

**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**

**Course Outline — Winter 2023**

**PY3950 (A3): Forensic Psychology – 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours for 15 Weeks**

**Instructor:** Dr. Connie Korpan Ph.D.      **Phone:** 780-539-2032  
**Office:** C312      **Email:** [ckorpan@gprc.ab.ca](mailto:ckorpan@gprc.ab.ca)  
**Office Hours:** Wednesdays and Fridays 11:30-12:30

**CALENDAR DESCRIPTION**

This is an overview of research, practice, and policy issues in Forensic Psychology. Both criminal and civil forensic topics will be discussed, including the history of forensic psychology, ethical issues in forensic practice, police selection processes, theories of criminal behaviour, criminal profiling, jury selection, validity of eyewitness reports, abuse against women and children, child custody, and insanity/competency.

**PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE:** PY1040 and PY1050

**REQUIRED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS:**

Pozzulo, J., Bennell, C., & Forth, A. (2021) *Forensic psychology* (Revel 6e Canada Version) Pearson Canada Inc.

**DELIVERY MODES:** In person

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

Students will be taught how research in Forensic Psychology has been applied to practice within criminal and civil legal systems. Topics covered will include:

- The history of forensic psychology
- The Canadian legal system
- Forensic Assessment in Criminal and Civil Domains
- Forensic Treatment
- Children and the Law (e.g., child witnesses)
- Juveniles and the Law (e.g., accountability)
- Eyewitness Testimony
- Police Investigations—interrogations and confessions
- Police Psychology—training, criminal profiling
- Juries
- Risk Assessment/Risk Management
- Offenders

## LEARNING OUTCOMES:

As a result of taking this course, students will be able to

- demonstrate fundamental knowledge and comprehension of major concepts, theoretical perspectives and empirical findings in the areas of forensic psychology
- demonstrate understanding of forensic assessment in criminal and civil domains, including issues pertaining to determination of fitness to stand trial, determination of criminal responsibility, determination of risk for recidivism, assessment for the purpose of civil commitment, assessment for the purpose of determining parental capacity, and assessing risk for child maltreatment
- demonstrate understanding of how offenders with mental illness receive treatment and the impact of treatment on recidivism
- demonstrate understanding of how children who are witnesses for criminal and civil cases are assessed for competence to provide testimonies and the nature of testimonial supports available to child witnesses
- demonstrate understanding of the rights of young offenders and how these rights have evolved over that last century
- demonstrate understanding of how eyewitness memory/accounts are affected by the nature of the event to be remembered, interview techniques, etc.
- demonstrate understanding of the nature of interrogation and how interrogation techniques affect confessions
- demonstrate understanding of how criminal profiles are constructed and used to solve crimes
- demonstrate understanding of how juries make decisions pertaining to guilt and issues that affect decision making
- demonstrate knowledge of various types/subtypes of offenders
- demonstrate basic level understanding of various research methods used in scientific investigations of psychological phenomena
- apply their knowledge of basic research methodology to critically evaluate psychological research

## TRANSFERABILITY:

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page <http://www.transferalberta.ca>.

**\*\* Grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability**

## EVALUATIONS:

1. 4 Quizzes—5% each for a course total of 20%
2. Midterm Exam—20%; Final Exam—30%
3. Participation/Attendance—5%
4. Chapter Assignments— course total of 10%
5. Annotated Bibliography—15%

**PLEASE NOTE: In order to preserve an evaluation system THAT IS FAIR TO ALL students, requests for additional/substitute work will NOT be granted to students wishing to compensate for poor or missed grades on assignments, quizzes, midterm exam or final exam.**

- 1. Quizzes:** There will be four multiple choice quizzes based on material covered in both the textbook and the lectures. Each quiz is worth 5%, for a course total of 20%. They are closed-book exams, meaning that for the duration of the quizzes, students are not allowed to access the course materials (whether they are on paper or on computers/other devices).
- 2. Midterm and Final Exams:** The midterm and final exams will include multiple-choice questions and short answer questions based on material covered in both the textbook and the lectures. The midterm is worth 20% and the final exam is worth 30%. THE FINAL EXAM WILL NOT BE CUMULATIVE.

**Note on Quizzes, Midterm and Final Exams:**

- During exams, you are not allowed to access course materials (i.e., no access to notes/book, whether in paper format or on devices). Accessing such materials will be considered cheating and will result in an automatic “0” on the exam.
- Activities such as holidays or employment are not considered excusable reasons for missing any exam. Students who chose to miss an exam for employment, holiday, or other unexcused reasons may receive a “0” on the exam.
- The dates of the quizzes and midterm are posted on page 5. The final exam date is to be determined by Student Services (note that the final exam period is from April December 14 to 24, inclusive). Please refer to pages 6 and 7 of this course outline for information on missed quizzes.

