Forensic Psychology
Dr. Middlebrook
Stephen F. Austin State University
Hybrid – Livestream / Online [TR 12:30 – 1:45 p.m.]
Robert T McKibben Education Building - Room 258

Assistant Professor: Sylvia Middlebrook, Ph.D., BCBA-D
Office: McKibben 215E
Office Hours: T 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.; W 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.; *via Zoom or e-mail
Phone: (936) 468-4402 Psychology Dept. main number
Email: middlebrs@d2l.sfasu.edu
Graduate/Teaching Assistant: tba


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, 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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<tr>
<th>PLO</th>
<th>Proficiency Level</th>
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<tr>
<td>The student will demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<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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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:**

You must have access to the Internet, and be familiar with or learn to use Brightspace by D2L in order to take this course. For assistance, call Brightspace support at 936-468-1919.

1. **Participation:** This is a fast-paced, advanced level course that will cover substantial amounts of information in each chapter / module / livestream session. Consistently accessing and referring to Brightspace by D2L is extremely important to your understanding of the concepts and information in this course.

   *It is recommended that you log onto Brightspace by d2L daily to read the modules and to complete required discussions, assignments, and quizzes. The amount of time you devote online should be comparable to the amount of time that you would spend in class and studying for the course if it were in a face-to-face format.

2. **Read the assigned chapters before starting the module,** and be prepared to participate in discussions, complete assignments and quizzes, and ask questions and/or make relevant observations. Students are expected to read the textbook, as well as information in each of the online modules and all assigned supplemental materials.

   Reviewing your reading materials after completing the module will enhance your retention of important information, and will assist you in completing the Quizzes. **You will need the textbook in order to successfully complete this course.** Note: Although every effort will be made to extensively cover information, you are responsible for material from the text whether or not it is specifically covered in the livestream discussion or online module.

3. **Quizzes:** There is a **multiple choice quiz** at the end of each chapter or at the end of several chapters combined (online module or modules). The quizzes are **non-cumulative**. Quizzes are of varying lengths, depending on the amount of information in the chapter/module. More information will be posted on Brightspace by d2L regarding the timing of the quizzes; however, the amount of time students have to take the quiz depends on how many items are on the quiz.
Quiz availability will open on approximately Friday of the week of the Quiz and will close at 11:59 p.m. each Sunday night. Thus, you have a three day “window” in which to take the quizzes. Note: if there is more than one quiz, you do not have to take all the quizzes at the same time. For instance, you could take Quiz 1 on Friday, Quiz 2 on Saturday, and Quiz 3 on Sunday. Or you could take all three quizzes on the same day.

Note: when taking Quizzes, you may use your book or other resources, but you may not work in conjunction with other students or be in communication with other students in any manner when taking quizzes. Items and answers are randomized so your item #1 would not be the same as that of a peers. Make-up quizzes are not offered unless verification of a medical excuse or emergency can be provided.

Be sure to allow enough time to take the quizzes. Do not wait until the last minute. Allow for possible difficulties you might encounter with internet connectivity or other problems.

Also, be prepared for your quizzes ahead of time. You will not have enough time to “look up” the answer to each question while you are taking the quiz. Relying too heavily on your book or other resources can use up your Quiz time quickly; so, pay close attention to remaining time while taking the Quiz.

4. **Assignments**: There are at least six assignments posted throughout the semester to evaluate your understanding of the text, content topics, and supplemental readings. You are expected to write on a level that is commensurate with that of an upper level university student. Grading will be based on content, clarity, and organization, as well as grammar and spelling. When appropriate, proper citations (APA) are required. Assignments will be available in dropbox on Brightpace by d2L.

The general expectation is that written work is be **double-spaced in Times New Roman, 12 point font**, with one inch margins. **Students must submit completed assignments as a Word Document only to the dropbox.** Your name should be typed at the top of each homework assignment. Assignments without names cannot be credited. Also, points may be deducted for work that is haphazardly completed or difficult to decipher.

There is no make-up for assignment deadlines that are missed. More information will be posted on Brightspace by d2L regarding the specific assignments. Students are provided with ample time for completion of homework assignments prior to the due dates.

**Important Note:** All assignments and work **must be submitted to Brightspace by d2L in a Word document**. Assignments cannot be “scanned in” or handwritten, or in a pages or jpeg format since these are not compatible with d2L parameters.

**Helpful links for writing:**

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html

http://www.easybib.com/guides/students/writing-guide/iv-write/a-formatting/apa-paper-formatting/

https://libguides.sfasu.edu/psychology#/?_k=6iazkw

5. **Discussion Posts (participation)**: There will be frequent discussion posts to facilitate student engagement and understanding, to read ideas and opinions of fellow students, and to promote course participation. These are short and require a quick turn-around (typically 24-48 hours).
Points are earned for reading material/watching video associated with discussion post and for answering the related questions as directed in the discussion post. Points are also earned for responding to a classmate’s post when required. **There is no make-up for missed Discussion posts** as the class will have moved on to the next topic.

Points are deducted for the following: discussion post offers vague or irrelevant information or opinion; discussion post has undue and obvious grammatical and spelling errors; discussion post only re-states what a classmate has already posted without adding student’s unique interpretation or additional information; discussion post does not use relevant course concepts and/or terms.

Note: it is not necessarily appropriate to disclose detailed personal matters in discussion posts or in classroom discussions.

