SYLLABUS with SCHEDULE for
PSYCHOLOGY & LAW
PSY 370, sec. 98; LAW 370, Sec. 98
Spring 24

Instructor: Mark R. Fondacaro, J.D., Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology

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Office Hours (by phone or Zoom): Thursday 2:30 to 3:30 or by Appointment

Email is the best way to contact me, and I will generally respond within 24 hours (48 hours on weekends). I am also available to meet during my office hours in person on campus or to talk by phone or Zoom either during my office hours or by appointment made through email. All students are expected to be familiar with how to use and navigate Blackboard before beginning the class and can review short Blackboard tutorials during the registration period and throughout the course. The tutorials and related materials can be found in the Help section of the Course Menu on Blackboard. This course works best if everyone, students and the instructor, logs on regularly. I plan to log on at least twice daily between Monday at 5am and Friday at 5pm and will monitor my email 7 days a week. Please try to log in at least once daily between Monday and Friday throughout the entire semester.

Technical Support:
1. You will need a reliable computer/laptop/tablet with an up-to-date browser, operating system and some additional software and Internet service to complete this online course successfully. A mobile phone is not a good permanent option for this class. See this link for information on laptop loans and other related services for students: https://www.jjay.cuny.edu/about/governance-leadership/finance-administration/information-technology/classroom-lab-support-services/computer-lab-services/laptop-loan-center
2. If you have a computer malfunction or Internet service interruption, please do your best to make alternate arrangements (for example, a public computer at your local library or on campus; a café with WiFi; borrow a JJ hotspot). If you have trouble, please contact me as soon as possible so we can troubleshoot.
3. Some of the documents in this course will be available to you in a PDF format. If you do not have Adobe Acrobat Reader software on your computer, you can download it from https://get.adobe.com/reader/.
4. There may be occasional scheduled downtimes and unanticipated disruptions in Blackboard. However, if there is an unscheduled downtime, an adjustment of the due date may be provided. If you have problems submitting an assignment via BB, you can contact BB for help, you can email me to let me know, and you can email me your assignment directly so it will not be late.

Course Description: Welcome to PSY 370. This course is a critical examination of the relationships between psychological research, practice, and theory and the law and legal system. Topics that may be considered include standards and assessments of legal competencies, mental state defenses, civil commitment, violence risk assessments, eyewitness identifications, (false) confessions, deception detection, jury behavior, child custody disputes, the roles of psychologists in the courtroom, and ethical issues in psychology and the law. (3 cr/3 hrs)

My emphasis in this online asynchronous course on Psychology and Law focuses on the application of behavioral science research and practice to the legal system. Topics covered include the roles played by psychologists in the legal system and the choices they face; the structure of the legal system and its various players; the psychology of crime, police, eyewitnesses, victims, and criminal suspects; traditional prosecution and alternatives; forensic assessment in juvenile and adult criminal and civil cases; trial preparation; jurors and juries; punishment and sentencing; and both juvenile and adult corrections.

Prerequisites: ENG 201, PSY 101, and PSY 221 or PSY 242 or LAW 203

Learning Objectives:
1. Students should demonstrate **mastery** of key concepts, principles and issues relevant to psychology and the law.
2. Students should demonstrate critical thinking in analyzing the interactions between psychology and the law. For example, students should be able to apply relevant psycho-legal court decisions, and psychological research findings, to appropriate individual psycho-legal or court cases.
3. Students should be familiar with the ethical standards of psychologists in forensic settings and be able to identify moral implications of the application of particular forensic standards and principles.
4. Students should be capable of considering how individual differences influence actors in the justice system, including the influence of bias or prejudice.
5. Students **should be able to use** instructor feedback to improve their own performance.
6. Students should become familiar with careers in forensic psychology.

By the end of the course, you should be able to:
-- interact sensitively, respectfully, and effectively in the online environment with people from diverse backgrounds and varied perspectives, reflecting on and learning from your own and others' personal experiences
--apply major, relevant psychological theories to the legal system
--begin to understand the advantages of scientific research and be able to accurately integrate research into your writing assignments
--apply critical thinking skills such as distinguishing between theory and empirical findings, as well as between subjective, clinical, and research knowledge
-- critically evaluate sources of general information and research
- -examine sociocultural contextual information that influences individual differences in human behavior, and how such individual differences influence the range of participants in the system
-- develop knowledge of how individual and personal bias—as well as structural forms of discrimination—impact society, law, and the criminal justice system
--provide and respond effectively to constructive feedback