- 3. Participation/Attendance:** Student input during lectures is enthusiastically welcomed and strongly encouraged. Attendance will be taken every class. Attendance may be taken more than once during a class period. **Please note that in my courses, students who miss more than 10% of classes without an acceptable excuse may be debarred from writing the final exam.**

- 4. Chapter Assignments:** There will be 15 multiple-choice chapter assignments, each comprised of questions taken from the textbook material. These are open-book assignments to be completed out of class. Your marks across all the assignments will be averaged; the average mark of all the assignments is worth 10% of your overall grade. You will answer the questions of each assignment by clicking the relevant link. These links are found under the “Chapter Assignments” widget or by clicking “Quizzes” on the blue banner at the top of the myClass page.

Deadlines for each assignment are noted in 3 ways:

- this course outline (page 5)
- the PDF Chapter Assignment booklet posted on myClass
- on the assignment links found on myClass.

**Please write these deadlines on your calendar and setup myClass to send you reminders of upcoming deadlines. The links will close at 11:59 (1 minute before midnight) on the dates listed (on page 5) and will not be reopened past the deadline. It is your responsibility to know the deadline of each assignment.**

**Do not ask for an extension if you miss a deadline.**

NOTE: The assignments are generally due before I cover the material in class as they are designed to help prepare you for the lectures. Also, note that myClass refers to these assignments as "Quizzes"; the assignments are also accessible

**5. Annotated Bibliography** Details of this assignment are provided on a separate document.

**GRADING CRITERIA** Please note that most universities will not accept your course for transfer credit **IF** your grade is **less than C-**.

<b>Alpha Grade</b>	<b>4-point Equivalent</b>	<b>Percentage Guidelines</b>
A+	4.0	97-100
A	4.0	94-96
A-	3.7	90-93
B+	3.3	85-89
B	3.0	80-84
B-	2.7	75-79
C+	2.3	70-74
C	2.0	65-69
C-	1.7	60-64
D+	1.3	55-59
D	1.0	50-54
F	0.0	00-49

**Note that each instructor may adopt unique criteria to assign final letter grades. Therefore, the criteria listed above might not be used by other instructors. Also, the grading system described on the college website and calendar is a guideline only.**

## COURSE SCHEDULE/**TENTATIVE** TIMELINE:

Chapter/Exam/Assignment		Lecture Date	Chapter Assignment Deadline 11:30 P.M.
	Course Overview	January 4	
Chapter 1	Introduction to Forensic Psychology	January 6/11	January 10
Chapter 2/3	Police Psychology/Investigations	TBA	January 14 (x2)
Chapter 12	Young Offenders	January 18/20	January 17
<b>Quiz 1</b>	<b>Chapters 1, 2, 3, 12</b>	<b>January 25</b>	-
Chapter 13	Intimate Partner Violence	January 25/27	January 24
Chapter 14	Sexual Offenders	February 1/3	January 31
<b>Annotated Bib Question</b>		<b>February 2</b>	-
Chapter 15	Homicidal/Other Offenders	February 8/10/15	February 7
<b>Quiz 2</b>	<b>Chapters 13, 14, 15</b>	<b>February 15</b>	-
<b>Midterm</b>	<b>Chapters 1, 2, 3, 12, 13, 14, 15</b>	<b>February 17</b>	-
<b>Reading Week</b>	<b>No Classes</b>	<b>February 20-24</b>	-
Chapter 4	Deception	March 1/3	February 28
Chapter 5	Eyewitness Testimony	March 3/8	March 2
Chapter 6	Child Victims and Witnesses	March 8/10	March 7
Chapter 7	Juries	March 10/15	March 9
<b>Quiz 3</b>	<b>Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7</b>	<b>March 17</b>	
Chapter 8	The Role of Mental Illness	March 22/24	March 21
<b>Annotated Bibliography</b>		<b>March 22</b>	-
Chapter 9	Sentencing & Parole	<b>STUDENTS DO ON OWN</b>	March 25
Chapter 10	Risk Assessment	March 29/31	March 28
Chapter 11	Psychopaths	April 5/12	April 4
<b>Quiz 4</b>	<b>Chapters 8, 9, 10, 11</b>	<b>April 12</b>	-
<b>Final Exam***</b>	<b>Chapters 4 to 11 inclusive</b>	<b>April 14-24</b>	-

## OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

Jan 13	Last day to add courses and drop courses (UT) for refund; winter fees due
Feb 20-24	Family Day/Winter Break—no classes
Mar 29	Last day to withdraw classes with permission (i.e., "W")
April 12	Last day of classes
April 14-24	Final Exam Period



## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:** The NWP calendar has information regarding the conduct expected of students. Here are the expectations specifically for my classes:

1. **TALK TO ME IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS OR YOU ARE EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES THAT MAY HAVE NEGATIVE IMPACT ON YOUR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE.** These concerns may include personal challenges or class-related issues (e.g., difficulty with material, disruptions from other students). Please know that I will keep your concerns confidential.

**EXAM ACCOMODATIONS:** Exam accommodations are used by any number of students whose learning disabilities affect processing and comprehending printed material, learning, and/or concentration (either due to the condition itself, or the effects of the medication which is used to treat the condition). Accommodations can also be sought by students with conditions that include, but are not limited to, mental health conditions, chronic illness, neurological disorders, visual disabilities and motor disabilities.

