

George Mason University

PSYCHOLOGY 461 Forensic Psychology: the psychological bases of criminal behavior

Class Begins: January 22nd

Class Ends: May 13th

Instructor Information

Instructor: Rebecca S. Morse, Ph.D.	Office: N/A
E-mail: rmorse@gmu.edu	Phone Number: 240-446-1022

Course Information

Course: Psyc 461	Credits: 3
Meeting Day(s): Online	Meeting Time(s): On-line

Course Description

This course approaches the understanding of delinquent and criminal behavior from a developmental, cognitive-behavioral, and psychological perspective. Viewing the juvenile and adult offender as being embedded and continually influenced by multiple systems, the course examines the risk and protective factors that are believed to influence the developmental pathways on the road to delinquency and crime. The behavioral, emotional and cognitive aspects of crime are examined, focusing primarily on the offender but occasionally on the victim as well.

Core Learning Outcomes

1. Describe the various theories that may help explain crime.
2. Identify the different perspectives of human nature that underlie the theoretical development and research of criminal behavior.
3. Define crime, criminal behavior, and juvenile delinquency.
4. Describe the various measurements of criminal and delinquent behavior.
5. Understand the study of criminal behavior and delinquency, from a psychological perspective.

Text

Criminal Behavior: A Psychological Approach, 10/E

Curt R Bartol & Anne M. Bartol

ISBN-10: 0132973197 • ISBN-13: 9780132973199

(Absolutely Required).

Assessment Method

<u>Homework/ Exams / Discussion</u>	<u>Point Value</u>
Homework (answers to set chapter questions)	75 pts. (5 per chapter)
EXAM 1 (Chapters 1-5)	100 pts.
EXAM 2 (Chapters 6-10)	100 pts.
Discussion Board (discussion conferences based on topical material presented)	75 pts. (5 per chapter)
Extra credit	Additional points
TOTAL	350 Pts.

Total Possible Points: 350 points (not including any extra credit points earned)

GRADE CALCULATION:

For simplicity, the points have been assigned such that a student can track their own grade without any confusing arithmetic acrobatics. I round to the second decimal when calculating final grades, so a total point value of 324.69 would be rounded to 325, so would equal an A.

Final Grade Breakdown (Letter grade by points):

<u>Final Grade Scale</u>
A+ = 350+ points
A = 325 to 349 points
A- = 315 to 324 points
B+ = 305 to 314 points
B = 290 to 304 points
B- = 280 to 299 points
C+ = 270 to 279 points
C = 255 to 269 points
C- = 245 to 254 points
D = 210 to 244 points
F = 209 and below

Students are required to uphold the Code of Academic Integrity and the Code of Student Conduct. Students who violate either of these codes may receive a failing grade in the class. Regarding assignments and exams, students should always observe the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Your academic work should be the result of your efforts, thoughts, and ideas. When writing papers or assignments, you should use an appropriate citation style consistently, indicating exactly where you are quoting, or have been inspired by, the work of others.

Cheating on any assignment or exam will result in possible disciplinary actions against you (the student), and all cases of academic misconduct will be referred to the Student Honor Council at George Mason University.

Examples of conduct meriting such disciplinary actions include, but are not limited to, the following: (1) cheating on an exam, either with or without assistance of another student or students, (2) submitting as your own work a paper that is either wholly or partially plagiarized, such as purchasing a paper from an internet site or superficially rewriting the work of others without proper citation, or (3) collaborating with fellow students on assignments or exams for which you were instructed to work alone.

Should you need accommodations for assignments/exams due to a verified, documented learning or physical disability please inform me of your situation so that proper accommodation procedures are followed. Disability Resource Services (703) 993-2474 or <http://accessibility.gmu.edu/student-services.html>

**** Discussion Board and Participation Policy ***

Due to the online format of this class, you will not attend any classroom lectures. Class participation, to include participation in the discussion board, individual class work, and respectful interaction between the instructor and students are emphasized in this course.

I will post several questions/topics on the discussion board for each week. The discussion board is set up to be a “reflection loop.” In other words, you will need to respond to my initial questions (post) by Saturday at midnight of each week; this posting is worth a maximum of 5 (5) points per chapter. You will then need to respond to at least two of your classmates’ posts by the following Saturday. Each of these chapter’s postings is worth a maximum of five (5) points per chapter. *What that means, is that you need to respond to my question **and** post two responses (for a total of three postings per chapter) in order to earn all 5 points for that chapter.*

Below is the grading rubric for the discussion board. **NOTE:** You will only be able to post for the current week. If you forget to post the previous week, then you lose your opportunity to earn any points for that week. (You can post as many times as you like each week. The more you post, the more you participate, and the higher your grade will be.

