

**Forensic Psychology  
Rutgers University  
Fall semester 2019**

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Undergraduate teaching assistants - please contact based on first letter of last name:

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### **Materials Required**

You will need the following materials for this course:

1. Wrightsman's Psychology and the Legal System, 9th Edition (8th edition acceptable)  
by Edie Greene and Kirk Heilbrun  
SBN-13: 978-1337570879  
ISBN-10: 1337570877
2. (for several assignments) Minds on Trial: Great Cases in Law and Psychology by Charles Patrick Ewing and Joseph T. McCann  
ISBN-13: 978-0195181760  
ISBN-10: 9780195181760  
Download this book FREE using your Rutgers NetID: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/lib/rutgers-ebooks/detail.action?docID=272302>
3. iclicker: ANY  
iclicker 2 (ISBN 1429280476) or iclicker+ (ISBN 149860305X), or phone-based clicker.  
The iclicker will allow you to respond to questions and give yes/no opinions class, making the class more interactive. There will be 5-10 questions per class.

Readings and/or videos will be assigned every week. All content, including additional readings and videos, will appear on quizzes and exams.

### **Prerequisites**

General Psychology, 830:101 or equivalent

## Course description

This course will explore the interface of psychology and the law, with an emphasis on forensic psychology. Forensic psychologists help courts make informed decisions about cases when some aspect of psychology is involved. Landmark legal cases that pertain to psychology will be discussed. Students will explore the various options for careers in the field of forensic psychology. Specific topics covered include police psychology, eyewitness and expert testimony, jury selection, psychopathy, repressed memories, profiling, victimless crimes, the insanity defense, lie detection, and custody evaluations.

Course objectives:

- Understand what forensic psychologists do
- Identify the major areas of overlap between psychology and the law
- Know the leading terms, concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in the field of forensic psychology
- Identify the landmark legal cases that shaped the field of forensic psychology
- Explore the various career options in the field of forensic psychology, and the education and training required
- Understand methods of forensic assessment of criminals, victims, families
- Comprehend ethical principles and dilemmas that arise in areas that involve law and psychology
- Apply course material to real life experiences, both in one's own life and in a broader context
- Understand how media depictions of forensic psychology are similar to and differ from actual practice

## Course Schedule

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE: follow announcements in class and on Canvas for updates

*By continuing your enrollment in the course, you are accepting the terms of this syllabus. Changes to the syllabus announced in class and/or posted to Canvas always take precedence over the information listed below.*

Exam dates:

Monday, 10/14 - regular class time

Wednesday, 11/13 - regular class time

Wednesday, 12/18 - final exam, 9-11 am

Dates	Topic	Reading and assignments (all chapters from Wrightsman's Psychology and the Legal System)
Week 1 9/6	Introduction, syllabus review	

	Forensic Psychology and the Media	
Week 2 9/9, 9/11  Reminder: 9/10 is the last day to drop without a "W"!	Psychology and the Law, introduction Review of the legal system  Psychology of Crime: Theories of crime	Chapter 3
Week 3 9/16, 9/18  9/16 - iclickers start to count	Psychology of Crime  Psychopathy, Columbine	Chapter 3
Week 4 9/23, 9/25	Evaluating Criminal Suspects	Chapter 7
Week 5 9/30, 10/2	Chris Watts and other high profile cases	Chapter 7
Week 6 10/7, 10/9	Catch up and review	
Week 7 10/14, 10/16	<b>EXAM #1 - OCTOBER 14</b> Quizzes due  Criminal profiling Signs of lying	
Week 8 10/21, 10/23	Eyewitnesses to Crimes and Accidents  Memory distortion	Chapter 5
Week 9 10/20, 10/30	Forensic evidence and DNA	
Week 10 11/4, 11/6	Psychology of Victims of Crime and Violence	Chapter 6
Week 11 11/11, 11/13	11/11 - Victims of Crime cont'  <b>EXAM #2 - NOVEMBER 13</b>	Chapter 6

	Quizzes due	
Week 12 11/18, 11/20	Competence and Insanity  Andrea Yates	Chapter 10
Week 13 11/25  11/27 - NO CLASS (change of designation day)	Juvenile Justice	
Week 14 12/2, 12/4	Forensic Assessment in Civil Cases Civil commitment, custody evaluations	
Final exam week -	Final Exam - Wednesday, December 18th 9-11 a.m.  Quizzes due	

Note that some material is of a sensitive and/or disturbing nature. If you have concerns, please let me know.

### Course Policies

*Disruptive behavior:* Multitasking is not an effective way to learn. Talking, texting, playing computer games, taking selfies, loud gum chewing, etc. are activities that do not belong in the learning environment of a classroom and are distracting to those around you. Students who continually disrupt in this manner will be asked to leave class, and/or will have points deducted from their grade. Turn cell phone ringers off when class begins.

*Recording class:* Audio or video recording of any part of lecture is not permitted without expressed permission from the instructor.

*Missed class:* If you miss a class, make arrangements to get missed notes from a classmate and check the Powerpoints or any other materials posted from the class. It is a good idea to find one or two “buddies” to help you if you are absent. Please do not email us asking what you have missed.

*Missed exams:* You may only miss an exam for a **documented** reason (in writing), and must make your request before the exam. Note that make-up exams may consist entirely of essays questions. Contact our TA, Maribel Plasencia, to arrange a make-up exam.

All issues concerning quizzes, exams, clickers, and attendance should be addressed to Maribel, our TA. You can cc: me if you'd like. Issues concerning course content should be addressed to me.

Attendance begins to count Monday, 9/16 (prior to this is practice).