6. **Important note and caution:** This course may include videos, power-point slides, clinical information/scenarios, etc., with **mature themes**, and may contain discussion of sensitive content related to psychological disorders, disturbing crimes/psychological mind-set of criminals, maladaptive or anti-social behaviors, trauma related to victimization, etc. Students should consider these factors when determining if they are appropriate candidates for this course. Students experiencing difficulty have the option of exploring and/or accessing services available via Counseling Services at (936) 468-2401, or other mental health services. More information can be found at: [http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices](http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices)

7. **Important E-mail Information:** E-mail from your personal e-mail account (gmail; Hotmail; yahoo, etc.) that is sent to the Professor’s sfasu.edu e-mail address is **often** directed to “Junk Mail” because it is not recognized by the server; thus, e-mails sent to my sfasu.edu address may not be received.

It is **very important** for students to **use the d2L address for e-mail communication with Dr. Middlebrook (middlebrs@d2l.sfasu.edu).**

Again, to reiterate, students should **check Brightspace by d2L daily** for important announcements, e-mails, assignments, discussion posts, quiz info, helpful links, etc. **You are responsible for all information posted on Brightspace by d2L, and it is to your advantage to use it.**

**Grade Distribution:** [subject to changes]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Four (4) Exams</td>
<td>100 points each</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syllabus Quiz</td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total possible points:</strong></td>
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**Grade Distribution:**

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

There are ample opportunities for students to earn points; thus, **grades are firm.** Ultimately, as the student, you are responsible for the grade you earn.

**Additional Course Information:**
Classroom Behavior: Online 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 process (refer to Student Conduct code, policy D-34.1). Inappropriate, unacceptable and/or disruptive language or behavior may result in a student being asked to exit from the livestream session. The expectation is that you will be respectful of the Professor and the other students in this class. Though students are encouraged to participate and to engage in class discussions, it is not necessarily appropriate to discuss or disclose detailed personal matters.

***Cell Phones and Electronics: Cell phones should be turned off and out of sight during livestream instruction. Texting, social networking, and/or online activities during livestream detracts from the purpose of meeting.

If you have questions, please make an appointment via Zoom (215E) to discuss. I am happy to meet with you via Zoom at a mutually convenient time.

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

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

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
Please talk with Dr. Middlebrook the first week of the semester if you are requesting disability services.

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.*

Course Hour Justification. Note: PSY 4325 “Forensic Psychology” (3 credits) is designed to introduce students to the field of forensic psychology by covering psychological concepts, principles, and skills with the individuals and practices involved in the criminal justice system. The course typically meets 150 minutes a week in two 75-minute segments or three 50-minute segments for 15 weeks, and also meets for a 2.5-hour final examination period. Students have significant weekly reading assignments, are expected to take regular tests, and a final examination. These activities average at a minimum 6 hours of work each week to prepare outside of classroom hours.

Forensic Psychology
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Sylvia Middlebrook, Ph.D., BCBA-D; office 215E, McKibben Bldg.
PSY 480.01 MW 2:30 – 3:45
Robert T McKibben Education Building: Room 258

*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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<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> Week of 08/25/2020</td>
<td>Welcome to Forensic Psychology! Syllabus Review; Introductions of Class, and Intro. to Forensic Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> Week of 09/01/2020</td>
<td>Monday 01/20/2020: MLK Holiday! Wednesday, 01/22/2020: ***Syllabus Quiz Ch. 1 History &amp; Current Issues in Forensic Psychology</td>
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*Test dates are tentative.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
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</table>
| 3      | Week of 09/08/2020 | Ch. 2 Roles & Responsibilities of Forensic Psychologists  
Ch. 3 Aggression & Violent Crime |
| 4      | Week of 09/15/2020 | Ch. 11 Capacity and Incapacity  
Exam 1: Chapters 1 – 3 + Ch. 11 (tentative) |
| 5      | Week of 09/22/2020 | Ch. 5 Mass Murderers & Serial Killers |
| 6      | Week of 09/29/2020 | Ch. 5 Mass Murderers & Serial Killers (continued) |
| 7      | Week of 10/06/2020 | Ch. 6 The Psychology of Terrorism, Cults, & Extremism |
| 8      | Week of 10/13/2020 | Ch. 7 Law Enforcement & Police Psychology |
| 9      | Week of 10/20/2020 | *Happy Spring Break!* |
| 10     | Week of 10/27/2020 | Ch. 8 Investigations  
Exam 2: Chs. 5, 6, 7, & 8 (tentative) |
| 11     | Week of 11/03/2020 | Ch. 9 Eyewitness Testimony & Accuracy  
Ch. 10 Psychology of False Confessions |
| 12     | Week of 11/10/2020 | Ch. 10 Psychology of False Confessions (continued)  
Ch. 12 Juries & the Courtroom |
| 13     | Week of 11/17/2020 | Ch. 13 Repressed Memories & Novel Syndrome  
Ch. 14 Forensic Psychology & the Workplace  
EXAM 3: Chapters 9, 10, 12, 13 (tentative) |
| 14     | Week of 11/24/2020 | Thanksgiving! |
| 15     | Week of 12/01/2020 | Ch. 15 Forensic Psychology Applied to Children & Families  
Ch. 16 Treatment & Rehabilitation in Forensic Psychology  
Wrap-up; Projects, Honors, etc. |
| 16     | Week of 12/08/2020 | Ch. 16 Treatment & Rehabilitation in Forensic Psychology  
Wrap-up; Projects, Honors, etc. |
| 17     | 05/04/2020 | Final Exam: |

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