

# PSYC\*3020, Course Outline: Winter 2018

## General Information

**Course Title:** Psychology of Law

### **Course Description:**

This course will provide an overview of the field of psychology and law, also sometimes referred to as forensic psychology. We will examine the ways in which the fields of psychology and law interact with one another and explore the psychological methods, findings, and theories applicable in the study of the legal system. The focus is on the application of psychological knowledge, concepts, and research methodologies, to understand human behavior in the legal contexts. Students will explore the major areas of interest shared by psychology and law; compare and contrast the often conflicting perspectives of psychology and law; and become familiar with the roles of psychology in the criminal justice system. A range of topics will be covered, and may include: police behaviour, interrogation and confessions, eyewitness identification and testimony, lie detection, criminal profiling, juries and judges as legal decision makers, mental illness in the context of criminal proceedings (e.g., fitness to stand trial, criminal responsibility), violence risk assessment, sentencing, and correctional and forensic rehabilitation.

**Credit Weight:** 0.50

**Academic Department (or campus):** Psychology

**Semester Offering:** Winter 2018

**Class Schedule and Location:** Tuesdays, 7:00 – 9:50 pm, MCLN 102

## Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Kaitlyn McLachlan

Instructor Email: [kmclac02@uoguelph.ca](mailto:kmclac02@uoguelph.ca) (please include “PSYC3020” in the subject line)

Office location and office hours: Tuesdays 2:00 – 3:00 pm; MacKinnon Extension #3011

## GTA Information

GTA Name: Katelyn Mullally

GTA Email: [kmullall@uoguelph.ca](mailto:kmullall@uoguelph.ca)

GTA office location and office hours: \*By appointment only

## **Course Content**

### **Specific Learning Outcomes**

#### **Communication: Reading comprehension**

The understanding of theoretical and empirical literature in Psychology and Law. Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate working knowledge of the key theories, research methods, and issues, in the Psychology and Law field and literature
2. Compare and contrast the assumptions and methods of psychology with those of law
3. Understand and appreciate how research is conducted and disseminated
4. Use the psychological concepts, language, and theories, to account for human behavior in legal contexts

#### **Communication: Written communication**

The ability to express one's ideas and summarize theory and research through a variety of writing styles (e.g., APA style, papers). Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

5. Demonstrate the ability to evaluate the appropriateness of conclusions derived from forensic psychological research and generalize research conclusions appropriately based on the parameters of particular research methods
6. Write class assignments and respond to exam questions in APA style in a manner that reflects a sophisticated and efficient approach to writing that is largely error-free.

#### **Creative and Critical Thinking: Depth and breadth of understanding**

Demonstrates knowledge of key concepts in psychology and law, and integrates that knowledge across disciplinary boundaries (e.g., application of psychological theories, research, and principles, in the legal context). In this course you will be introduced to ways in which psychological principles can be applied to legal issues in the 'real world.' Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

7. Articulate how psychological principles can be used to explain legal issues and inform public policy.
8. Identify appropriate applications of psychology in solving criminal justice problems.

#### **Creative and Critical Thinking: Inquiry and analysis**

A systematic process of exploring issues, objects and works in Psychology and Law through the collection and analysis of evidence that result in informed conclusions or judgments. Though psychology is a science, it is not exact. Psychologists must weigh and analyze evidence, and tolerate ambiguity, in reaching informed judgments and conclusions. Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

9. Seek and evaluate scientific evidence for forensic psychological claims.
10. Realize that psychological explanations are often complex and tentative.

#### **Professional and Ethical Behaviour: Personal organization and time management**

An ability to manage several tasks at one and prioritize. Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

11. Manage time effectively and ensure personal organization (e.g., complete assigned readings on time, prepare effectively for exams, complete assignments on time)
12. Demonstrate intellectual integrity and academic accountability

**Technological Literacy:** The ability to select and use appropriate technology relevant to course completion and research reporting. Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

13. Use technology to research and support the retrieval and communication of knowledge (e.g., Courselink, library website).

