

PSYC 381: Mental Illness and Criminal Justice (3 credits)

Spring 2021

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Course Description

Follows the journey of five individuals diagnosed with severe mental illnesses from the day they commit a crime until one year after their final court date. The trajectory of each individual is unique and, taken together, encompasses, arrest, law enforcement response, post-booking options, jail mental health treatment, navigating legal options, correctional mental health treatment, trial, adjudication, and incarceration and release options in addition to establish other means through which the criminal justice system diverts and responds to the needs of individuals with severe mental illnesses.

Blackboard Login Instructions

Access to [MyMason](#) and GMU email are required to participate successfully in this course. Please make sure to update your computer and prepare yourself to begin using the online format BEFORE the first day of class. Check [the IT Support Center](#) website. Navigate to [the Student Support page](#) for help and information about Blackboard. In the menu bar to the left you will find all the tools you need to become familiar with for this course. Take time to learn each. Make sure you run a system check a few days before class. Become familiar with the attributes of Blackboard and online learning.

Required Textbooks

- None – All material available online via the Blackboard website for the course.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Define the symptoms of the severe mental illnesses in question and use that knowledge to illustrate how these symptoms impact the daily functioning of the individual.
2. Explain and categorize the paths through which an individual diagnosed with a mental illness may enter the criminal justice system.
3. Describe and explain the range of arrest, correctional, treatment, and release options available to individuals diagnosed with mental illness within the criminal justice system with a particular focus on diverting these individuals from the criminal justice system for treatment.

4. Identify the types of professionals employed in the criminal justice system who have direct contact with, and affect the dispositional outcome of, individuals diagnosed with mental illnesses and distinguish the roles and responsibilities of each of these professionals with respect to diversion to treatment.
5. Practice the observational, diagnostic, and assessment-related skills used by mental health professionals in the criminal justice system.

Technology Requirements

Hardware: You will need access to a Windows or Macintosh computer with at least 2 GB of RAM and access to a fast and reliable broadband internet connection (e.g., cable, DSL). A larger screen is recommended for better visibility of course material. You will need speakers or headphones to hear recorded content and a headset with a microphone is recommended for the best experience. For the amount of Hard Disk Space required taking a distance education course, consider and allow for:

1. the storage amount needed to install any additional software and
2. space to store work that you will do for the course.

If you consider the purchase of a new computer, please go to [Patriot Tech](#) to see recommendations.

Software: Many courses use Blackboard as the learning management system. You will need a browser and operating system that are listed compatible or certified with the Blackboard version available on the [myMason Portal](#). See [supported browsers and operating systems](#). Log in to [myMason](#) to access your registered courses. Some courses may use other learning management systems. Check the syllabus or contact the instructor for details. Online courses typically use [Acrobat Reader](#), [Flash](#), [Java](#), and [Windows Media Player](#), [QuickTime](#) and/or [Real Media Player](#). Your computer should be capable of running current versions of those applications. Also, make sure your computer is protected from viruses by downloading the latest version of Symantec Endpoint Protection/Anti-Virus software for free [here](#).

Students owning Macs or Linux should be aware that some courses may use software that only runs on Windows. You can set up a Mac computer with Boot Camp or virtualization software so Windows will also run on it. Watch [this video](#) about using Windows on a Mac. Computers running Linux can also be configured with virtualization software or configured to dual boot with Windows.

Note: If you are using an employer-provided computer or corporate office for class attendance, please verify with your systems administrators that you will be able to install the necessary applications and that system or corporate firewalls do not block access to any sites or media types.

Module 1

All tasks must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm

Order	Task	Course Material
1	Watch	Submission and Peer-Review for Papers
2	Read	Dave - Police Report
3	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 1 - Meet Dave
4	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 1 - The CIT Model: A Bit of History
5	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 1 – CIT Goal #1
6	Listen	Officer Interview Clip About CIT
7	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 1 – CIT Goal #2
8	Take	Module 1 Quiz
9	Take	Get to Know Betty Quiz

Module 2

All tasks must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm

Order	Task	Course Material
1	Read	Betty - Police Report
2	Read	Betty - Victim Statement
3	Read	Betty - Witness Statement
4	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 2 - Betty and Relationships
5	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 2 - Betty and Self-Harm
6	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 2 - How Did Betty Get Like This?
7	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 2 - Betty and CIT Goal #3
8	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 2 - CIT and Crisis De-escalation
9	Take	Module 2 Quiz
10	Take	Get to Know Marcus and Pablo Quiz

