

**Professor:** Brian Cahill, PhD

**Department:** Psychology

**Office:** 257 Psy

**Office Hours:** Wednesdays 2-3 or by appointment

**Office Phone:** 352-273-2175

**Email:** [brian.cahill@ufl.edu](mailto:brian.cahill@ufl.edu)

**Graduate Teaching Assistants:**

**Teaching Assistants: Graduate TAs:** Joy Losee and Elsa Jiang

**Office:** Virtual Office hours only

**Office Hours:** Losee Monday 9-10am or by appoint.; Jiang Thursday 2-3pm or by appointment

**Email:** Losee: [jl01745@ufl.edu](mailto:jl01745@ufl.edu) and Jiang: [congjiaojiang@ufl.edu](mailto:congjiaojiang@ufl.edu)

*Please allow 48 hours for a response. Questions posted over the weekend may not receive a response until the beginning of the following week.*

***"The struggle for justice doesn't end with me. This struggle is for all the Troy Davis's who came before me and all the ones who will come after me. I'm in good spirits and I'm prayerful and at peace." Troy Davis most likely an innocent man who was executed by the State of Georgia on Sept 21, 2011 at 11:00 PM.***

### **Course Description:**

Legal Psychology is the study of the interaction between the individual and the legal system. This course will cover the major topics in the field, including eyewitness identification, investigative interviewing, interrogations, jury selection, the insanity defense, and punishment. Throughout the course, we will examine psychological research that investigates issues related to law and the legal process. At the end of the course, you will have a better understanding of how the legal system can be informed by psychological research, and how psychological research can be reactive to legal issues. Students should be prepared to think critically about each topic and to actively participate in class discussions; I enjoy discussions, so expect them in most of the modules! Successful completion of this course requires participation in class activities, completion of all assignments, and timely reading of assigned materials.

### **Course Goals:**

Upon completion of this course, students will:

1. Have a better understanding of a variety of contemporary issues in the legal system.
2. Have a basic understanding of research methods in the study of psychology and law.
3. Understand how psychological research can inform legal policies and procedures.

## **Recommended Text, Canvas, and Materials:**

**Text:** Castanzo & Krauss (2015). *Forensic and Legal Psychology* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Worth Publishers, NY, NY.

**Canvas:** If you aren't already comfortable with the Canvas platform ( <http://elearning.ufl.edu/>; click "Log in to e-Learning"), I highly suggest that you spend some time exploring its various components. It's our everything portal; the repository for **all** of the resources you'll need to make your way through the course. Announcements will be made periodically about class issues (such as when grades are posted). These will be visible on Canvas. Students are responsible for all announcements made there. Thus you must check Canvas on a daily basis so you don't miss any course announcement.

**Multimedia:** Netflix: You will need to obtain a Netflix account or have reliable access to one as you will be required to watch the first season of the documentary series titled "[Making a Murderer](#)" during the first 2 weeks of the course. The series consists of 20, one-hour episodes and covers the exoneration of Steven Avery and the subsequent prosecution of him for a murder he is accused of committing shortly after being exonerated. This documentary is shocking to say the least and provides a sad but needed look into what we consider to be a fair and impartial justice system. We will reference this series throughout class as it provides an invaluable look into the current issues facing our legal system. Also, you will have several discussion posts related to various episodes in season one and thus successful completion of these posts is dependent upon you watching this series.

## **Additional Resources:**

[The Innocent Man: Murder and Injustice in a Small Town](#) by John Grisham

[The Wrong Guys: Murder, False Confessions, and the Norfolk Four](#) by Tom Wells and Richard Leo

[Witness for the Defense: The Accused, the Eyewitness and the Expert Who Puts Memory on Trial](#) by Elizabeth Loftus and Katherine Ketcham

[Serial Podcast, Season 1](#): This podcast series investigated the 1999 murder of Hae Min Lee and is wickedly addicting!

[Murder on a Sunday Morning](#): Is an Oscar winning documentary that covers the murder trial of a young black man in Florida. If you love this class you will love this movie!