### Lecture Content

Week	Date	Topics	Readings	Readings and Assignments
1	Jan 9	Overview of Syllabus and Course	Course Outline	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/user/LawandPsychology">https://www.youtube.com/user/LawandPsychology</a>
2	Jan 16	The Intersection of Psychology and the Legal System, Professional Roles, and Training	Ch 1	Dematteo et al. (2009)
3	Jan 23	Police Behaviour, Interrogations, and False Confessions	Ch 2	Kassin (2017)  <a href="http://www.cbc.ca/fifth/episodes/2014-2015/the-interrogation-room">http://www.cbc.ca/fifth/episodes/2014-2015/the-interrogation-room</a>
4	Jan 30	Eyewitness Memory, Identification, and Testimony	Ch 5	Wells and Olson (2003)  <a href="https://www.ted.com/talks/eliza_beth_loftus_the_fiction_of_memory">https://www.ted.com/talks/eliza_beth_loftus_the_fiction_of_memory</a>
5	Feb 6	<b>Midterm 1</b>		
6	Feb 13	Criminal Profiling and Psychological Indicators of Deception	Ch 3 Ch 4	Snook et al. (2007)  ***Written Assignment #1: Wrongful Conviction Analysis due Feb 18 by 11:59pm***
	<i>Feb 20</i>	<i>Reading Week – No Classes or assignments due</i>		
7	Feb 27	Juries and Judges as Decision Makers	Ch 7 Ch 8	<a href="http://www.apadivisions.org/division-41/publications/newsletters/news/2017/06/indigenous-underrepresentation.aspx">http://www.apadivisions.org/division-41/publications/newsletters/news/2017/06/indigenous-underrepresentation.aspx</a>
8	Mar 6	Intimate Partner Violence and Syndrome Testimony	Ch 12	

	Mar 9	40 <sup>th</sup> day of class		Last day to drop one-semester classes
9	Mar 13	<b>Midterm 2</b>		
10	Mar 20	Fitness to Stand Trial and the NCRMD Defence	Ch 9	Crocker et al. (2015)
11	Mar 27	Understanding, Predicting, and Preventing Violent Behaviour: The Psychology of Risk Assessment	Ch 10	Desmarais et al. (2014)  **Written Assignment #2: Media Analysis due Mar 27 by 11:59pm***
12	Apr 3	Corrections, Sentencing, Imprisonment, and Alternatives	Ch 11	None ☺
	Apr 13	<b>Final Exam (11:30-1:30pm)</b>		

### Course Assignments and Tests:

Assignment or Test	Due Date	Contribution to Final Mark (%)	Learning Outcomes Assessed
Wrongful Conviction Analysis	February 18, 2018	15%	1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13
Media Analysis	March 27, 2018	15%	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13
Midterm #1	February 6, 2018 (regular class time and location)	20%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12
Midterm #2	March 13, 2018 (regular class time and location)	20%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12
Final Exam	April 13, 2018 11:30 am – 1:30 pm	30%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12

### Additional Notes:

#### Course Assignments and Exams

**Wrongful Conviction Analysis Assignment:** The purpose of this assignment is to review the case details of a Canadian wrongful conviction, and to reflect your understanding of the factors that contributed to the conviction and exoneration. You should apply scientific, legal, and psychological concepts learned in the course to your analysis of the wrongful conviction. The goal of this assignment is for you to explore the various factors that contributed the conviction and exoneration, and relate those case-specific factors to evidence from the course. This might include information from chapters in the course text, further information yielded from scientific studies reviewed in the course text or in scientific articles. You will choose one of the cases outlined on Courselink. You will write a polished paper (3-4 pages, double-spaced, not including title page or reference list) which summarizes the legal case and conviction, analyzes the

evidence or case factors that resulted in the wrongful conviction (and were important in the exoneration) and review information from the textbook and/or other primary source articles that provide support for the problematic nature of that evidence (e.g., the fallibility of eyewitness memory, coercive police interrogation practices, etc.). You will also provide at least one recommendation, based on psychological evidence, that could improve legal outcomes and reduce wrongful convictions, based on the evidence and facts of the case you have chosen (please note that this should be evidence and not opinion-based). A detailed outline and marking breakdown will be provided on Courselink. **This assignment must be uploaded on Courselink using Dropbox on by February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018, by 11:59 pm.** Please refer to course policies on late submissions. Please direct any questions about this assignment to your course TA, Katelyn Mullally ([kmullall@uoguelph.ca](mailto:kmullall@uoguelph.ca)).

**Media Analysis Assignment:** The purpose of this assignment is to reflect on how individuals with mental illness who have offended are portrayed in the popular media, with consideration to relevant scientific and course-related evidence, theories, issues, and critiques. You will first choose a recent news article from a list provided on Courselink. You will write a polished paper (3-4 pages, double spaced, not including title page or reference list) which analyzes the media piece in terms of what you know psychology and the law and/or forensic psychology directly using (and appropriately citing/referencing) the related section(s) of the textbook and/or other relevant primary source scientific research articles. A detailed marking breakdown will be provided on Courselink. **This assignment must be uploaded on Courselink using Dropbox by March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018, at 11:59pm.** Please direct any questions about this assignment to your course TA, Katelyn Mullally ([kmullall@uoguelph.ca](mailto:kmullall@uoguelph.ca)).