Module 3		
All tasks must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm		
Order	Task	Course Material
1	Read	Marcus - Police Report
2	Read	Marcus - Witness Statement - Jenny
3	Read	Marcus - Witness Statement - Jon
4	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 3 - Marcus - Police Response
5	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 3 - Marcus - Bipolar Disorder
6	Read	Pablo - Police Report
7	Read	Pablo - Witness Statement
8	Read	Pablo - Victim Statement
9	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 4 - Pablo - Police Response
10	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 4 - Pablo - PTSD
11	Listen	Interview Clip - Getting People Services
12	Take	Module 3 Quiz
13	Take	Get to Know Susan Quiz
14	Watch	Writing Your "Background Information/Instant Offense" Paper

Module 4		
All tasks must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm		
Order	Task	Course Material
1	Read	Susan - Police Report
2	Read	Susan - Victim Statement
3	Read	Susan - Witness Statement
4	Read	Susan - Initial Police Interrogation
5	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 5 - Susan - Police Response
6	Listen	Interview Clip - Susan - Police Response
7	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 5 - Susan - Schizophrenia Delusions
8	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 5 - Susan - Schizophrenia Hallucinations
9	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 5 - Susan - Other Aspects of Schizophrenia
10	Listen	Interview Clip - Schizophrenia Delusions - The Police Side
11	Listen	Interview Clip - Schizophrenia Delusions - The Mental Health Provider Side
12	Take	Module 4 Quiz
13	Take	Get to Know Pablo's Emergency Custody Order
14	Submit	Susan - Background Information and Instant Offense Paper

Module 5

All tasks must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm

Order	Task	Course Material
1	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 4 - Pablo – What is an Emergency Custody Order?
2	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 4 – Pablo – Emergency Custody Order Criteria
3	Listen	Interview Clip - Three Types of ECOs Explained by a Deputy
4	Listen	Interview Clip - Police ECO Decisions
5	Read	Pablo - Emergency Custody Order (ECO) Screening Assessment
6	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 4 – Pablo – Emergency Custody Order Evaluation
7	Listen	Interview Clip - ECOs From the Mental Health Provider Perspective
8	Take	Module 5 Quiz
9	Take	Get to Know the Jail Incident Reports Quiz
10	Grade	Complete Peer Grading for Susan's Background Information/Instant Offense Paper
11	Watch	Writing Your Behavioral Observations Paper

Module 6

All tasks must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm

Order	Task	Course Material
1	Watch	Susan - Clinical Interview
2	Read	Betty - Jail Incident Report Form 1, Form 2, and Form 3
3	Read	Susan - Jail Incident Report Form 1
4	Read	Marcus - Jail Incident Report Form 1
5	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Initial Hearings - Part 1
6	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Bail - Part 1
7	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Bail – Part 2
8	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Bail – Part 3
9	Listen	Mini-Lecture: Initial Hearings - Part 2
10	Take	Module 6 Quiz
11	Take	Get to Know the Rest of the Jail Incident Reports Quiz
12	Submit	Susan's Behavioral Observations Paper

Module 7

All tasks must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm

Order	Task	Course Material
1	Read	Betty - Jail Incident Report Form 4
2	Read	Marcus - Jail Incident Report Form 2
3	Read	Susan - Jail Incident Report Form 2
4	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Jail – The Basics
5	Watch	Mini-Lecture: The Makeup of US Jails
6	Watch	Mini-Lecture: The Prevalence of Mental Illness in US Jails
7	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Why is Focusing on Severe Mental Illnesses in Jail Important?
8	Take	Module 7 Quiz
9	Take	Get to Know the DSM Criteria Quiz
10	Watch	Writing Your Diagnosis Paper
11	Grade	Complete Peer Grading for Susan's Behavioral Observations Paper

Module 8

All tasks must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm

Order	Task	Course Material
1	Read	DSM 5 Diagnostic Criteria - Schizophrenia
2	Read	DSM 5 Diagnostic Criteria - Alcohol Use Disorder
3	Read	DSM 5 Diagnostic Criteria - Major Depressive Disorder
4	Read	DSM 5 Diagnostic Criteria - Intellectual Disability
5	Read	DSM 5 Diagnostic Criteria - Malingering
6	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Screening for Mental Illness in Jail
7	Watch	YouTube Video: What Life is Like for the Mentally Ill in Prison https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EqaoUgEjrQ8
8	Watch	YouTube Video: Inmates with Mental Illness Tell Their Stories https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hjfu2VR62tY
9	Take	Module 8 Quiz
10	Submit	Susan's Diagnosis Paper

