PSY 420/520 – Psychology & Law
Winter 2012
CRN: 25256/25270 (4 credits)
Lecture: MW 10:00-11:20
Location: 142 Straub
Syllabus

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OVERVIEW
This course is devoted to an exploration of the intersection of social science and the law. We will discuss issues of identity (e.g., eyewitness identification, interrogation, lie detection, and profiling), state of mind (competency, insanity, and other legal defenses based on the defendant’s state of mind), legal process (e.g., jury decision-making), social policy (e.g., legal sanctions, capital punishment, discrimination), and the use of social science methods in legal contexts. In each of these areas, we will focus on understanding the practical problems that have been addressed by the law and how social science knowledge and methodology can be used to illuminate these issues. Students will be provided with exercises designed to help them develop basic skills in understanding case law and social science research.

OBJECTIVES
By the end of the course, students should have a broad familiarity with a variety of legal issues and the ways in which social science research and methodology have been applied to address these issues. They should understand the differences in the ways that jurists and social scientists approach issues and be able to perform simple legal and scientific analyses.

MATERIALS
- Additional Readings on Blackboard (see syllabus)
# SYLLABUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>Law &amp; Legal Systems</td>
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   - **Required Reading**  
     - Greene & Heilbrun, Chapter 1  
     - Comparative Legal Systems  
     - Outline of the US Legal System: Introduction pp 4-17  
   - **Additional Reading**  
     - Outline of the US Legal System (Remainder)  

| 1/11 | Social Science and Law: Confluence & Conflict |  
   - **Required Reading**  
     - Greene & Heilbrun, Chapter 2  
     - US Constitution Bill of Rights  
   - **Additional Reading**  
     - US Constitution  

**Actions and Actors: What happened and Who Did It?**

| 1/16 | Martin Luther King Day – No Class |  

| 1/18 | Memory & Eyewitness Testimony |  
   - **Required Reading**  

| 1/23 | Memory & Eyewitness Testimony |  
   - **Required Reading**  
     - Greene & Heilbrun, Chapter 5  
     - APA Brief in *Perry v New Hampshire* (2011)  
   - **Additional Reading**  

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**Additional Reading**

| 1/27 | Online Quiz: Applied Scientific Research Methods |

| 1/30 | Law of Evidence, Reading Cases, & Finding the Law |

**Required Reading**
- Selective Summary of Evidence Law  
- Guide to Finding the Law  
- *People v Lee* 96 N.Y.2d 157 |

| 2/1  | Mind of a Murderer |

| 2/6  | Criminal Personality Profiling |

**Required Reading**
- Greene & Heilbrun, Chapter 3 & 140-147  

**Additional Reading**
### Profiling, Stops, Searches, Seizures & the Fourth Amendment

**Required Reading**

**Additional Reading**
- 4th Amendment Law

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### Online Quiz: Reading Cases and Evidence Law

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### Interrogation & Confessions

**Required Reading**
- Greene & Heilbrun, 148-169

**Additional Reading**

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### Lie Detection

**Required Reading**

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###States of Mind: Intent, Responsibility, Competence, and Insanity

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### Mens Rea & Legal Defenses

**Required Reading**
- *R. v. Dudley & Stephens* (1884) 14 QBD 273

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### Online Quiz: Actions & Actors
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Required Readings</th>
<th>Additional Reading</th>
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<tr>
<td>2/27</td>
<td>Competence and Insanity</td>
<td><strong>Required Readings</strong></td>
<td><strong>Additional Reading</strong></td>
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<td>2/29</td>
<td>Insanity Defense</td>
<td><strong>Legal Procedure and Social Policy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3/5</td>
<td>Legal Decision-Making</td>
<td><strong>Required Reading</strong></td>
<td><strong>Required Reading</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3/7</td>
<td>Jury Trials, Jury Decision-Making and the Sixth &amp; Seventh Amendments</td>
<td><strong>Required Reading</strong></td>
<td><strong>Additional Reading</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3/12</td>
<td>Discrimination &amp; the 14th Amendment: Due Process &amp; Equal Protection of the Law</td>
<td><strong>Required Reading</strong></td>
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### Additional Reading


### 3/14

**Social Science in Law: Death Penalty; Term Papers Due**

**Required Reading**

- Greene & Heilbrun, Chapters 14 & 15
- *Furman v GA* (1972) 408 US 238, 92 S.Ct. 2726, 33 L.Ed.2d 3

### 3/23

**Final Examination 10:15**
CLASS REQUIREMENTS

There will be four on-line quizzes and a comprehensive final examination. Each quiz will be devoted to a particular subject matter and will be designed to test declarative knowledge of the course material and/or particular skills as identified on the syllabus. The final examination will be composed of a multiple choice section designed to test declarative knowledge and a short essay section designed to test your ability to apply your knowledge by analyzing cases and research and communicating your analysis clearly.

UNDERGRADUATE CLASS REQUIREMENTS

Depending on the grade you would like to receive, you may choose one of two different options to complete the requirements for this course.

P or C Only

If you desire to receive only a “C” or “Pass” in this course, your only requirement is to demonstrate your understanding of the course content by receiving a weighted average score of 70% or better on the examinations. If you select this option, each quiz will be worth 15% of your final grade and the Final Examination will be worth 40% of your final grade. If you desire to receive only a “C” or “Pass” in this course, you do not need to complete the term project.