#### **Midterm Exams:**

Both midterm exams will be written in class during regular class hours and in the usual location. Content will cover all assigned readings (both chapters and articles), videos (if applicable) and lecture content assigned for classes up to and including the class prior to the exam. Exam questions will cover material from the text and not discussed in class, as well as material discussed in class, but not covered in the text and assigned readings. Key themes discussed from assigned videos are also fair game. Your best strategy for doing well in the course and on exams is to come to class prepared (complete the readings on time), engage in discussions, meet with the TA or instructor if you are confused about any material in advance. The midterm exams are *not* cumulative. The midterm exams will contain between 25 and 30 multiple choice questions and two short answer questions (you will be able to choose two from three possible options). **Please make sure you have your student ID card, a few sharpened HB pencils, and an eraser with you at the exam.**

#### **Final Examination date and time:**

Friday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM (Location TBA). Make sure to confirm the date and time of the final exam by visiting the registrar's website. In case of conflicting information, provided in class, on the course website, or from any other source, you **MUST** follow the instructions provided on the registrar's website.

### **Final Exam:**

The format of the final exam is generally similar to that of the midterms. The final exam will be comprised of a combination of between 25 and 30 multiple choice questions, two short answer questions (choose from three options), and one longer essay question. You will receive more information about the general topic for the essay question during the last week of class. The final exam is generally not cumulative, and will focus primarily on content following the second midterm. However, the essay question will ask you to draw from material covered throughout the course, and allow you to apply knowledge learned. Please make sure you have your student ID card, a few sharpened HB pencils, and an eraser with you at the exam.

**Final exam weighting:** 30%

**Final Examination regulations are detailed at:**

[Examination Regulations](#)

### **Course Resources**

#### **Required Text:**

Costanzo, M., Krauss, D., Schuller, R. A., & McLachlan, K. (2014). *Forensic and Legal Psychology, Psychological Science Applied to Law (First Canadian Edition)*. New York: Worth Publishing.

#### **Other Resources:**

#### **Course Policy on Kountu**

We will be using Kountu, a web-based chat and polling platform during this course. Kountu is designed to increase engagement in medium and large class sizes. It is a “backchannel” tool that allows for multi-directional and parallel discussions, including synchronous microdiscussions or questions alongside the main lecture. In a nutshell, I will occasionally poll the class about key issues, or for feedback about the course and/or understanding of key concepts. I will also pose structured questions that you can respond to, based on small group discussions. Instructors for using Kountu will be reviewed during the first class. Kountu is a *free* resource that will help us to keep the learning environment engaged, responsive and exciting! A few key principles and course rules will help keep the online learning environment fun, supportive, and engaging for everyone in the class:

1. Use respectful and appropriate language during all communication.
2. Your posts are “anonymous” to the room, however, I can and will monitor individual contributions for activity and appropriateness. Thus, post online “as though you were including your name” and in a manner that maintains academic integrity, professionalism, and respect for the instructor and fellow learners. You are accountable for your activities on Kountu.
3. In general responses on Kountu should be limited to brief posts (think twitter in the 280 character world). This will keep the conversation moving swiftly.
4. I will take breaks during lecture to poll understanding of key concepts. Please do use this time to ask questions! You can and are encouraged to raise your hand and engage me directly, but, Kountu is also a great platform for getting clarification and for providing feedback.

## **Course Policies**

### **General**

All students are required to check their @uoguelph.ca e-mail account regularly. There are a number of deadlines and substantial organization required in completing this course. It is your responsibility to organize yourself and meet these deadlines.

### **Grading Policies**

Course assignments are strictly due on the dates outlined above. Late submissions will be deducted 10% per day, beginning after the assigned submission time and date. Please note that these policies are binding unless academic consideration is given to an individual student. The timeframe and due dates for all assignments are outlined in this course outline. The time and date for the midterms are also clearly outlined. Please note that issues related to technological malfunctions (e.g., "I forgot to hit submit," hard-drive crashes, etc.) and leisure travel are not valid reasons for extensions. The only exception to these rules are for unforeseen, serious circumstances of personal health or other issues.

