Forensic Psychology
Dr. Middlebrook
Stephen F. Austin State University
TR 2:00 – 3:15 p.m.
Robert T McKibben Education Building - Room 257

Assistant Professor: Sylvia Middlebrook, Ph.D., BCBA-D
Office: McKibben 215E
Office Hours: MW 1:00 – 2:00 pm, & 4:00 – 4:30 pm; TR 11:00 – 12:00 pm; other days/times by appt.
Phone: (936) 468-4402 Psychology Dept. main number; (936) 468-1455
Email: middlebrs@d2l.sfasu.edu (preferred); E-mail through d2L: middlebrs@d2l.sfasu.edu; middlebrs@sfasu.edu
Graduate/Teaching Assistant: Tessa Thomas; thomasta3@d2l.sfasu.edu; thomasta3@jacks.sfasu.edu
Office: 241; Office hours: TR 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.; or by appt.


Course Description: This course addresses the research and application of psychological knowledge to different areas of forensic psychology. Principles and concepts relevant to psychology and the legal system, as well as cognitive, biological and social factors, are explored. Topics may include, but are not limited to: roles and responsibilities of forensic psychologists, aggression and violent crime, mass murders and serial killers, the psychology of terrorism, cults, and extremism, eyewitness testimony and accuracy, false confessions, competency to stand trial, sanity and the insanity plea, juries and the courtroom, police psychology and investigations, the role of mental illness in the court system, risk assessment, psychopathy, and intimate partner violence. Prerequisite: Advanced Standing; previous course/background information in Abnormal Psychology preferred.

Program Learning Outcomes:
Students will be able to understand and apply psychological principles to personal, social, and organizational issues.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLO</th>
<th>Proficiency Level</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The student will demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
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<tr>
<td>The student will understand and apply basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretation.</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student will respect and use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and, when possible, the scientific approach to solve problems related to behavior and mental processes.</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student will understand and apply psychological principles to personal, social, and organizational issues.</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
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</table>
The student will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and reflect other values that are the underpinnings of psychology as a science.

**Student Learning Objectives:**

1. Students will be able to communicate an understanding of the scientific research and theories pertaining to forensic psychology.
2. Students will be able to explain the diagnostic system utilized to classify anti-social behaviors and psychiatric disorders specifically related to legal offenses.
3. Students will be able to communicate an understanding of the different diagnostic categories of alleged offenders, forensic assessments, the trial process, and sentencing phase.
4. Students will be able to distinguish between civil and criminal cases, and will have an understanding of the role of mental illness in the courtroom.
5. Students will develop and improve their critical thinking skills within the domain of psychology in general, and forensic psychology, in particular.
6. Students will learn to better communicate their knowledge and opinions regarding topics relevant to forensic psychology effectively during classroom discussions.

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**Course Requirements:**

1. **Attendance and Participation:** This is a fast-paced, advanced level course that will cover substantial amounts of information during each class session. Consistent class attendance is extremely important to your understanding of the concepts and course material covered in this class. Read the assigned chapters before class, and be prepared to participate in discussions, respond to questions, and make relevant comments and pertinent observations. Absences cannot be used as an excuse for missing deadlines. Students are expected to arrive to class on time. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to inform the professor of your presence at the end of class. Attendance will be taken on five (5) random dates during the semester, and points may be awarded for attendance or for a brief class activity that may be given that day. Only students who are present at the beginning of class when roll is taken will earn attendance points or class activity points that day unless there is a formal medical/clinic excuse for absence or coming in late. Otherwise, in-class assignments cannot be made up.

2. **Reading:** The textbook, Forensic Psychology, by Jack Kitaef, is required. Students are expected to read all assigned materials, and are responsible for knowledge of the materials in the textbook. Reading should be done in advance of class to maximize your comprehension of the material and to facilitate your capacity to meaningfully contribute to classroom discussion. Reviewing your reading materials after the class will also enhance retention of important information. You will need the textbook in order to successfully complete this course.

Note: We will cover much of the material in the text during classroom lectures and discussion; however, it would not be possible to cover all topics and information in the book, so note that you are responsible for material from the text for examinations whether or not it is covered in class.

3. **Exams:** There are four (4) non-cumulative exams, and a syllabus quiz. Each exam is worth 100 points. Exams cover a substantial quantity of information, thus, preparation for them should be on-going. Stay current in your reading and take notes in class. Although the standard power-points that accompany the text will be posted on d2L, you should not depend on these as a primary study resource. Additionally, the powerpoints used in class will contain additional information not included in the powerpoints on d2L.
Many students choose to print the d2L ppts, and take notes on them during class. Ultimately, you are responsible for your own success in this class.

