



**Department of Arts and Education  
Course Outline — Winter 2017**

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

**Instructor:** Dr. Connie Korpan Ph.D.      **Phone:** 539-2032  
**Office:** C312      **Email:** [ckorpan@gprc.ab.ca](mailto:ckorpan@gprc.ab.ca)  
**Office Hours:** Mondays 11:30-12:30; Tuesdays 1:00-2:00 or by appointment

**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:**

Roesch, R., Zapf, P.A., Hart, S.D., & Connolly, D.A. (2014). *Forensic psychology and the law: A Canadian perspective*. Wiley: Canada.

**DELIVERY MODE(S):** This course includes lectures, class discussions and take-home exercises. Lectures will be delivered concurrently at the GPRC campus and via videoconferencing.

**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: UA, UC, UL, AU, GMU, KUC

**\*Warning:** Although we strive to make the transferability information in this document up-to-date and accurate, **the student has the final responsibility for ensuring the transferability of this course to Alberta Colleges and Universities.** Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at Alberta Transfer Guide main page <http://www.transferalberta.ca> or, if you do not want to navigate through few links, at <http://alis.alberta.ca/ps/tsp/ta/tbi/onlineSearch.html?SearchMode=S&step=2>

**\*\* 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. **Quizzes/Exams.** There will be four quizzes; each will be in a multiple choice format. Each quiz is worth 5%, for a total of 20%. Please refer to page 9 of this outline for more information on missed quizzes.

The midterm and final exams will include multiple-choice and short answer questions. The multiple choice questions are taken “primarily” from the test-bank and the short answer questions will be taken primarily from the lecture material. The final exam will not be cumulative; it will cover material from after the midterm to the end of term.

The dates of the quizzes and midterms are indicated on page 7 of this outline. The date of the final exam will be announced by the Student Services office, but note that it will be between April 17 and April 27, 2017

**Weight: Quizzes: 5% each for a total = 20%; Midterm exam = 25%; Final exam = 30%.**

2. **Research and Writing Skills Assignment** This assignment entails completed several components that culminate in a paper. You will choose a question that is relevant to Forensic Psychology, do library research to find answers to that question, and write a paper. Please note that I reserve the right to use any means available, including electronic searches, to check for plagiarism.

All components are due at the beginning of class on the stipulated due-dates. Anything submitted after the beginning of class will be considered late. Any component handed in later than the stipulated due dates will be docked up to 25%

per day (at my discretion).

**Weight of paper and related components = 15%**

3. **Attendance.** Student input during lectures is enthusiastically welcomed and strongly encouraged. There are a variety of ways that you can contribute to the lectures, such as asking relevant questions, making insightful comments during the lectures, contributing to discussion during group work. Attendance is taken during each class. **Please note that students who miss more than 10% of classes without an acceptable excuse may be debarred from writing the final exam. Weight = 5%**

4. **Assignments.** There will be several chapter assignments, each comprised of multiple choice questions taken the test bank. These assignments will be posted on Moodle. It is your responsibility to note and meet the deadlines for the assignments. Deadlines will be announced in class and will be indicated on the Moodle assignment.

**Weight = 5%**

**GRADING CRITERIA**

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

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

**COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:**

<b>Chapter/Exam/Assignment</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chapter 1	Introduction to Forensic Psychology	January 9
Chapter 2	The Canadian Legal System	Students will cover on their own
Chapter 3	Forensic Assessment: Criminal Domains	Jan 16
<b>Quiz 1</b>	<b>Chapters 1, 2, 3</b>	<b>January 23</b>
Chapter 4	Forensic Assessment: Civil Domains	January 23
	<b>Research Question Due</b>	<b>January 25</b>
Chapter 5	Forensic Treatment	January 30
Chapter 6	Children and the Law	February 6
<b>Quiz 2</b>	<b>Chapters 4, 5, 6</b>	<b>February 13</b>
<b>Midterm Exam</b>	<b>Chapters 1 to 6 inclusive</b>	<b>Feb 15</b>
Reading Week	No Classes	February 20-24
	<b>Reference Page Due</b>	<b>March 1</b>
Chapter 7	Juveniles in the Legal System	March 1
Chapter 8	Eyewitness Testimony	March 6
Chapter 9	Police Investigations	March 13
<b>Quiz 3</b>	<b>Chapters 7, 8, 9</b>	<b>March 15</b>
	<b>Paper Due</b>	<b>March 22</b>
Chapter 10	Police Psychology	March 22
Chapter 11	Juries and Legal Decision Making	March 29
Instructor Notes	Offenders	April 5
<b>Quiz 4</b>	<b>Chapters 10, 11, Offenders</b>	<b>April 12</b>
<b>Final Exam***</b>	<b>Chapters 7 to 11 inclusive &amp; Offenders</b>	<b>April 17-27</b>

\*\*\*The exact date, time, and location of the final exam is set by the registrar's office and will be announced in class as soon as this information is available. Again, the dates for the final examination period fall between April 17 and 27, inclusive. **DO NOT PLAN YOUR VACATION DURING THIS PERIOD**

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:****1. LECTURE ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES**

First of all—**come on time and stay in class**; deal with eating/drinking/bathroom needs before or after class. Classes are only 80 minutes long, so this expectation should be easy to manage. Arriving late and leaving during class is EXTREMELY DISTRACTING.

Students are held accountable for all lecture materials and readings. It is your responsibility to keep up with class work. Therefore, you are expected to attend all lectures. Attendance will be taken every class.