Netiquette: You will be communicating with one another via the discussion board. It is likely that you will not always agree with the opinions of your fellow classmates. Disagreement is fine but you will need to respect others’ views. Thus, personal attacks and derogatory comments will not be tolerated. If, however, you do disagree with someone, then I expect you to state your position in an articulate fashion on the discussion board.

Grading Rubric:

0 Points	1 Points	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points	5 Points
Does not respond to postings; does not participate freely. No effort to participate in learning community as it develops. Didn't post in each required topic for each week.	Does not respond to most postings. Does not make effort to participate in learning community as it develops; seems indifferent. Comments or questions were not responsive to the discussion questions.	Occasionally makes meaningful reflection on group's efforts; marginal effort to become involved with group. Comments or questions provided some evidence that the participant had read the course material.	Frequently attempts to direct the discussion and present relevant viewpoints for consideration by group; interacts freely. Comments or questions enhanced the quality of discussion (i.e., suggested new perspectives on an issue, asked questions that helped stimulate further discussion, etc.)	Consistently responds to posting; demonstrates good self-initiative. Frequently attempts to motivate the group discussion; presents creative approaches to topic. Participant posted a significant response in the form of comments and or questions to all required conference topics posted for that week.	Exceeds all expectations when responding to posts.

Online Links of Help/Interest:

Writing Center: <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>

Library: <http://library.gmu.edu/>

Topical Outline

Every effort will be made to keep to this schedule; however, the instructor reserves the right to alter or amend it as necessary. The schedule is subject to change as the course progresses; as much advance notice as possible will be provided when this occurs.

Date	Topic	Assignments Due
First day: Jan 22nd	Chapter 1 Introduction to Criminal Behavior	Chapter 1 posts, and homework due Saturday the 26th at midnight
Jan 27 to Feb 2	Chapter 2 Origins of Criminal Behavior: Developmental Risk Factors	Chapter 2 posts and homework, & responses to chapter 1 due Saturday the 2 nd at midnight
Feb 3 to 9	Chapter 3 Origins of Criminal Behavior: Biological Factors	Chapter 3 posts and homework, & responses to chapter 2 due Saturday the 9 th at midnight
Feb 10 to 16	Chapter 4 Origins of Criminal Behavior: Learning and Situational Factors	Chapter 4 posts and homework, & responses to chapter 3 due Saturday the 16 th at midnight
Feb 17 to 23	Chapter 5 Human Aggression and Violence	Chapter 5 posts and homework, & responses to chapter 4 due Saturday the 23 rd at midnight
Feb 24 to Mar 2	Chapter 6 Juvenile Delinquency	Chapter 6 posts and homework, & responses to chapter 5 due Saturday the 2 nd at midnight
Mar 3 to 9	Chapter 7 Criminal Psychopathy	Chapter 7 posts and homework, & responses to chapter 6 due Saturday the 9 th at midnight
MARCH 10	EXAM #1	Chapters 1 through 7
Mar 11 to 17	SPRING BREAK—Enjoy! =)	
Mar 18 to 23	Chapter 8 Crime and Mental Disorders	Chapter 8 posts and homework, & responses to chapter 7 due Saturday the 23 rd at midnight
Mar 24 to 30	Chapter 9 Homicide, Assault, and Family Violence	Chapter 9 posts and homework, & responses to chapter 8 due Saturday the 30 th at midnight
Mar 31 to Apr 6	Chapter 10 Multiple Murder, School, and Workplace Violence	Chapter 10 posts and homework, & responses to chapter 9 due Saturday the 6 th at midnight
Apr 7 to 13	Chapter 11 Psychology of Terrorism	Chapter 11 posts and homework, & responses to chapter 10 due Saturday the 13 th at midnight
Apr 14 to 20	Chapter 12 Sexual Assault	Chapter 12 posts and homework, & responses to chapter 11 due Saturday the 20 th at midnight

Apr 21 to 27	Chapter 13 Sexual Assault of Children and Youth and Other Sexual Offenses	Chapter 13 posts and homework, & responses to chapter 12 due Saturday the 27 th at midnight
Apr 28 to May 4	Chapter 15 Violent Economic Crime and Crimes of Intimidation	Chapter 15 posts and homework, & responses to chapter 13 due Saturday the 4 th at midnight
May 5 to 11	Chapter 16 Substance Abuse, Alcohol, and Crime	Chapter 16 posts and homework due Saturday the 11 th at midnight
Tuesday May 14th (by midnight)	FINAL Exam (Chapters 9 through 16 (not including 14))	Final Exam & responses to chapter 16 Due <u>Tuesday</u> the 14th by midnight