I have so many more recommendations so if you get through all of these and want more just let me know!

## **Course Structure:**

**Modules:** To make the class easier for you I have standardized the opening and due dates of all modules and assignments throughout the course. Most modules will be 1 week long (see class schedule for exceptions). Also most modules will begin on Monday at 12am and will end the following Sunday at 11:59pm. Most Quizzes and Activities will be due on Sunday at 11:59pm (see class schedule for exceptions), while discussion posts will have 2 due dates.

Your initial discussion post will be due on 3 days prior to the final post at 11:59pm (usually on a Thursday) and your response to a fellow student's discussion post will be due on Sunday at 11:59pm. The main exceptions to this pattern will be modules 1, 7, 12, and 13. Module 1 is two-weeks long to allow students to add the class and to allow you ample time to watch the Netflix documentary. Module 7 is altered because of Spring Break. And modules 12 and 13 are combined into a week and a half. Make sure you read the class schedule very carefully and mark all due dates in your calendar. **I tried to keep everything standardized as much as possible but because of Spring Break and Reading Days I was unable to keep it perfect. Keep this in mind particularly for the due dates for Modules 12 and 13 as they are different.**

**Exams:** Each exam will consist of 45 multiple-choice questions and 1 open ended question. Each multiple-choice will be worth 2 points and the open ended question will be worth 10 points for a total of 100 points for each exam. There will be 4 exams in all and each exam will be non-cumulative. Exam 1 will cover chapters 1, 2, and 3; Exam 2 will cover chapters 4, 5, and 6; Exam 3 will cover chapters 7, 9, and 11; and Exam 4 will cover chapters 13, 14, and 17. Each exam will be taken using ProctorU and remember you will NOT be allowed to use your book or notes. To make sure you have ample time to watch all of the lectures and prepare for the exams your exams will be given the week after the final module is covered for each exam. For example, Exam 1 covers modules 2 – 4 so the exam will be on the Monday of Module 5. This will be the same for all exams except for Exam 4 which will be on the Monday of examination week. You will be given 1 hour and 15 minutes to complete each exam. Your lowest exam score will be dropped, so 3 exams x 100 = 300 points total.

**Quizzes:** Three days before the end of most modules (i.e., Sunday at 11:59pm) I'll open up a 10-question **multiple-choice** quiz on Canvas. They'll be timed, such that you won't be able to look up answers quickly enough without knowing exactly where to look, so preparation's important. These quizzes are non-cumulative, thus they will focus on the current material being covered that week/module. Also, the questions will be randomly selected from a large question pool so each person's quiz will differ. Quizzes for each module will be due at the end of each module/week, which is usually a Sunday, at 11:59pm. There will be 12 quizzes in total, one for each of the modules 2 -13, each worth 10 points (1 point per question). Your lowest quiz score will be dropped, so 11 quizzes x (10 questions x 1 points each) = 110 points total.

**Discussion Posts:** Starting with module 1 we will have a discussion post about every other module with the total number of posts being 8. Your posts will consist of an initial post which will entail you addressing the topic posed by me as well as a follow up response to one of your fellow students' posts. The purpose of these posts is for you to think critically about a topic and share your thoughts with your fellow students. The posts will likely change format from one to the next, but I will provide you with a detailed rubric for each post so you will have a clear understanding of what I am looking for in that particular post. I will open the post at the beginning of each module as well as post the rubric. Remember I will open the discussion post at the beginning of each module (i.e., Monday at 12am) and your initial discussion post will be due on 3 days prior to the end of the module at 11:59pm and your response to a fellow student's discussion post will be due on Sunday (usually) at 11:59pm. The reason behind having 2 due dates for this assignment is to make sure that you give everyone ample time to read your post and create a thoughtful response. Hopefully this will allow for some really great discussions!!! To earn your full points, make sure you fully answer/address each component in the initial post and provide a thoughtful response to a fellow student's post. As for length your initial post should be no less than 200 and no more than 500 words, with your follow up being no less than 100 words.