### **Course Policy Regarding Use of Electronic Devices and Recording of Lectures:**

Electronic recording of classes is expressly forbidden without consent of the instructor. When recordings are permitted they are solely for the use of the authorized student and may not be reproduced, or transmitted to others, without the express written consent of the instructor.

### **Course Policies Regarding Materials Provided by the Instructor and her Designates:**

The material shared by the course instructor or by her designate (e.g., TA) as part of this course including copies of the lecture slides, are solely for the personal use of the authorized student and may NOT be reproduced, or transmitted to others, whether it is their original format or a modified version, without the express written consent of the course instructor.

### **Policy on Emails**

Only questions that can be answered simply, for example by yes or no, or with a short sentence, will be answered by email. For longer answers you will most likely receive an email asking you to come and see me (or the TA) during office hours or by appointment. Emails will usually be answered within 24 to 48 hours during weekdays. It is possible that some emails are not from a university address (e.g., @hotmail.com) may be treated as spam. Please do not hesitate to come and see one of us if your email was not received. The university expects you to check your U of G email account regularly and us to use it to communicate with you.

### **Policy Regarding Exam Copies**

Copies of the exam are loaned to registered students for the duration of the examination only. They remain the property of the course instructor at all times. All copies must be returned to the instructor or her designate at the end of the examination time. They cannot be removed from the examination room under any circumstances. All material contained in the exams is

copyrighted, and may not be reproduced, or transmitted to others, without the express, written consent of the instructor.

## **University Policies**

### **Academic Consideration**

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for

Academic Consideration:

[Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions](#)

### **Academic Misconduct**

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community, faculty, staff, and students to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring.

University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:

[Academic Misconduct Policy](#)

### **Accessibility**

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) as soon as possible.

For more information, contact SAS at 519-824-4120 ext. 54335 or email [accessibility@uoguelph.ca](mailto:accessibility@uoguelph.ca) or the [Student Accessibility Services Website](#)



## Course Evaluation Information

Please refer to the [Course and Instructor Evaluation Website](#) .

## Drop date

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is **March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018**. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the [Schedule of Dates in the Academic Calendar](#).

[Current Undergraduate Calendar](#)

## Additional Course Information

### Policy Regarding Turnitin

Course instructors are allowed to use software to help in detecting plagiarism or unauthorized copying of student assignments. Plagiarism is one of the most common types of academic misconduct on our campus. Plagiarism involves students using the work, ideas and/or the exact wording of other people or sources without giving proper credit to others for the work, ideas and/or words in their papers. Students can unintentionally commit misconduct because they do not know how to reference outside sources properly or because they don't check their work carefully enough before handing it in. Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

In this course, your instructor will be using Turnitin.com to detect possible plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration or copying as part of the ongoing efforts to prevent plagiarism in the College of Social and Applied Human Sciences.

A major benefit of using Turnitin is that students will be able to educate and empower themselves in preventing misconduct. In this course, you may screen your own assignments through Turnitin as many times as you wish before the due date. You will be able to see and print reports that show you exactly where you have properly and improperly referenced the outside sources and materials in your assignment.

**My Role and Responsibilities:** My role is to familiarize you with core issues relevant to psychology and law. I will come each week to class prepared with well-organized lectures and real-world examples from my own practice, the news, case studies, research, or media clips. I will engage you to learn and be excited about forensic psychology! I will support a sound learning environment that is free from undue distraction, noise, etc. I will model facilitation of healthy and active discussions concerning course content. I will be available to answer your questions regarding course content and assignments. I will adhere to the syllabus, in the exception of exceptional circumstances, wherein I will announce the change in class as soon as possible as well as on CourseLink.

**Your Role and Responsibilities:** Come to class, complete assigned readings, pay attention, and participate in class activities and discussions. I encourage healthy debate and discussion throughout the course, but you must also practice respectful participation strategies and show the ability to consider alternative perspectives. Put thought and effort into your coursework and make use of instructor and TA supports. Pay attention in class and remove irrelevant distracting stimulus. You may use a laptop in class but do not engage in activities that will distract anyone (myself included). Please read the syllabus before asking a question about the course or assignments.

**Classroom Conduct:** Please come to class on time and listen during lectures and while others are speaking. Arriving late to class, getting up while others are speaking, and leaving early are all distracting behaviours that take away from the learning environment. Cell phones should be turned off during class other than in emergency situations. If you are found to be using technology in a distracting manner (e.g., tablets, cell phones, laptop computers) you may be asked to turn them off.