**If you are absent from a class, all missed material is to be obtained by approaching a fellow student, not the instructor. It would be very unfair for students who miss lectures to be advantaged by getting the instructor's notes.** Typically, the quality of note-taking by students is quite variable. Therefore, if you miss a lecture and need to rely on another student as a source for the missed lecture material, it is advised that you **pick your sources very carefully**.

If you are missing a class for excusable reasons (e.g., illness, appointment) and wish to avoid having your attendance/participation grade docked, please email me at [ckorpan@gprc.ab.ca](mailto:ckorpan@gprc.ab.ca). Write “**Absence from PY3950 Class**” in the subject box and provide your explanation in the email. Please be aware that I may ask for documentation.

**Again, students who miss more than 10% of classes without an acceptable excuse may be debarred from writing the final exam.**

## **2. RESPECTFUL CONDUCT**

**It is expected that all students will display respectful attitude and behaviours** in the classroom. This includes coming to class on time and leaving without disruption to others. Also expected is attention to the instructor and fellow students during discussions of topics relevant to the course. Disrespect will not be tolerated. Examples of disrespectful behaviour include talking while the instructor or fellow students are discussing course material, making rude, destructive comments, reading the newspaper, putting your feet up on the desk, putting your head down on the desk for a nap, and so on. Also, unless you are awaiting a call about something of a very very serious nature, **TURN OFF YOUR CELLPHONE**. Phones that ring during lectures cause a lot of distraction. Furthermore, people answering these calls during class cause even more distraction. Loving to listen to music is wonderful, but **LISTEN TO YOUR MUSIC OUTSIDE OF CLASS**. Instructors and other students can often hear the music which creates a distraction. Furthermore, such behaviour is

disrespectful to instructors. **AS STATED EARLIER, TEXTING, FACEBOOKING, PLAYING COMPUTER GAMES, CHECKING EMAILS, DOING ASSIGNMENTS FOR THIS COURSE AND OTHER COURSES, ETC. DURING CLASSTIME ARE NOT ALLOWED.** These types of expectations are based on common sense—you cannot learn the course material while engaging in these activities. Furthermore, research indicates that those around you are negatively affected by such activities. Finally, such activities are blatantly disrespectful. **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 pages 42-43 of the calendar for more information regarding the conduct expected of students

### **3. OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES**

You are also expected to prepare for each lecture by reading the assigned chapters and handouts. Students who prepare for lectures learn and perform much better than students who do not prepare.

Although the instructor feels that all the material in the text book is important and interesting, **limited class time prevents discussion of all the material covered in the text.** You are responsible for learning textbook material (assigned chapters only) that is not discussed in class. Please feel free to approach me outside of class if you wish to get clarification on this material.

### **MISSED QUIZZES/EXAMS**

Dates for the quizzes and midterm are included on page 8 of this course outline. **Quizzes that are missed for any reason will not be rescheduled.** If a student misses a quiz due to **verified** illness, dentistry, accident, emergency, or GPRC obligations (e.g., you are away due to the requirements of another course) the **weight of the quiz will be transferred to the midterm (Quizzes 1/2) or final exam (Quizzes 3/4).** If a student misses a quiz for reasons that do not include verified illness, dentistry, accident, or emergency, then a “0” (zero) will be assigned to that quiz. Holidays, employment, etc. are not considered to be excusable reasons to miss any exam in this course. Missing a quiz without explanation from the student will result in a “0” on that quiz.

**Students who miss a midterm because of illness, dentistry, accident, or emergency (verified) must write the midterm at another date** (set by me—I will choose a date that is mutually convenient). **I will NOT transfer the weight of the midterm to the final, as this practice will not allow me to adequately assess student learning of the first half of the course.** When students miss the midterm for reasons that do not include verified illness, dentistry, accident, or emergency, a “0” is assigned to that the midterm.

Students who miss the midterm without explanation will receive a “0” on the midterm.

**Absences from a registrar-scheduled Final Exam fall under GPRC Examination Policy.** It is the responsibility of the student to be informed about these policies prior to the final examination period. If the final exam is missed 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 of the end of the examination period. **You will be required to provide documentation for your illness.**

## OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

Jan 12	Last day to add courses (UT)
Feb 20-24	Winter Break—no classes
Mar 7	Last day to withdraw classes with a “W”
April 12	Last day of classes
April 17-27	Final Exam Period

### 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 College Calendar at <http://www.gprc.ab.ca/programs/calendar/> or the College Policy on Student Misconduct: Plagiarism and Cheating at <https://www.gprc.ab.ca/about/administration/policies>

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 during exams.**

**\*\*Note:** all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page

### Additional Information:

**Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy:** Please refer to college’s website <https://www.gprc.ab.ca/about/administration/policies/> to access this link.

**Friendship Centre:** The Friendship Centre at Grande Prairie Regional College provides a space for all students to meet, do homework, retrieve or leave messages, obtain community resources material, or just relax. The on-campus Friendship Centre is available for sharing circles, gatherings, study groups, and tutoring sessions. Everyone is welcome.

**Campus Security:** You should be aware that GPRC is no safer than the rest of Grande Prairie. Attacks on campus, as well as theft and vandalism have been occurring with increasing frequency. For your safety, Campus Security will provide a 24-hour Safe Walk service anywhere on campus. Call 780-539-2700 or use the blue phones on campus.

**Learning Support Centre:** The Learning Support Centre is available to all students who wish to improve their academic skills and ability to learn. Students can receive help with their writing (essay structure, grammar, formatting), as well as with math and science problems. Workshops on exam anxiety, study skills, noting taking, and other important skills are also offered here. The Learning Centre is in the Library.

**Student Printing Policy:** Please refer to college's website <https://www.gprc.ab.ca/about/administration/policies/> to access this link.