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion:
In an ideal world, science should be objective. However, much of science is historically built on a small subset of privileged voices. Integrating a diverse set of experiences is important for a more comprehensive understanding of science, and we will discuss issues of diversity in psychology and law during this course. We will work together to create a learning environment that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.). Discrimination and harassment will not be tolerated. In addition, to maintain fairness and equity, this class has a policy of not accepting late assignments or delaying class responsibilities without providing these same opportunities for the entire class or negotiating a fair balance. However, unforeseeable emergencies will be accommodated. If concerns related to fairness, equity, and inclusion arise please communicate the concerns to me as soon as possible and I will act in good faith on your concerns. If there is ever a class concern or instructor concern that cannot be resolved through active communication, please reach out to the Chair of the Department, Dr. Daryl Wout (dwout@jjay.cuny.edu).

CUNY/John Jay Policies and Procedures on Non-Discrimination
It is the policy of The City University of New York and John Jay College of Criminal Justice to recruit, employ, retain, promote, and provide benefits to employees and to admit and provide services for students without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, legally registered domestic partnership status, disability, predisposing genetic characteristics, alienage, citizenship, military or veteran status, or status as a victim of domestic violence. Sexual harassment, a form of sex discrimination, is also prohibited. The City University of New York, as a public university system, adheres to federal, state, and city laws and regulations regarding non-discrimination and affirmative action. This policy is set forth in CUNY's Policy on Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination (PDF).

The CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct (PDF) prohibits all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, gender harassment and sexual violence. Inquiries concerning sexual misconduct or sex discrimination may be made to the individuals specified in that policy or may be referred to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

It is also the university's policy to provide reasonable accommodations and academic adjustments, when appropriate, to individuals with disabilities, individuals observing religious practices, individuals who have pregnancy or childbirth-related medical conditions and victims of domestic violence/stalking/sex offenses. The process for addressing these issues is set forth in:
CUNY's Procedures for Implementing Reasonable Accommodations and Academic Adjustments.

John Jay College is committed to addressing discrimination complaints of all members of the College Community promptly, consistently and fairly. Ms. Silvia Montalban, Esq. is the College's Director of Compliance & Diversity. She functions as the Sexual Harassment Coordinator and Coordinator for Title IX, which prohibits sex discrimination in federally assisted education programs. She can be reached at smontalban@jjay.cuny.edu or at 646.557.4409.

First Assignment:
Please begin by reviewing all of the materials in the separate folders of the **Course Documents** area of Course Menu on Blackboard, including the folders labeled Instructor Introduction, Syllabus, Critical Analysis Assignments, and Grading Rubrics.

Your assignment for Week 1 is to read the Instructor Introduction and to familiarize yourself with the syllabus (including the information on the required text), and to read chapter 1 of the text and complete the ungraded Critical Analysis Assignment Practice Example. The instructions for completing this practice example are in the Critical Analysis Assignments folder of the Course Documents area of Blackboard. A Model Answer for the Practice Example will be posted in the Critical Analysis Assignment folder during week 2.

The deadline for the first assignment (not including the Practice Example) is Friday, February 2 by 11pm. By Monday, February 5 I will post information about assignments for week 2 and will post a Model Answer for the Practice Example by Thursday, February 8.

My goal is to complete and post grading of all assignments within one week of their deadline. I will send out weekly assignment reminders including due dates and deadlines. If you have any questions, please contact me via email at mfondacaro@jjay.cuny.edu

I look forward to a productive semester!

Critical Analysis Writing Assignments: Students must complete 3 Critical Analysis Writing Assignments based on articles listed on the syllabus and included in the Assigned Articles folder on

Blackboard. The Critical Analysis writing assignments require you to review selected articles and critically analyze them using a Critical Analysis Assignment Evaluation Form (CAAEF) to structure and guide your written review and analysis of the assigned article. Detailed instructions are provided in the "Critical Analysis Assignments" folder in the Course Documents area of Blackboard. Please note that a Discussion Forum will be created for each of the 3 Critical Analysis Assignments, which are assigned for weeks 4, 9, and 12 of the course. The Critical Analysis Assignment on the syllabus for week 1 is an ungraded practice example. Detailed instructions are provided in the Critical Analysis Assignments folder of the Course Documents area and a Model Answer will be added there in week 2. All completed Critical Analysis Assignments also will be submitted for peer review as a new topic thread within the relevant Discussion Forum for the week when the Critical Analysis Assignment is due. You will not need to submit the first ungraded Practice Example for peer review.

