

SYLLABUS*
PSYCHOLOGY 405
Mystery, Madness, and Murder
Fall 2011

Instructor: Rebecca Morse (rmorse@gmu.edu)

Assistant Instructors:

(405-001) Danielle Mead (dmead@gmu.edu)
(405-002) Qikun Niu (gniu@gmu.edu)

Class Hours & Location:

(405-001) Mondays/Wednesdays 9:00AM – 10:15AM / Innovation Hall, Room 207
(405-002) Tuesdays 7:20PM – 10:00PM / Innovation Hall, Room 132

Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:30AM -11:30AM
Tuesdays 6:00PM – 7:00PM

Office Location: David King Hall 1027
Office Phone during hours: 703.993.4065

REQUIRED TEXT:

Bartol & Bartol. (2011). *Criminal Behavior: A Psychological Approach* (9th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall. ISBN-10: 0135050502 | ISBN-13: 9780135050507.

**Please note that your exams are based on the textbook, ergo it is imperative that you have the book to succeed in the course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND GOALS:

This synthesis course is designed to allow upper-level undergraduates to practice critical thinking by engaging in conversations and debates on a variety of current, interdisciplinary topics with far-reaching social and ethical implications. Assigned readings and the independent research required for engaged participation will utilize and expand on research, communication, and writing skills acquired in other courses.

TECHNOLOGY:

Students will be expected to access and use Blackboard on a regular basis (<https://courses.gmu.edu/>). Important class information, such as the syllabus and weekly quizzes/practicum assignments, will be posted here. To access Blackboard, students should use their George Mason email ID and password.

In addition, students should check their GMU email account regularly. Be sure to check that new messages can be received and that you are not over the message limit. You also have the option for your GMU account to be forwarded to another email address.

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION:

You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss and apply the material. In order to make the most out of your learning experience, it is imperative that you are not only present at each class meeting, but are alert, attentive, and ready to learn. Students are required to read (before class) any texts that may be assigned for that week. Class reading assignments will be posted on Blackboard.

Throughout the semester we will have class discussions. You are responsible for being prepared to discuss the material, and are expected to actively participate in discussion with your classmates about the material.

EXAMS:

There will be one mid-term and one final exam. These will be based primarily on the textbook and lectures, with additional information gleaned from classroom discussions. Each exam will stand alone (i.e. NON-cumulative). Exams will be online, and will consist of a combination of multiple choice, true-false, and short essay questions. Exams are open-book, open-note. Chapters 14 & 15 will not be on the exam.

There will be NO make-up exams offered for this course. If you anticipate conflict with an exam date, it is the student's responsibility to provide justification, but scheduling an alternate date is at the discretion of the instructor. Similarly, emergency exceptions are at the discretion of the instructor (in the hospital; car accident = emergency; alarm clock did not ring; bad hair day = not an emergency)

DEBATE ASSIGNMENTS:

Each student will take a primary role as a presenter in one of the main debates, which will require independent research and written work, due at the beginning of class on the day of the debate. The main debate presentation grade will be composed of your written preparation of your argument (synopsis) (20 points), instructor score of debate performance (10 points), reference list in APA format (5 points), supporting arguments using all three methods of persuasion (5 points), and cross-examination prep (10 points).

GRADES:

2 Exams x 25 points each = 50 points

Debate assignments = 50 points

Total Possible Points: 100 points

GRADE CALCULATION:

For simplicity, the points have been assigned such that a student can track their own grade without any confusing arithmetic acrobatics (hence the even 100 points). I round to the second decimal, so a grade of 91.49 is considered a 92 (A-), and a grade of 96.03 is a 96 (A).

Grade Breakdown:

A+ 100 – 97	B+ 89 – 87	C+ 79 – 77	D 69 - 60
A 96 – 93	B 86 – 83	C 76 – 73	F 59 and below
A- 92 – 90	B- 82 – 80	C- 72 - 70	

HONOR CODE:

All provisions of the GMU Honor Code will be followed in this class. Information regarding the Honor Code and what constitutes academic dishonesty can be found in the 2011-201 University Catalog or online at the following website: <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/>.

DISABILITY HELP:

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES:

*Topics subject to change as needed to ensure that the majority of students are comfortable with material covered prior to moving to the next topic.

Date	Topic	Readings /Exams
Week 1 08/29-31	Introduction to Criminal behavior	Chapter 1
Week 2 09/6-7 (No Monday Class)	Developmental factors	Chapter 2
Week 3 09/12-14	Biological factors Tuesday Class: Three modes of persuasion (AI)	Chapter 3
Week 4 09/19-21	Learning and situational factors	Chapter 4
Week 5 09/26-28	Human aggression and violence	Chapter 5
Week 6 10/3-5	Juvenile delinquency	Chapter 6
Week 7 10/10-12 (No Monday or Tuesday class. Wednesday will meet as normal.)	Wednesday Class : Three modes of persuasion (AI)	MID-TERM due 10/14/11 by midnight (11:59PM)
Week 8 10/17-19	Criminal psychopathy	Chapter 7
Week 9 10/24-26	Crime & mental disorders	Chapter 8
Week 10 10/31-11/2	Homicide, Assault, and Family Violence	Chapter 9
Week 11 11/7-9	Multiple Murder, School, Workplace Violence	Chapter 10
Week 12 11/14-16	Psychology of Terrorism	Chapter 11
Week 13 11/21-23 (No Wednesday Class)	Sexual Assault	Chapter 12 & 13
Week 14 11/28-30	DEBATES TBA	
Week 15 12/5-7	DEBATES TBA	
MONDAY/WEDNESDAY AM CLASS FINAL: 12/19/11 DUE BY 10:15AM (NOT PM)		TUESDAY NIGHT CLASS FINAL: 12/13/11 DUE BY 10:10PM

*Syllabus subject to change, especially if we experience significant weather difficulties, as we did last year!

Important Dates

Dates listed on this page are for full semester courses only. For add/drop deadlines for courses that meet less than a full semester, see [Non-standard Sections Dates](#).

First day of classes ; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date	August 29
Labor Day, university closed	September 5
Last day to add classes —all individualized section forms due	September 6
Last day to drop with no tuition penalty	
Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty	September 19
Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty)	September 30
Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via Patriot Web	September 26 - October 21
Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only)	October 3 - October 28
Columbus Day recess (Monday classes/labs meet Tuesday. Tuesday classes do not meet this week)	October 10
Incomplete work from spring/summer 2011 due to instructor	October 28
Incomplete grade changes from spring/summer 2011 due to registrar	November 4
Thanksgiving recess	November 23-27
Last day of classes	December 10
Reading Days	December 12
Exam Period	December 13 - December 20
Degree Conferral Date	January 14, 2012

** These dates will not change.