On Exam Days: Be on time. Coming into class late after an exam has begun is distracting to classmates, and decreases the amount of time you have to finish the exam. When taking exams, students are required to remain in the classroom until exams have been submitted as completed. Bring a large blue Scantron sheet (form 30423) and a number 2 pencil to class on exam days.

*Important note: If your cell phone is in sight at any time during any exam, your test will be taken up and you will receive an automatic zero on that exam.

*Make-up exams: If you know you have to miss class on an exam day (for university activity, doctor's appt., etc.), please speak with the Professor as soon as you know, and make arrangements to take the exam before the regularly scheduled test date. However, if you are ill or have an emergency on exam day and are unable to make it to class, you must meet two requirements in order to be eligible to take a make-up exam: (1) You must inform the professor no later than the start of class that you will be absent and state the reason for your absence. If you fail to notify the professor either by phone, email, or in person, before the exam has been handed out to the class, you will not be eligible to take a make-up exam. (2) In addition, students must have a formal excuse, such as a medical or clinic excuse. A make-up exam will be scheduled as soon as is reasonably possible depending on the circumstances, and a formal excuse will be required at that time. If you do not bring formal documentation, you will not be able to take the make-up exam. *Please note that the make-up exam may vary in format and content from the scheduled exam administered in class.

4. Assignments: There may several in-class assignments (details TBA), as well as several more in-depth assignments to be completed out of class (TBA). D2L dropboxes will be opened for these. More information will be given regarding the specific assignments and ample time is provided for completion of assignments prior to the due dates. All outside work is submitted through d2L dropbox in a Word document.

**Important Note: All assignments and work must be submitted in a Word document; assignments cannot be scanned in or handwritten, or submitted in a pages or jpeg format. There is no make up for in-class assignments that are missed unless a person has a formal (medical/clinic) or university approved activity excuse.

5. Research Participation: Students are required to earn 10 research points (R points) by participating in departmental research projects. Students must first create a Sona Systems account before signing up to participate in the studies. Please visit the Department of Psychology web page – See Experiments - Sona Systems Sign-up, in order to create an account: http://sfasu.sona-systems.com Each R point equals two (2) course points. All R-points must be completed by Friday, 04/27/2018. Note: A small number of extra credit points may be earned by those who complete all R-points by mid-term (03/07/2018).

6. Project -- tba

7. ***Important note and caution: This course may include videos, power-point slides, clinical information/crime scenarios, etc., with mature themes and/or of a graphic nature, and may contain discussion of sensitive content related to psychological disorders, maladaptive and/or anti-social behaviors, and serious victimization/trauma. Students should consider these factors when determining if they are appropriate candidates for this course. Students experiencing difficulties have the option of exploring and/or accessing services available via Counseling Services (936) 468-2401. More information can be found at: http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices
8. You should **check d2L daily** for important announcements, e-mails, assignments, exam info, helpful links, etc. You are responsible for all information posted on d2L, and it is to your advantage to use it.

**Important note:** E-mail from your personal e-mail account that is sent to the Professor’s sfasu.edu e-mail address is *often* directed to “Junk Mail”; thus, e-mails sent to my sfasu.edu address may not be received or seen, and a delay in response may occur. Therefore, use d2L for e-mail communication with Dr. Middlebrook (middlebrs@d2l.sfasu.edu) and for graduate teaching assistant, Tessa Thomas (thomasta3@d2l.sfasu.edu).

**Grading System:**

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Four (4) Exams</td>
<td>100 each</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syllabus Quiz</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ten (10) Research Participation</td>
<td>2 points each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total possible points:</strong></td>
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**Grade Distribution:** *Grades are firm!*

A = 90% - 100%; B = 80% - 89%; C = 70% - 79%; D = 60% - 69%; F < 60%

**Additional Course Information:**

**Classroom Behavior:** Classroom behavior must not interfere with the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (refer to Student Conduct code, policy D-34.1). Inappropriate, unacceptable and/or disruptive behavior may result in a student being asked to leave class, and this student may be subject to judicial, academic, and/or other penalties. The expectation is that you will be respectful of the Professor and the other students in this class. Extended private conversations during lecture are distracting to the Professor and other classmates, and are not acceptable. The instructor reserves the right to ask students to leave class if that student's behavior interferes with the learning or teaching process. Though students are encouraged to participate and to engage in class discussions, it is not necessarily appropriate to discuss detailed personal matters.

