

Special Topic: Selected Topics in Psychology and Criminal Justice (CRJU803)
Fall, 2002, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
Room 437T, 5pm Fridays (TBD)

Professor: Jennifer Groscup, J.D., Ph.D
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Office hours: MW 11:00am-12:pm
MW 3:45pm-4:45pm
before our class (tbd)
or by appointment

Course Goals:

The main goal of this course is to broaden and deepen your understanding of the interaction between psychology and the law. You are all currently enrolled in a masters level course in forensic psychology. This may not be the first course in forensic psychology that you have taken in graduate school, and you may be familiar with the courses your colleagues are currently taking. This class is designed to integrate the topics being presented in your forensic psychology classes and to increase your involvement with the topic of the course you are currently taking. In short, we are going to be taking your masters level classes and building upon them to create one Ph.D level class. We will accomplish this goal by doing additional readings, by engaging in class discussions on topics related to the classes you are currently taking, by doing academic conference style class presentations, and by completing a writing assignment.

Course Policies:

Attendance: You are required to attend all of the class meetings. If you will have to miss a class, please let me know ahead of time so we can make arrangements for you to make up the work that you missed. Failure to attend class may result in the lowering of the portion of your grade for class discussions.

Academic Honesty: This likely goes without saying, but cheating and/or plagiarism will not be permitted in this class. Please see the definitions of these terms as determined by the College in the Bulletin.

APA Style: All written work must be in APA Style. If you are unfamiliar with APA Style, please refer to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th Ed.) or just ask.

Course Work:

The basic setup of this course will be as follows. In the first few weeks, I will be assigning readings and leading the class discussions of those readings. Early in the semester, you will be choosing a day to be the discussion leader. These will be the days marked "special topic" in the course schedule. The special topics being discussed will be the contents of the courses you are currently taking in the psychology department. On those days, you will be responsible for selecting suitable readings which are representative of that course and for leading the class discussion of those readings. Following the special topics days, we will be doing oral presentations and discussions of those presentations. Your oral presentation will be on the topic you are investigating in the writing assignment. Each of these assignments is discussed below.

Readings: There will be approximately 3-5 readings assigned per week. You are expected to read all of them with enough attention to participate in class discussions of these readings. Readings will be available on a webpage for you to download and print. I will assign the readings for the first five weeks. On "special topic" days, the person in charge of class that day will be responsible for selecting the readings for that week. As selection time draws near, please talk with me about your ideas and questions. **You must provide me with a copy of the readings in class the week before they will be due**, and I will arrange for them to be available to the rest of the class.

Reaction Papers: Each week that we have readings, you will write a one paragraph to one page reaction to

the readings assigned for that week. A reaction can be a critique of the research methods used, a discussion of the theory presented, the policy implications of the research, or a discussion of additional research suggested by the readings. I expect you to analyze the work presented in the readings, and not just to express your personal opinion about them. At the end of your reaction paper, you must provide 2 questions you thought were raised by the readings that you would like to see discussed in class. **Reaction papers must be e-mailed to me by noon the day before class.**

Class Discussion: The bulk of our class time will be spent discussing the readings, your experiences in your forensic psychology courses, and anything else that suits our collective fancy. You are required to participate in class discussion each week.

Writing Assignment: You will each be writing a grant proposal for the writing assignment in this course. We will discuss this assignment at length in class. Basically, writing a grant proposal involves writing a paper on a topic and taking that paper one step further by proposing a study based on that literature review. The topic of your grant proposal should be a topic raised in your psychology class or a topic suggested by our readings and class discussion.

Presentations: Toward the end of the course, each of you will be making an academic conference style presentation on the topic you have selected for your writing assignment. You will each pick a day to present from the days marked "Presentations" in the class schedule. You will be presenting the literature review, the theory behind your proposed study, the design of your study, your hypotheses and expected results, any policy implications of your proposed research, and future research directions. **Each presentation should be approximately 20-30 minutes in length and should be accompanied by power point slides or overheads.** I will arrange for a computer and a projector to be available for you on these dates.

Grades will be determined in the following manner (see Bulletin for more grading info):

50%: Grant Proposal

30%: Reaction Papers, Discussion Leadership, and Participation in Class Discussion

20%: Oral Presentation

CLASS SCHEDULE (Draft)

Week 1: Introduction to Psychology and Criminal Justice

Week 2: Introduction to Psychology and Criminal Justice

Week 3: Research Methods in Psychology and Law

Week 4: Research Methods in Psychology and Law

Week 5: Grant Writing for Law and the Behavioral Sciences

Week 6: Special Topic #1

Week 7: Special Topic #2

Week 8: Special Topic #3

Week 9: Special Topic #4

Week 10: Special Topic #5

Week 11: Special Topic #6

Week 12: Presentations

Week 13: Presentations

Week 14: Presentations

Week 15: Course Conclusion

STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET

Name _____

Psychology course(s) you are currently enrolled in:

Other courses you have taken in forensic psychology:

Classes taken in research methodology:

Research experience:

What inspired you to go to graduate school and pursue your current course of study?

What interests you most in forensic psychology?

What are your ultimate career goals?

When you look back on this class in December, what would you most like to say you have accomplished or learned?

Tell me a little bit about yourself (family, hobbies, favorite vacations, favorite tv shows, whatever!)