If you require exam accommodations due to a disability or condition, you must contact Accessibility Supports (in the library). More information is available at <https://libguides.nwpolytech.ca/learningcommons/AccessibilityServices>

Please note that when you contact an advisor, you will be asked to provide them with documentation supporting your request for accommodation. After the advisors inform me of your need for accommodation, I will extend the allotted exam writing times by an appropriate amount.



2. **RESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR**

Students are expected to exhibit respectful behavior to the instructor, guest speakers and other students. We will discuss topics in class that may cause disagreement. It is expected that all participants will deal with such disagreements WITHOUT resorting to behaviors/comments that are dismissive, demeaning or threatening to others. Swearing and use of slurs against individuals or groups (racial, religious, gender, etc.) are unacceptable. Students unable to meet these expectations will be required to leave the class in the interest of preserving the learning opportunities of other students. Please refer to the NWP calendar for more information regarding student conduct.



3. **ATTEND CLASS AT THE SCHEDULED CLASS TIMES:**

Students are expected to attend lectures at the scheduled class times. Attendance will be taken every class and may be taken more than once each class

- ❖ **Missed Lecture Material:** Although notes are available on **myClass**, they are not complete; attendance is required to get full lecture information. If you miss a class, you are to obtain missed material by approaching a classmate, *not* the instructor. It would be *unfair* for students who miss lectures to be advantaged by getting the instructor's notes.
- ❖ **Missed Quizzes/Exams:** Dates for the quizzes and midterm are included on page 5 of this course outline. Missed quizzes will generally not be rescheduled. If you miss a quiz due to verified illness, dentistry, accident, emergency, or NWP obligations (e.g., you are away due to the requirements of another course, athletics) the weight of the quiz will be transferred; the weight of Quiz 1 or 2 will be transferred to the midterm exam, the weight of Quiz 3 or 4 will be transferred to the final exam. Quizzes missed for reasons that do not include verified illness, dentistry, accident, or emergency, will be assigned a "0" (zero). Holidays, employment, etc. are NOT considered to be excusable reasons to miss any exam in this course. Furthermore, quizzes missed without explanation from the student will be assigned a "0".

According to NWP policy, deferring a missed Midterm Exam is at the discretion of the instructor. In my courses, students who miss a midterm because of illness, dentistry, accident, or emergency (verified) may write the midterm at a later date (set by me—I will choose a date that is mutually convenient for me and the student). When students miss the midterm for reasons that do not include verified illness, dentistry, accident, or emergency, a “0” is assigned to that midterm. Students who miss the midterm without explanation will receive a “0” on the midterm. Absences from a registrar scheduled Final Exam fall under NWP Examination Policy. It is the responsibility of the student to be informed about these policies prior to the final examination period.

If you miss the final exam due to illness, you will be required to submit an application to the Registrar’s office for permission to write a deferred exam and must do so within 48 hours of the scheduled exam time. You may defer the final exam for up to 20 days after the end of the examination period. You will be required to provide documentation for your illness.

- 4. LEARN & RECORD ASSIGNMENT DEADLINES AND EXAMINATION DATES/TIMES:** These dates are posted on this course outline and on myClass. You can set the notifications on myClass to remind you of upcoming assignment deadlines and exams. **For the sake of fairness for ALL students, assignment deadlines will NOT be extended for those who miss an assignment. If you know that you will be away when an assignment is due, it is expected that you hand in that assignment earlier than the announced/posted date.** FYI—myClass chapter assignments can started/completed before the announced/posted deadlines.



- 5. OUT-OF-CLASS WORK:** Students are expected to prepare for each lecture by reading the assigned chapters and lecture notes that are posted in advance. Although all information in the textbook is important and interesting, limited class time prevents discussion of all the material covered in the assigned chapters. You are responsible for learning the material covered in the assigned chapters, including material that is not discussed in class.

- 6. CHECK YOUR STUDENT EMAIL/USE YOUR STUDENT EMAIL TO COMMUNICATE WITH ME.**

On occasion, I will send students emails about something important, such as information about exams or assignments. If I need to cancel a class, I will inform students through email. These emails go to your **student email** account (i.e., nwpolytech.ca), not your personal email account. Also, you must use your student email to communicate with me. Many hotmail/gmail/telus etc. emails get sent to my junk folder rather than my inbox, so I may miss emails from such accounts (or notice them much later).

## STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and there will be penalties. For a more precise definition of plagiarism and its consequences, refer to the Student Conduct section of the Northwestern Polytechnic Calendar at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/programs/calendar/> or the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy which can be found at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/administration/policies/index.html> .

Instructors reserve the right to use electronic plagiarism detection services on written assignments.

Instructors also reserve the right to ban the use of any form of electronics (cell phones, Blackberries, iPods, tablets, scanning pens, electronic dictionaries, etc.) during class and exams.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

More useful information can be found at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/students/>