### Grading

The grading breakdown will be as follows:

Exam 1 – 25%  
Exam 2 – 30%  
Final exam – 30%  
Quizzes: 10%  
Attendance: 5%

The following grading scale will be used:

90-100% = A  
85-89% = B+  
80-84% = B  
75-79% = C+  
70-74% = C  
60-69% = D  
below 60% = F

Note that grades will NOT be rounded up under any circumstances. An 89.6 is a B+, not an A. There will also be no changing of grades for any reason other than a calculation error - student requests for grade changes due to scholarships, probation, etc. will not be honored under any circumstances in fairness to all students.

### Exams

Anything mentioned in lecture is fair game. If you do not come to class, aside from losing attendance points and missing quizzes, you are putting yourself at a significant disadvantage. Exams will be in class and closed book. You may be tested on material in the book and not covered in lecture. If so, I will let you know in a review sheet before the exam.

### Class participation iclicker

Class participation is worth 5% of your grade and will be assessed via iclicker (not including in-class quizzes). You may use iclicker2 or iclicker+ or any of the cloud-based clickers. Turning Point clickers will not work.

I will be asking, on average, 5-10 questions per class. You must respond to at least 75% of the questions that class session to get credit. **Your lowest three participation scores will be dropped.** This will compensate for any technical problems, such as leaving your clicker at home, batteries dying, improper use, etc.

I will upload iclicker results to Canvas following each class. It is your responsibility to make sure your clicker is working properly.

*Please note:* If you are found using more than one clicker during class, all who are involved will receive an F for the participation portion of their grade. If this is a repeated offense, you will get an F for the course.

### Extra Credit

You will be able to earn extra credit towards your final grade by visiting a courthouse or prison, observing proceedings, and submitting a journal entry about your experience. More details will be provided.

There may also be extra credit opportunities offered during class. These cannot be made up.

Note that extra credit can bump you to the next grade if you are close to the border. However, you will not be able to bridge a substantial gap by extra credit.

### Academic Integrity

The consequences of scholastic dishonesty are very serious. Rutgers' academic integrity policy is at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>. Please familiarize yourself with the policy.

Academic integrity means, among other things:

- Develop and write all of your own assignments.
- Show in detail where the materials you use in your papers come from. Create citations whether you are paraphrasing authors or quoting them directly. Be sure always to show source and page number within the assignment and include a bibliography in the back.
- Do not fabricate information or citations in your work.
- Do not facilitate academic dishonesty for another student by allowing your own work to be submitted by others.

If you are in doubt about any issue related to plagiarism or scholastic dishonesty, please contact me.

### Rutgers Academic Support Services

Rutgers has a variety of resources for academic support. For more information, check <http://www.rutgers.edu/academics/academic-support>

Rutgers has Learning Centers on each campus where any student can obtain tutoring and other help. For information, check <http://lrc.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers also has a Writing Center where students can obtain help with writing skills and assignments. Learn more here: <http://wp.rutgers.edu/tutoring/writingcenters>

### Rutgers Student Accommodations

The Rutgers Office of Disability Services evaluates students and provides documentation about necessary accommodations. Students who need accommodations in class must do so through the Rutgers Disabilities Services Office. See <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students> for details.

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations can do so here:  
<http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/request.html>

If you need special accommodations, let me know early in the semester. If you need extra time on exams, you must provide me with a Letter of Accommodation from the disability office to sign at least one week prior to the first exam.

### Counseling

College can be an overwhelming time. If you find yourself having a difficult time coping, please refer to <http://rhscaps.rutgers.edu/> where you can see an overview of support services available at Rutgers.

### Communication

As noted above, for questions about attendance, quizzes, or exams, please contact Laura. You may also post on a general chat to ask questions about the course, policies, etc., and ask clarification questions that other students could benefit from. For content questions, contact me.

Before asking a question, read the syllabus thoroughly and look on our course site to see if your question was answered. When emailing, it is helpful to let me or Laura know what steps you took to find the answer.

When contacting us, always identify that you are in Forensic Psychology and sign with your full name.

### Dropping the course

In order to withdraw from a course, it is not sufficient to stop coming to class or taking exams. In accord with university policy, students wishing to withdraw from a course must do so formally through the Registrar's office. It is the student's responsibility to complete all forms. If this is not done, the instructor must assign a grade of F at the end of the semester.

### Diversity

*Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, age, or any other category covered by law in its admission, programs, activities, or employment matters. The Department of Psychology at Rutgers, New Brunswick is committed to promoting tolerance and respect for differences in the classroom and across campus. Students enrolled in this course are expected and required to treat all students with respect both inside and outside of the classroom.*

### Studying

Here are some tips to improve your study skills and increase your chances of doing well in the course.

- Form study and homework groups. Discussing material with others is a great way to aid retention.

- Distributed practice: don't cram. The more you space out your studying over a period of time, the more likely you'll be to remember the material.
- Self-testing and evaluation - frequent testing is one of the best ways to learn and retain information. Make sure to take all quizzes.
- Study actively. Make flash cards, write definitions, talk it out.
- Take frequent breaks when studying. People tend to remember the beginning and end of a study session best. Marathon sessions are usually exhausting and hamper long-term recall.
- SLEEP! Make sure to get adequate rest.
- Ask for help early in the semester when there is still enough time to address issues.

## Student Wellness Services

### Just In Case Web App

<http://codu.co/cee05e>

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

### Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / [www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/](http://www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/)

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

### Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / [www.vpva.rutgers.edu/](http://www.vpva.rutgers.edu/)

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

### Disability Services

(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

### Scarlet Listeners

(732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.



