

**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO AT SCARBOROUGH  
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**

**PSYD15 – Current Topics in Social Psychology  
Fall, 2005**

**Mondays, 7-9 p.m.**

<https://intranet.utsc.utoronto.ca/>

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**Course Description:**

The area of study this year will be Psychology and Law, or Forensic Psychology. We will explore what can be described as an applied area of Social Psychology, and discuss the ways in which theoretical research is rightly or wrongly applied to some very important real-world issues. We will also discuss the many methodological difficulties with which applied researchers are confronted. Students will be required to choose a topic related to the course content and conduct a thorough review of the relevant research associated with it; this material will be presented by the students as part of an in-class seminar, as well as a term-paper. The goal of each class is to have a lively and engaging in-class discussion that relates to the topic of the week, so students will need to be prepared by having read the assigned materials for that week and coming to class with questions and comments.

**Required Class Materials:**

Rather than an assigned text, readings will come from scholarly articles that discuss both the Social Psychological research and its legal applications. All articles are available from the U of T library.

**Course Requirements:**

Your grade will be based on a mid-term exam (25%), a 2-page assignment hand-out (5%), an in-class presentation (15%), a final term paper (45%), and your level of participation (10%). Students must complete all components of the course in order to receive a passing grade. Please familiarize yourself with departmental policies regarding missed tests in the UTSC calendar.

## Tentative Course Schedule D15 - Fall, 2005

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Lecture Topic</u>
Sept. 12 <sup>th</sup>	Introduction to Forensic Psychology/Psychology and the Law. The role of Social Psychology in a Legal setting. Discussion of major term paper requirements.
Sept. 19 <sup>th</sup>	Topic: The psychological expert within the justice system. Conflicts and concerns.
Sept. 26 <sup>th</sup>	Topic: Methodology and the use of jury simulations.
Oct. 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Topic: A successful application of psychology to the law? Eyewitness issues.
Oct. 10 <sup>th</sup>	Thanksgiving - no class
Oct. 17 <sup>th</sup>	Topic: The Impact of Psychology on the Law.
<b>Oct. 24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Mid-Term Exam - 50%</b>
Oct. 31 <sup>st</sup>	Presentation Preparation and Exam results posted – no lecture. Instructor “virtually” available between 8:30 and 10:30 p.m.
Nov. 7 <sup>th</sup>	Presentations: Psychology in the courtroom
Nov. 14 <sup>th</sup>	Presentations: Police selection and training
Nov. 21 <sup>st</sup>	Presentations: Bias and Prejudice in the courtroom
Nov. 28 <sup>th</sup>	Presentations: Is what we know, so? The role of prior beliefs and pressure.
Dec. 5 <sup>th</sup>	Presentations: They made me do it; pressure in the justice system

\*There is NO final exam during the December exam period for this course

To do well in this course, you need to come to class (!) prepared to think about and discuss the topics we cover. As this is an advanced seminar class, I expect lots of active participation by all students. Any concerns regarding your grades on the assignment or a particular exam should be presented to me - in writing - as soon as possible after the evaluation. If you find you are having difficulties, please come and talk about it with me early, rather than after the course when it is too late to do anything about it - I will do my best to assist with suggestions for time management, alternate ways of studying the material, and so on.