Each post will be worth a maximum of 10 points, so with 7 posts x 10 points = 70 points total. Your lowest discussion grade will be dropped.

**Activities:** The last part of your grade is comprised of completing 3 activities. These activities are designed to be fun, interactive, and will help reinforce material we cover in that particular module. The first activity will be in Module 1 and will be a True/False quiz that will assess your knowledge of current legal issues. After you take the Legal Knowledge quiz you will discuss your reaction to your performance in a discussion post and it is this discussion post that is graded. The second activity will be in Module 6 and will consist of you categorizing killers into the different types based on their criminal acts and motivations. The third activity will be in Module 12 and will consist of finding the correct words to fill in the blanks within a paragraph of text. More details about each of these will be provided at the beginning of their respective modules. Activities will be available at the beginning of the module and will be due at the end of that module (i.e., Sunday at 11:59pm). Each activity will be worth 16 points for a total of 48 points.

### Grading Procedure:

Assessment	Total Points	Percentage of Final Grade
Exams	300	57%
Quizzes	110	21%
Discussion Posts	70	13%
Activities	48	9%

Your final grade will include 11 quizzes, 7 discussion posts, and 3 activities. **The following scale will be used to determine final grades, I will not round up final grades under any circumstances:**

A	=	93 – 100%			
A-	=	90 – 92%	C-	=	70 – 72%
B+	=	87 – 89%	D+	=	67 – 69%
B	=	83 - 86 %	D	=	63- 66%
B-	=	80 - 82 %	D-	=	60 – 62%
C+	=	77 - 79 %	E	=	0 – 59%
C	=	73 – 76%			

At any time, you may calculate your grade by adding up the number of points earned, dividing that sum by the number of points attempted, and multiplying the result by 100. Information about UF’s current grading policies may be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

### Our Class Policies

#### Late Work and Make ups:

An example: You have been very busy all week so you keep putting off taking that online quiz for your favorite class Legal Psychology. It is finally time for you to take the quiz so you put on your most comfortable Snuggie, crawl into your memory foam bed and turn on your notebook to take the quiz and then you say, “Son of a &^%\*&!” because your internet goes out so you have no way of accessing the quiz now. You look at the clock and now there is only 20 minutes before the deadline so you don’t even have time go to a local Starbucks to access the internet. So you

email me panicked, telling me about this horrible situation and plead for me to allow you to take the quiz late. Well unfortunately, unlike Lloyd Christmas who famously said “So you're telling me there's a chance. YEAH!”, you have NO chance of earning points for late work so please make sure you turn your assignments in on time. So please, please, please, please be responsible and make sure you do not wait until the last minute to do any of your graded assignments. Make-ups are not allowed under any circumstances, as I already allow you to drop your lowest quiz and discussion grades in case of any emergencies. Of note, if the Canvas website experiences course wide technical difficulties deadlines will be adjusted to allow for completion of assignments. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

**University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities:** Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the [Dean of Students Office](#). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

**U Matter, We Care:** Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

**University Policy on Academic Misconduct:** Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. *“Cheating is defined in the UF Handbook, and it is the student’s responsibility to be familiar with its many forms (including plagiarism). If a student is caught cheating, the first offense will result in a zero for that exam or assignment and a record of the event will be placed in a temporary file with the Office of Student Affairs. The second offense will result in an “E” for the course, and the student will go before the Honor Court. As a result of completing registration at UF, every student has agreed to the following statement: “I understand that UF expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University.”* Please make sure you understand the [UF Student Honor Code](#).

