

## Course Outline Psychology and Law, PSY C53

Professor: David Nussbaum, Ph.D.

T.A.s: Stephanie Bass, M.A.

Course Text: *Forensic Psychology, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.* (2008) Authors: Pozzulo, Bennell & Forth.

Pearson Prentice Hall

ISBN-13: 978-0-13-205176-7

Time: Mondays: 1:10 – 3:00 P.M.

Location: AA 112

	<u>Week</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Chapter</u>
1.	September 13	Intro to Forensic Psychology	1
2.	September 20	Police Psychology	2
3.	September 27	Police Investigations	3
4.	October 4	Deception	4
5.	October 11	Thanksgiving .... <b>No Classes</b>	
6.	October 18	Eyewitness Testimony & Child Witnesses	5 & 6
7.	October 25	Term Test 1 Chapters 1 – 6 & Lectures	
8.	November 1	Juries	7
9.	November 8	Role of Mental Illness in Courts	8
10.	November 15	Sentencing & Parole	9
11.	November 22	Domestic Violence & Sex Offenders	10
12.	November 29	Homicide & Psychopathic Offenders	11
13.	December 3	Risk Assessment & Special Treatments	12 & 13
14.	Exam Period	Second Term Test 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 & 13.	

**Evaluation:** Two multiple choice tests of 100 items each:

Question Selection; Approximately 60% from the Text, and 40% from Lectures.

**Office Hours:** Professor Nussbaum: Mondays: 3:15 – 4:15 in SW 414

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## Course Description: Psychology and Law PSYC39, UTSC

This course covers both “civil” and “criminal” aspects of the intersection between psychology and the legal system, often referred to as “Forensic Psychology”. Forensic means simply, having to do with the law. Many aspects of our civilization’s laws and legal practices make assumptions about human behaviour, and these assumptions have been entrenched through decades if not centuries of legal practice. However, as empiricists, psychologists have examined a number of these beliefs and found that some of them are actually unsupported by experimental data. One example is the veridicality of eye-witness testimony that shifts under different specifiable conditions. Another has to do with the ability of “experts” to evaluate defendants’ mental states on the bases of a review of their social, educational, criminal and/or psychiatric histories and an interview. Empirical work has shown that test and instruments developed for specific purposes provide far greater validity across a diversity of “psycholegal” contexts including extent of impairment following head injury (civil), whether an individual is or is not Fit to Stand Trial, sufficiently impaired by a mental disorder to warrant a mental health defense for a criminal act (called NCR for “Not Criminally Responsible”), or likely to commit a serious violent act in future that would warrant indeterminate incarceration.

This course will cover various topics demonstrating the advantages accruing to the legal system by utilizing psychological knowledge. While the empirical evidence is critical in supporting the veracity of psychological knowledge, at least equal emphasis will be devoted to understanding why observations occur the way they do. The important role of psycholegal instruments and tests for both research and practice will be explored. The Professor takes the position that Forensic Psychology should not be seen as a “stand alone area” under a disjointed psychology patch-quilt but rather as reflecting general psychological principles common to other areas but somewhat specialized by the extreme nature of some of the events that trigger legal involvement. By the end of the semester, the student can expect to have surveyed all of the major themes and content areas that drive this applied but also active research area within psychological science. Links between different levels of explanation for forensic issues will be addressed when appropriate.

## 2010 Fall Session

Tuesday, August 17	Last day to pay fees.
Monday, September 6	Labour Day - University closed.
Monday, September 13	Classes begin in F & Y courses.
Sunday, September 19	Last day for students writing deferred examinations in December to adjust their current course load.
Sunday, September 26	Last day to add F & Y courses.
Monday, October 11	Thanksgiving Day - University closed.
Sunday, November 21	Last day to drop F courses without academic penalty and have them removed from the transcript.
Monday, November 29	Last day for submission of term assignments in F courses.
Monday, December 6	Last day of classes in F courses.
Tuesday, December 7- Wednesday, December 8	Study Break.
Tuesday, December 7- Tuesday, December 21	2010 Summer deferred examinations.
Wednesday, December 8	Last day to drop UTSC F courses and have them remain on the transcript with a grade of LWD indicating withdrawal without academic penalty. After this date grades are recorded on transcripts whether course work is completed or not (with a '0' assigned for incomplete work) and they are calculated into GPAs. (Note: See <a href="http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/registrar/">www.utsc.utoronto.ca/registrar/</a> for dates for courses on other campuses.)
Thursday, December 9- Tuesday December 21	Final examinations in F courses.
Wednesday, December 22- Sunday, January 2	December break - University closed.
Tuesday, February 15	Last day to confirm intention to graduate at the 2011 Spring Convocation.