Peer Review of Critical Analysis Writing Assignments
As noted above, you must complete 3 Critical Analysis writing assignments throughout the semester. The writing assignments require you to review and critically analyze specific assigned articles using a Critical Analysis Assignment Evaluation Form to guide your written review and analysis. These writing assignments are taken from the assigned readings and appear on the syllabus for weeks 4, 9 and 12. You will note on Blackboard that a discussion forum will be created for each of the Critical Analysis Assignments. Completed assignments will be posted by each student (including name in the subject line) as a separate thread in the relevant Critical Analysis Assignment discussion forum. In addition to completing 3 writing assignments, you will have the opportunity to have your assignments reviewed and graded by another student and you will have the opportunity to review and grade the 3 writing assignments completed by one of your classmates. Detailed instructions will be provided in the "Peer Review" folder that will be created in the Course Documents area of the Course Menu on Blackboard.

Required Texts:

Greene, E., Heilbrun, K., & Bradfield Douglass, A. (2024). *Wrightsman's Psychology and the Legal System* (10th Edition).
Boston, MA: Cengage
ISBN: 978-0-357-79746-4
The required text is on order with the John Jay online bookstore and is available from online sources as well at:
(PSY 370 students) https://jjay.textbookx.com/institutional/index.php?action=browse#books/4203644/

(Law 370 students) https://jjay.textbookx.com/institutional/index.php?action=browse#books/4203131/

Posting Reflective Questions and Comments on the Discussion Board: For weeks 2 to15 you will be required to pick one of the topics in the assigned readings assigned for that week (not including the articles assigned for the Critical Analysis writing assignments) and to post a question about the topic that you would like your classmates to reflect on and think about as they read the material. You also will be required to reply to and comment on 26 of the reflective questions posted by your classmates over the course of the semester.

Policy on Participation and Deadlines: This course works best if everyone, including students and the instructor, log on regularly. I plan to log on at least twice daily between Monday at 5am and Friday at 5pm and will monitor my email 7 days a week. Please try to log in at least once daily between Monday and Friday throughout the entire semester. All Critical Analysis writing assignments are due by 11 pm on Thursday of the week in which they are assigned. **Late assignments will not be accepted.** Peer reviews will be due by Saturday at 5pm of the week they are assigned (two days after the due date of the writing

assignment). **Again, late assignments will not be accepted.** All exams must be completed by the due date and deadline indicated on the course schedule. Late exams will not be accepted and a grade of 0 will be assigned.

The Writing Center: The Writing Center, located in room 01.68 NB, is a service that provides free tutoring to students of John Jay. The Center has a staff of trained tutors who work with students to help them become more effective writers, from planning and organizing a paper, to writing and then proofreading it. The Writing Center is a valuable resource for any student of writing, and I encourage you to use it. If you are given a Referral form to the Writing Center, you must log on to the Writing Center website (http://jjcweb.jjay.cuny.edu/writing/homepage.htm) and schedule a an online Tutoring session to address specific items noted on the form. This is not optional. You may also voluntarily schedule a Tutoring session for guidance on improving your writing skills.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism and cheating are violations of CUNY's policy on academic integrity. By registering in this course, you are promising to abide by all the requirements stated in this policy. Students in breach of this policy are liable to severe penalty, including disciplinary action.

Assessment and Grading:

Two examinations will be administered throughout the semester. You will complete the exams online and instructions for completing the exams will appear in a file labeled "Exam Instructions" in the Course Documents area of the Course Menu on Blackboard. You are required to take both exams. Each exam will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions worth ½ point each for a total of 25 points. The exams will not be cumulative and will be curved, with the highest score being curved up to 25 and the rest of the class being curved the same number of points needed to curve up the highest score. Your final course grade will be calculated by adding up the total of your exam scores (50 points), Critical Analysis Assignments (15 points), Peer Reviews (9 points), your Reflective Questions (13 points), and Comments (13 points). The grading rubrics for the Critical Analysis Assignments, Peer Reviews, and Reflective Questions and Comments will appear in the Grading Rubrics folder in the Course Documents area.