### **I Need Help!!!**

Ok, so maybe you are not a very tech savvy person or Canvas is giving you some strange error message and when you google it you still can’t fix it. Don’t panic we are here to help 24/7! For technical issues like this you should contact the UF Computing Help Desk at:

- [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu)
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2

[Submit a question via the Helpdesk website](#) If they are still of no help (which from my experience they are very helpful) then you should contact me Dr. Brian Cahill: [brian.cahill@ufl.edu](mailto:brian.cahill@ufl.edu) or the teaching assistant you have been assigned to using your last name (see the top of the syllabus for their contact info). Aside from technical help my teaching assistants and myself are here to help you however we can with course related questions. We love our jobs and our students very much so please don't be afraid to ask for help! We are good at what we do and will do whatever we can to help you succeed in this course. However, when you email us please keep in mind a couple of things and I know this will come off as condescending and I am sorry but you would put this in your syllabus if you received the kinds of inappropriate emails I receive from students on a regular basis: 1) Your emails should be formal when you write to us, we are not your brother/sister, bff, or bae so please address us properly using appropriate terms (e.g., Dr. Cahill, Professor Cahill), 2) We have hundreds of students in multiple classes so please give us your full name, what class you are in, and which section in every email you write to us, and 3) Please spell check your email and use proper grammar so we can understand your question/issue.

### Course Evaluations:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing [GatorRater online evaluations](#). Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students on the [GatorRater Public Results page](#).

### SOP 4842 Legal Psychology Spring 2019 \*\*Course Schedule\*\*

Module/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignments (all Assignments Due at 11:59pm)
1 (1/7 – 1/20)	Course Introduction Making a Murderer	Making a Murderer	<b>Due: 1/13 Legal Knowledge Activity and Post</b> <b>Due: Initial Discussion Post 1/17; Response Post 1/20</b> <b>Due: Syllabus Quiz 1/20</b>
2 (1/22- 1/27)	Psychology and Law: A Cautious Alliance	Chapter 1	<b>Due: Quiz 1/27</b>
3 (1/28- 2/3)	Interrogations and Confessions	Chapter 2	<b>Due: Initial Discussion Post 1/31; Response Post 2/3</b> <b>Due: Quiz 2/3</b>
4 (2/4-2/10)	Lie Detection	Chapter 3	<b>Due: Quiz 2/10</b>
5 (2/11- 2/17)	The Psychology of Forensic Identification	Chapter 4	<b>Exam 1: Chapters 1, 2, and 3. Take between 12am and 11:59pm on 2/11.</b> <b>Due: Initial Discussion Post 2/14; Response Post 2/17</b> <b>Due: Quiz 2/17</b>
6 (2/18- 2/24)	Criminal Profiling and Psychological Autopsies	Chapter 5	<b>Due: 2/24 Serial Killer Activity</b> <b>Due: Quiz 2/24</b>
7 (2/25- 3/17)	Jury Selection	Chapter 6	<b>Due: Initial Discussion Post 3/14; Response Post 3/17</b> <b>Due: Quiz 3/17</b>

8 (3/18-3/24)	Eyewitness Identification and Testimony	Chapter 7	<b>Exam 2: Chapters 4, 5, and 6. Take between 12am and 11:59pm on 3/18. Due: Initial Discussion Post 3/21; Response Post 3/24 Due: Quiz 3/24</b>
9 (3/25 - 3/31)	The Insanity Defense	Chapter 9	<b>Due: Quiz 3/31</b>
10 (4/1- 4/7)	Interviewing Children and Memories of Sexual Abuse	Chapter 11	<b>Due: Initial Discussion Post 4/4; Response Post 4/7 Due: Quiz 4/7</b>
11 (4/8-4/14)	Juries and Judges as Decision Makers	Chapter 13	<b>Exam 3: Chapters 7, 9, and 11. Take between 12am and 11:59pm on 4/8. Due: Initial Discussion Post 4/11; Response Post 4/14 Due: Quiz 4/14</b>
12 (4/15-4/24)	Predicting Violent Behavior	Chapter 14	<b>Due: Initial Discussion Post 4/18; Response Post 4/21 Due: Risk Assessments Concept Activity 4/24 Due: Quiz 4/24 This week has assignments due on different days than usual so be careful!!!!</b>
13 (4/15-4/24)	The Death Penalty	Chapter 17	<b>Due: Quiz 4/24 This week has assignments due on different days than usual so be careful!!!! Exam 4: Chapters 13, 14, and 17. Take between 12am and 11:59pm on 4/29</b>

**\*\*This syllabus is tentative and subject to change\*\***