cognitive and Neuroscience approaches	Shay 3-5 and online reading: Teicher (2002)	
6	Feb 14	War and trauma		Paper 2 due 10 am
7	Feb 19	Gender and trauma	Shay 6-7, Herman 7-8 and online reading	
7	Feb 21	Intergenerational Transmission and perpetration		
8	Feb 26	Assessment of trauma	Shay 11 & conclusion, Herman 9-10 and online reading	

<b><u>Week</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Topic</u></b>	<b><u>Reading</u></b>	<b><u>Assignments Due</u></b>
8	Feb 28	Resilience and posttraumatic growth		Exam 2 due 10 am
9	Mar 5	Treatment approaches	Herman: Ch. 11 and Afterward; Online reading: Pennebaker (1997), <i>New York Times</i> "The quest to forget"	
9	Mar 7	Treatment approaches		Final Project due 10 am
10	Mar 12	Healing and society	Online reading: "What hysteria?" (Cheit, 2003); Online reading: Goddard & Saunders, 2000	Self-other evaluation Due 10 am
10	Mar 14	Conclusions: What next?		