



PSY 339.01, .31 Forensic Psychology  
COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2016

Instructor: Jane Bednarz, M.S.

Class Location: .01 Henderson 206, .31 Rockwall Campus

Class Times: .01 Tuesday 4:30pm-7:10pm, .31 Monday/Wednesday 11am-12:15pm

Office Location: Binnion 208

Office Hours: TR in Commerce 12pm-3pm, MW in Rockwall After Class, and by appointment

Email Address: [jbednarz@leomail.tamuc.edu](mailto:jbednarz@leomail.tamuc.edu)

### COURSE INFORMATION

**Course Description:** In this course we will be working to demonstrate the influence that psychological research can have on the criminal justice system. We will cover topics ranging from the psychology of criminal behavior, to the processes involved in the criminal justice system, to the varying degrees of validity and reliability that come with testimony and criminal defenses. The goal of this course is to illuminate how the field of psychology can inform the criminal justice system and the policies developed by that system.

**Suggested (Not Required) Materials:**

1. Bartol, C. R., & Bartol, A. M. (2014). *Introduction to forensic psychology: Research and application*. Sage Publications. ISBN: 1483370682

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Assigned Materials:**

The topics for this course will largely be covered through the utilization of assigned materials such as articles, videos, podcasts, etc. While I cannot force you to review any of these materials, I will be conducting class discussion and constructing quizzes/exams under the assumption that you have reviewed the materials. **That means that you should review the assigned materials prior to coming into class that week.....or suffer the consequences.**

**Quizzes:**

There will be ten quizzes (worth ten points each) throughout the course of the semester that can cover information from any of the assigned materials for that week.

**Exams:**

Each exam (the midterm and the final will be comprised of 40 multiple-choice questions (each question worth 2 points) and 2 short answer questions (each question worth 10 points) based on the assigned materials and information covered in class.

**Debates:**

There will be two debates (worth 50 points each) throughout the course of the semester where you will be assigned a position to argue for and will be required to back up your position with evidence from the empirical literature. Specific details and instructions will be provided as the debates get closer in the semester.

**Policy Proposal Paper**

There will be one final paper (worth 100 points) where you will be required to develop a proposal for a criminal justice policy aimed to improve performance in some area in the criminal justice system. While you are free to choose the area that you would like to focus on, you will be required to provide evidence from the empirical literature to back up your proposal. Specific details and instructions will be provided as the policy proposal gets closer in the semester.

**Attendance:**

Attendance will be taken every class, and your grade for attendance will be based on the percentage of class days that you were in attendance. Then, that percentage will be transferred into points. For example, if you are in attendance for 75% of the total class days, you will receive an attendance grade of 75 points. However, if documentation is provided for your absence you will be excused.

**Where Will Your Grade Come From?**

- A) 10 Quizzes (100 points)
- B) 2 Exams (Midterm and Final) (200 points)
- C) 2 Debates (100 points)
- D) Policy Proposal Paper (100 points)
- E) Attendance (100 points)

Your overall grade is based on a point system, with a maximum of 600 possible points. The letter grades are assigned as follows:

**A** = 600-550pts. **B** = 549-500pts. **C** = 499-450pts. **D** = 449-400pts. **F** = 399pts. or Less

**COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT****What can YOU expect from ME?**

My office hours are listed above, but I am relatively flexible if you need to meet outside of those times, I simply request that you email me ahead of time or make arrangements with me in class. I will do my very best to have your assignments or assessments graded as soon as possible. If you have any questions at any point during the class, please feel free to ask.

I want you all to succeed and will do my best to make sure that happens, you just need to be willing to put in the required effort.

**NOTE:** I will NOT be available to answer emails between the hours of **11pm and 8am**. If you attempt to contact me during that timeframe, please do not expect a response until after that timeframe has ended.

<b>COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES</b>
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**Student Behavior:**

My expectations in this area should be very simple to fulfill. (1) Immaturity will NOT be tolerated! If a student's behavior is disrupting the class, he/she will be asked to stop. (2) To remain in this class, you must be respectful of others and maintain a mature and professional manner at all times. Failure to do so will result in your expulsion from the course. (3) The Student's Guidebook addresses the issues of academic cheating and plagiarism. These are a breach of conduct, and students are subject to disciplinary actions. It's simple. Do NOT cheat (to cheat is to act dishonestly or unfairly in order to gain an advantage) or plagiarize (to plagiarize is to take the work or idea of someone else and pass it off as one's own)!

**Cell Phone and Computer Use:**

The use of cell phones and computers is prohibited in my class. If I see that you are on your cell phone or computer during class you will be asked to leave class for the day and will not receive attendance credit for that day.

**Tardiness:**

If you are late to class be sure to come up at the end of class to sign the attendance sheet. This is your responsibility, and attendance points will be assigned by strict adherence to the attendance sheet.

**Changes to Class:**

Minor changes may be made to this schedule; modifications will be announced in eCollege and/or in class.

**Students with Disabilities:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library- Room 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

[StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)

**University Nondiscrimination Policy:**

Texas A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

**Campus Concealed Carry**

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to (<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafeTyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>) and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at [903-886-5868](tel:903-886-5868) or 9-1-1

**COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR****TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (16 Weeks including Finals Week)**

<i>Week Starting:</i>	<i>Topic:</i>	<i>Assessment:</i>
(1) 8/29	Introduction	
(2) 9/5	Criminology	(No Class Monday) Quiz #1
(3) 9/12	Continued.	Quiz #2
(4) 9/19	Police Tactics	Quiz #3
(5) 9/26	Continued	Quiz #4
(6) 10/3	Insanity and the Death Penalty	Quiz #5
(7) 10/10	Continued	Debate #1
(8) 10/17	Eyewitness Memory and Confidence	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>
(9) 10/24	Continued	Quiz #6
(10) 10/31	False Memories and Repressed Memories	Quiz #7

(11) 11/7		Continued	Debate #2
(12) 11/14		Children and Experts in the Courtroom	Quiz #8
(13) 11/21		Continued	Quiz #9
(14) 11/28		Jury Decision Making	Quiz #10
(15) 12/5		Continued	<b>POLICY PAPER DUE</b>
(16) 12/12	<b>STUDY!</b>	Finals Week	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>