Module 9

All tasks must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm

Order	Task	Course Material
1	Read	Betty - Jail Incident Report Form 5
2	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 8 - Suicide and Suicidal Ideation in Jails
3	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 8 - Screening for Suicidal Ideation in Jails
4	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 8 - Suicide in Jail: The Solution?
5	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Day 8 - Suicidal or Manipulative?
6	Take	Module 9 Quiz
7	Grade	Complete Peer Grading for Susan's Diagnosis Paper
8	Watch	Writing Your Jail Treatment Paper

Module 10

All tasks must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm

Order	Task	Course Material
1	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Treating Mental Illness in Jail - Triage
2	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Treating Mental Illness in Jail - Treatment
3	Watch	Mini-Lecture: The Role of the Correctional Officer
4	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Jail Transfer Options
5	Take	Module 10 Quiz
6	Submit	Susan's Jail Treatment Plan

Module 11

All tasks must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm

Order	Task	Course Material
1	Read	Mac-CAT - The MacArthur Competency Assessment Tool
2	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Competency to Stand Trial - Introduction
3	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Severe Mental Illness and Competency to Stand Trial
4	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Assessing and Restoring Competency to Stand Trial
5	Watch	Mini-Lecture: The Dusky Standard and the Mac-CAT
6	Take	Module 11 Quiz
7	Grade	Peer Grading for Susan's Jail Treatment Paper

Module 12

All tasks must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm

Order	Task	Course Material
1	Read	Arlington Drug Court Handbook
2	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Specialty Courts - Part 1
3	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Specialty Courts - Part 2
4	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Specialty Courts - Efficacy
5	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Specialty Courts - Areas of Concern
6	Take	Module 12 Quiz
7	Listen	Susan's Competency Evaluation Interview
8	Submit	Susan's Competency Evaluation

Module 13

All tasks must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm

Order	Task	Course Material
1	Read	Virginia Insanity Standard and Decision Tree
2	Watch	Video - An Introduction to Criminal Responsibility
3	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity - M'Naughten
4	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity - Other Standards
5	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity - Are People Getting Away with Murder?
6	Take	Module 13 Quiz
7	Grade	Peer Grading for Susan's Competency Evaluation
8	Watch	Writing Your Criminal Responsibility Paper

Module 14

All tasks must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm

Order	Task	Course Material
1	Watch	Susan's Criminal Responsibility Interview
2	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Community Corrections - What is it?
3	Watch	Mini-Lecture: Community Corrections - Problems and Solutions
4	Watch	Mini-Lecture: The "Risk-Needs-Responsivity" Model - An Explanation
5	Watch	Mini-Lecture: The "Risk-Needs-Responsivity" Model in Practice
6	Take	Module 14 Quiz
7	Submit	Susan's Criminal Responsibility Paper

Module 15

All tasks must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm

Order	Task	Course Material
1	Watch	Mini-Lecture: The Sequential Intercept Model - Part 1
2	Watch	Mini-Lecture: The Sequential Intercept Model - Part 2
3	Take	Module 15 Quiz
4	Grade	Peer Grading for Susan's Criminal Responsibility Evaluation

Assignments Description

- 1. Papers (56% total):** There will be six papers required for the course. They are:
 - a. Background Information/Instant Offense (5%)
 - b. Behavioral Observations (10%)
 - c. Diagnosis (8%)
 - d. Jail Treatment Plan (8%)
 - e. Competency Evaluation (12%)
 - f. Criminal Responsibility Evaluation (13%)
- 2. Weekly Quizzes (30% total):** There are 15 weekly quizzes during the course of the semester.
 - a. Online quizzes must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm each week... after that, the quiz closes. Missed quizzes cannot be made up.
 - b. These quizzes are untimed, and you may use whatever resources you wish to answer the questions, including online content from the Blackboard site and the posted PowerPoint presentations.
 - c. Each quiz is worth 2% of your overall grade in the course.
 - d. Quizzes not completed by the due date will be subject to a 5% a day late penalty. Exceptions can be made in accordance with the late policy.
- 3. The "Get to Know..." Quizzes (14%):** There are seven "Get to know..." quizzes throughout the course of the semester.
 - a. These all occur in Modules 1-7. They are untimed and open book.
 - b. The point is for you to, literally, get to know the information in our case materials. They are not meant to be stressful. They are only meant to ensure that everyone has reviewed all the necessary information, so the material presented makes sense.
 - c. Quizzes not completed by the due date will be subject to a 5% a day late penalty. Exceptions can be made in accordance with the late policy

Paper Assignment Instructions – You are about to embark on the process of creating a full psycho-legal evaluation of Susan.

