

Psychology 3CC3: Forensic Psychology

Course Outline, September - December, 2014

Time: **Mon., Wed., Thus. 1:30 pm**
 Classroom: **HSC-1A1**

Instructor: **Dick Day**
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Required Text: Pozzulo, Bennell, and Forth. *Forensic Psychology, 4th Edition*. Pearson Education Canada

Recommended Text: Day, R. B. *Forensic Psychology 3CC3 Handbook*. McMaster Custom Courseware, 2014.

Course web site: <http://intropsych.mcmaster.ca/psych3cc3>; plus the course pages on Avenue 2 Learn

Course Objectives

The goals of the course are to familiarize students with the nature and scope of forensic psychology, to describe in more detail some of the specific responsibilities and activities of forensic psychologists, and to familiarize students with the theory and empirical evidence that guide forensic psychologists in their work within the legal system.

Course Topics

The table below shows the topics we will cover in this course, and the order in which we will discuss them. The specific weeks in which we will cover these topics may vary from the dates given below, depending on how deep and active our discussion of each topic becomes. So take the dates below as approximate and subject to revision.

Week of:	Topic	Text Readings
Sept. 1 Sept. 8	Introduction to Forensic Psychology	Chapt. 1
Sept. 8 Sept. 15 Sept. 22 Sept. 29	Interview and Interrogation Procedures; Detecting Deception; Eyewitness Testimony	Chapt. 3 (pp. 58-77) Chapt. 4 (pp.92-112); Chapt. 5; Chapt. 6 (pp. 154-173)
Oct. 6 * Oct. 13 Oct. 20	Profiling in Criminal Psychology	Chapt. 3 (pp. 78-90)
Oct. 20 Oct. 27	The Psychology of Juries	Chapt. 7
Nov. 3 Nov. 10 * Nov. 17	Assessment of Competence, Criminal Responsibility, Risk of Violence	Chapt. 8; Chapter 10
Nov. 24 Dec. 1	Psychopathy (Classes end Wednesday, December 3 rd)	Chapt. 11
Exam Period	Final Examination	

Course Evaluation: There will be two non-cumulative in-class midterm tests, worth 30% each, and a cumulative final exam worth 40%.

Each in-class test will consist of approximately 40 multiple-choice questions. You will have the full 50 minutes of the class period to complete each test.

The final exam will consist of approximately 80 multiple-choice questions and will cover all the material in the course. You will have two hours for this test, which will take place during the December examination period. The **tentative dates** for the in-class tests are as follows (and are marked on the course outline with an asterisk next to the week in which they will take place):

In-class Test #1: Wednesday, October 15

In-class Test #2: Wednesday, November 19

The **actual** dates of the in-class tests will depend on the availability of additional testing rooms (if required), and will be announced in class - and posted on the course website - **at least 10 days** prior to the actual test date. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE SURE THAT YOU GET THIS INFORMATION.**

Missed Work: If you miss one of the in-class tests for documented medical or compassionate reasons, you should complete a Missed Work form in the office of the Associate Dean (Studies) of your Faculty. Once your Associate Dean has accepted your reason for absence, the remaining in-class test and the final exam will be reweighted (40%, 60%, respectively) to cover the missed in-class test.

Final Grade Calculation and Adjustment: The final mark in Psychology 3CC3 will be computed by applying the following formula to the percentage scores on Test1, Test2, and Final Exam:

$$(\text{Test1}\% \times .30) - (\text{Test2}\% \times .30) - (\text{Exam}\% \times .40) = \text{Final Course Mark}$$

Apart from excused absences from an in-class test, every student will be assessed using the weighting formula shown above - with one exception:

In assigning final letter grades for the course I look at the pattern of performance over the two in-class tests and the final exam. If the overall average, as calculated by the formula above, is on the borderline of the next higher letter grade (e.g. 49%, 66%, or 84%) and if the marks on both the final exam and one in-class test are at the next higher level (e.g., D-, C+, A), then I will assign the next higher letter grade.

Apart from this one final adjustment, final course grades in Psych 3CC3 are not changed unless they have been calculated incorrectly. Consequently, I do not respond to personal, phone, or email requests to reconsider correctly calculated final letter grades.

Note that although midterm and exam marks, and final course averages are posted on Avenue as well as on the intropsych Grades Lookup, **ONLY THE NUMERICAL POSTINGS ON THE GRADES LOOKUP REFLECT THE CORRECT CALCULATION OF YOUR MARKS AND FINAL AVERAGE.** The letter grades posted on Avenue and the Grades Lookup will be identical, and equally correct.

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Academic Integrity and Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty consists of

misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at

http://www.mcmaster.ca/senate/academic/ac_integrity.htm

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. **Copying or using unauthorized aids on tests and examinations.**
2. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
3. Improper collaboration in group work.