**Cell Phones and Electronics:** *Cell phones MUST be turned off and out of sight during class.* Texting, social networking, and/or online activities during class are not appropriate and *will not be tolerated.* These activities are distracting to the Professor and to those around you. When you enter the classroom, turn your cell phone off and put in out of sight (in backpack, purse, etc.). Place your backpack/purse/tote bag, etc., on the floor. *The Professor reserves the right to ask students to leave class if they are texting or otherwise using cell phones during class.*

**Electronic Use:** Use of computers, electronic notepads, phones, etc. is not permitted during class unless the student has documentation of an educational need for such devices from the Office of Disability Services. Students are not permitted to record class lectures unless there is a documented need to do so as indicated by the Office of Disability Services.

If you have questions, please stop by my office (215E), or make an appointment with me.

**Additional information:**
**Academic Integrity** (A-9.1): "Academic integrity is a responsibility of all University faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instructions on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by University policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism." -- Stephen F. Austin State University Policies. The policy can be accessed for your review at: [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student_academic_dishonesty.pdf](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student_academic_dishonesty.pdf)

**Withheld Grades from Course Grades (Policy 5.5)**

At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic unit head, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F, except as allowed through policy [i.e., Active Military Service (6.14)]. If students register for the same course in future semesters, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Students with Disabilities (Policy 6.1)**

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/) and [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic-accommodation-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic-accommodation-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf).

**Early Alert Intervention Program:** Students experiencing significant behavioral, attendance, and/or academic difficulties may be considered for referral to student services to provide additional assistance or intervention.

*The instructor reserves the right to change or modify this syllabus, including the format, the course content, and/or the calendar based on students' level of comprehension, mastery of material presented, and/or other circumstances.*
**Forensic Psychology**  
Stephen F. Austin State University  
Sylvia Middlebrook, Ph.D., BCBA-D; office 215E, McKibben Bldg.  
PSY 498.001 TR 2:00 – 3:15pm  
Robert T McKibben Education Building: Room 257

*Tentative Schedule: The Professor reserves the right to change the course calendar based on students' level of comprehension, mastery of material presented, and/or other circumstances.*

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<th>Week of (tentative)</th>
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| 1 | Week of 01/16/2018 | 01/16/2018: “Snow” day! Syllabus Review; Introduction to Forensic Psychology 
| 2 | Week of 01/23/2018 | ***Syllabus Quiz (Tuesday,01/23/2018)***  
Ch. 1 History & Current Issues in Forensic Psychology  
Ch. 2 Roles & Responsibilities of Forensic Psychologists 
| 3 | Week of 01/30/2018 | Ch. 3 Aggression & Violent Crime 
| 4 | Week of 02/06/2018 | Ch. 11 Capacity and Incapacity  
**Exam 1: Chapters 1 – 3, & Ch. 11**  
| 5 | Week of 02/13/2018 | Ch. 5 Mass Murders & Serial Killers  
Ch. 6 The Psychology of Terrorism, Cults, & Extremism 
| 6 | Week of 02/20/2018 | Ch. 7 Law Enforcement & Police Psychology 
| 7 | Week of 02/27/2018 | Ch. 8 Investigations 
| 8 | Week of 03/06/2018 | **Exam 2: Chapters 5 - 8** 
| 9 | Week of 03/13/2018 | Spring Break!!!  
| 10 | Week of 04/03/2018 | Ch. 9 Eyewitness Testimony & Accuracy 
| 11 | Week of 04/10/2018 | Ch. 10 Psychology of False Confessions  
Ch. 12 Juries & the Courtroom 
| 12 | Week of 04/17/2018 | Ch. 14 Forensic Psychology & the Workplace  
**EXAM 3: Chapters 9, 10, 12, 13** 
| 13 | Week of 04/24/2018 | Ch. 15 Forensic Psychology Applied to Children & Families  
Ch. 16 Treatment & Rehabilitation in Forensic Psychology 
| 14 | Week of 05/01/2018 | Wrap-up; Projects, reviews, etc. 
| 16 | Week of Finals Week | **Final Exam : Chapters 14, 15, 16**  
**Tuesday, 05/08/2013, 1:00 – 3:00** (note: exam time different from class time) 

**Dates/materials covered in the above schedule are tentative and subject to change.**

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