B- or Better

If you desire to receive a grade higher than a “C”, you must complete the quizzes and final examination and complete the term project. If you select this option, each quiz will be worth 10% of your final grade. The Final Examination will be worth 30% of your final grade. The project will be worth 30% of your final grade. To obtain a “B”, your weighted average score on the examinations and project must be 80% or better. To obtain an “A”, your weighted average score on the examinations and project must be 90% or better. If your weighted average score is over 75% but less than 80%, you will receive a “B-”. If your weighted average score is over 70% but less than 76%, you will receive a “C”.

Term Project

Overview. If you select this option, you will be asked to engage in a mock “evidentiary hearing” for a case. At the hearing, two students will take a position arguing in favor of introducing specific psychological evidence in the case and two students will take a position arguing against introducing that evidence. Within each group of two (you can pick your own teammates if you wish), one student in each group will take the role of the “lawyer” and be in charge of researching and presenting the relevant legal issues. The other student will take the role of the “expert” and be charged with researching and presenting the relevant psychological issues. Each student will be asked to summarize his/her work in a 5-page paper. At the mock hearing, the
lawyer will argue for or against introducing the expert testimony and will ask the expert questions that will elucidate the relevant scientific issues.

**Paper.** Papers will be developed in three steps:

1) **Quasi-final draft.** You must finish a draft of the paper by 2/15. At this point, the paper should be complete, grammatical, and well written. It should be ready for submission. On this date, upload your paper to Blackboard using the **** utility, provide a copy to the “opposition,” and send a copy of the paper to your readers – your teammate and anyone else you wish. Give your readers the “Suggestions for Writing” below and ask them to help you edit your paper and give you their comments by 2/22.

2) **Semi-final draft.** Incorporate your readers’ comments as needed into your paper. If you have any questions/concerns ask the instructor or teaching assistant. Upload this draft to Blackboard, and hand in a hardcopy on 2/29 at the beginning of class. The instructional staff will read this draft. Papers should be printed on 8 ½” X 11” sheets of paper with 1” margins using 12 point Times New Roman font.

3) **Final draft.** You will receive comments from the instructor and/or teaching assistant on the day of your mock hearing. Incorporate these comments into your final draft. Upload this version to Blackboard by 3/16 at 2400. Each paper will be evaluated individually using the grading scale below.

**Paper Grading Criteria**

Papers will be evaluated on three dimensions:

**Writing.** The writing should be grammatical, using properly spelled words in a clear, concise, and precise manner.

**Content.** Each issue should be covered completely using all of the appropriate references available in the course material and any other materials you obtain. All materials that you use should be properly and consistently cited using APA, ALA, or Law Review styles.

**Analysis.** Analyses should be based on clearly stated assumptions and/or cited facts. Each step in each argument should be clearly based on previously stated assumptions or cited facts or be a logical deduction from the assumptions or facts previously stated in the paper.

Each dimension will be scored on the 5-point scale below and the values summed to produce a total score for the paper.

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<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Excellent: there may be a few minor faults but there are no substantial problems that need to be corrected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Very good: there are multiple minor faults or a substantial problem but no major faults that need to be corrected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Good: there are many minor faults or more than one substantial problem or a</td>
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major fault, but no fundamental errors

2 Needs improvement: there are many major problems or a fundamental error that need to be corrected

1 Poor: there are a large number of serious problems; a major rewrite of the paper would be necessary

By combining the scores on each dimension, total paper scores will be obtained on a 15-point scale:

| 15 – A | 10 – B- | 5 – D |
| 14 – A | 9 – C+  | 4 – D |
| 13 – A- | 8 – C  | 3 – F |
| 12 – B+ | 7 – C- | 2 – F |
| 11 – B | 6 – D  | 1 – F |

Oral Presentation

Mock hearings will be scheduled during the week of 3/5-3/9. Mock hearings for three four-person groups will be scheduled during the same 90-minute session. Each four-person group (2 in favor, 2 opposed to introducing the scientific evidence) will be allocated 30 minutes. During the first 10-minute period, the “lawyer” and “expert” in favor of introducing the evidence will present their case. The “lawyer” will ask the “expert” questions designed to satisfy the requirements of the rules of evidence and any relevant law. During this period, the presenters may be asked questions by the instructional staff (acting in the role of the court). During the following 5-minute period, the members of the other four-person groups in attendance will ask questions. After this period, the “lawyer” and “expert” opposing the introduction of the evidence will present their case using the same procedures.

Oral Presentation Grading Criteria

Content. For the “lawyer,” each critical legal issue should be covered by an appropriate question. For the “expert,” the scientific basis for the introduction of the testimony should be provided. Both “lawyers” and “experts” should be able to answer questions about their issues.

Presentation & Organization. Questions and answers to all questions should be clear and concise. The entire presentation should be organized to address the relevant issues in a logical order.

Each dimension will be evaluated using the 5-point scale above.
Graduate Class Requirements

Graduate students will be expected to take the quizzes and final examination and to complete a term paper on a topic in psychology and law. Before beginning your paper, be sure to have your topic approved by the instructor.