25	Exam 1
25	Exam 2
15	Critical Analysis Writing Assignments (5 points each x 3 assignments)
9	Peer Reviews (3 points x 3 peer reviews)
13	Reflective Questions (1 point x 13 reflective questions)
13	Comments on Reflective Questions (1/2 point x 26 comments)
100	Total Points

Final course grades will be assigned using the following grading scale:

93-100%	A
90-92%	A-
87-89%	B+
83-86%	B
80-82%	B-
77-79%	C+
73-76%	C
70-72%	C-
67-69%	D+
60-66%	D
Below 60%	F

SCHEDULE OF SESSONS OFFERED AUGUST 25 TO DECEMBER 15

WEEKLY DEADLINES
All readings are to be completed by 11pm on Thursday of the week they appear on the syllabus unless otherwise noted.

Reflective Questions are due by Wednesday at 11pm and **Comments** on Reflective Questions are due the following Tuesday at 11pm unless otherwise noted**.** Reflective Questions and Comments are required for Weeks 2 to 14 and extra credit for Weeks 15 and 16.

Critical Analysis Writing Assignments are due by Thursday at 11pm and must be **posted for Peer Review** after 11pm on Thursday and before 1pm Friday unless otherwise noted.

Peer Reviews must be completed by Saturday at 5pm unless otherwise noted.

Week & Dates	**Readings and Taking Sides Topics**	**Assignments and Due Dates**
I may delete or substitute readings throughout the semester and will give you notice by Friday of the week before the reading is assigned. However, I do not anticipate making many if any substitutions.		
Week 1 1/25-2/2	Wrightsman Chapter 1 Psychology and the Law: Choices and Roles	
	Critical Analysis Assignment PRACTICE EXAMPLE Kassin (2014). False confessions: Causes, consequences, and implications for reform. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral Sciences, 1,* 112 -121.	Instructions for Practice Example are in the Critical Analysis Assignments folder of Course Documents area of Blackboard
Week 2 2/5-2/9	Wrightsman Chapter 2 The Legal System: Issues, Structure, and Players	Model Answer for the Critical Analysis Assignment Practice Example will be Posted by 2/8
Week 3 2/12-2/16	Wrightsman Chapter 3 Understanding Crime	
Week 4 2/19-2/23	Wrightsman Chapter 4 Psychology of Police	
	Critical Analysis Assignment 1 ("CAA 1"): Aita et al. (2018). Can we identify bad cops based on history? Base rates of historical markers in	CAA 1 due by 2/22 at 11pm *Peer Review of CAA1 due* by 2/24 at 5pm

law enforcement pre-employment evaluations. *Journal of police and criminal psychology*.

Week 5 Wrightsman Chapter 5
2/26-3/1 Eyewitnesses to Crimes and Accidents

Week 6
3/4-3/8 Wrightsman Chapter 6
Psychology of Victims of Crime and Violence

Week 7
3/11-3/15 Wrightsman Chapter 7
Evaluating Criminal Suspects

Week 8 Wrightsman Chapter 8
3/18-3/22 Traditional Prosecutions: Arrest, Bail, Plea Bargain and Settlement, & Trial

Week 9
3/25-3/29 Wrightsman Chapter 9
Alternatives to Traditional Prosecution

Critical Analysis Assignment 2:
Trawver & Rhodes (2012). Homesteading a pioneer mental health court: A judicial perspective from the last frontier. *American Behavioral Scientist, 57,* 174-188.

CAA 2 due by 3/28 at 11pm
Peer review of CAA 2 due by 3/30 at 5pm

Exam 1 must be completed on 3/25 between 8am & 11pm
Covers Wrightsman Chs 1-8

Week 10
4/1-4/5 Wrightsman Chapter 10
Forensic Assessment in Juvenile and Criminal Cases

Week 11
4/8-4/12 Wrightsman Chapter 11
Forensic Assessment in Civil Cases

Week 12
4/15-4/19 Wrightsman Chapter 12
Preparing for Trials

Critical Analysis Assignment 3:
Fondacaro, M.R. (2014). Rethinking the scientific and legal implications of developmental differences research in juvenile justice. *New Criminal Law Review, 17,* 407-441.

CAA 3 due by 4/18 at 11pm
Peer Review of CAA 3 due by 4/20 at 5pm

Week 13
4/22-4/30 **Spring Break**

Week 14
5/1-5/3 Wrightsman Chapter 13
Jurors and Juries

Week 15

5/6-5/10 Wrightsman Chapter 14
Punishment and Sentencing

Week 16

5/13-5/17 Wrightsman Chapter 15
Juvenile and Adult Corrections

Exam 2 must be completed on 5/17 between 8am & 11pm
Covers Wrightsman Chs 9-15