Paper #1 - Background Information and Instant Offense

- As the semester progresses, you will write one section of the report after the other until you have created several full psycho-legal reports “Treatment Plan,” “Competency Evaluation,” and “Criminal Responsibility Evaluation.” This is the first step in that process.
- Use the “Susan – Paper 1 Template” file available on the Blackboard site for the class and follow the highlighted instructions.
- You are tasked with creating the first portion of a psychological report that will be used in all reports later (treatment, competency, and criminal responsibility) in this section.
- Please include the following sections:
 - “Reason for Referral”
 - Follow guidelines in the report template.
 - This should just be 1-3 sentences in length. Be concise and to the point. Forensic writing is not like some master work of fictional literature.
 - “Non-Confidentiality Statement”
 - Leave as is... no editing necessary. Delete highlighted text.
 - “Background Information”
 - Add your own synopsis of Susan’s background information in this section.
 - Be sure to include all information you deem relevant. You do not know what information you are going to be using in the report later... so it is best to be thorough in this section and include everything you can without repeating yourself.
 - Do not cut and paste from the information available on Blackboard... summarize in your own words.
 - Be sure to use all information that is available to you at the time of the report writing... don’t look forward to the jail incident reports or any other material.
 - There is not a lot of information available, just do your best with what you have.
 - “Summary of the Instant Offense”
 - The “Summary of the Instant Offense” is exactly that. A summary of the police report, all victim and witness statements, and the initial police interrogation. In this case, “instant offense” refers to the crime with which Susan is currently charged.
 - Be sure to list the date, time, and location of the offense (that is important information).
 - Summarize the police report, victim statement, witness report, and initial police interrogation as best you can, in your own words, and include all relevant information... You should probably include more than you think you should.
 - Combine all the relevant documents into a chronological timeline of the crime in question (instant offense section).

- Include direct quotes from Susan as well (quotes from the police report... However, do not make up any information in your report).
- **Paper #2 - Behavioral Observations**
 - For this section of your report, you must watch the “Susan – Behavioral Observations Video” posted on the Blackboard site for the class.
 - Use the “Susan – Paper 2 Template” file available on the Blackboard site for the class and follow the highlighted instructions.
 - Please write this as if you are meeting Susan in jail on “Day 16” at 14:30 hours in Arlington County Detention Center.
 - Use the information available in the “Writing Your Mental Status Exam” PowerPoint to create the format of your behavioral observations section.
 - I can’t state this clearly enough... be objective and factual. You must provide behavioral observations that back up your claims. You should not simply state, “Susan appeared worried” and leave it at that. You may say, “Susan appeared worried” but then provide concrete examples of what you say that made you think that... without stating “worried.” For example, you can say, “Susan was continually shifting in her seat during the interview, rocking back and forth. On several different occasions she asked, ‘am I in big trouble?’ and asked when she could see her sons.”
 - Additionally, do not use judgmental language when writing forensic reports (especially behavioral observations). Some phrases like “bad thoughts” or words like “weird,” or “strange” are pretty obvious and should be swapped for more descriptive language or direct quotes from Susan. However, sentences like “Susan suffered from delusions” may seem fine... but they assume that she is suffering. It’s empathic, but it is still a judgment.
 - Be sure to cover every category listed in the class PowerPoint... use that as a guide. Each of these sections should be a different paragraph in your behavioral observations section. For clarification... those are:
 - Appearance
 - Behavior
 - Mood
 - Speech
 - Cognition
 - Thought Processes
 - Insight and Judgment
 - Suicidality/Homicidality
 - Use the PowerPoint presentations related to Susan and her diagnosis of schizophrenia to help you understand what is, and what is not, relevant.
 - One caveat, the PowerPoint is a guide so you don’t forget anything... but don’t go looking for things that are not there.
- **Paper #3 - Diagnosis**
 - Use the “Susan – Paper 3 Template” file available on the Blackboard site for the class and follow the highlighted instructions.
 - In this section of the overall report, you are to make the case for Susan’s diagnosis of schizophrenia using information from the “background information,” “instant offense,” and “behavioral observations” sections previously written.

- Review the DSM criteria (provided on Blackboard) for schizophrenia in your paper and state which ways Susan does, or does not, meet the criteria. Provide concrete examples from all previously written sections of the report.
 - Make each diagnostic criteria a separate paragraph of this section.
 - Be logical. If you are going to diagnose Susan with schizophrenia (and you should) then be sure to explicitly state which criteria she meets and how she meets that criteria.
 - Reference Susan's behaviors from the clinical interview as well as the statements made in police reports, witness statements, victim statements, and jail incident reports to make your case. Provide direct quotes from Susan when those quotes will help you make your point with respect to her diagnosis.
 - Start the diagnosis section by clearly stating the criteria required for Susan to qualify for a diagnosis of schizophrenia. Remember, the eventual reader of this report (an attorney or judge) does not know the diagnostic criteria, so be sure to outline it for them and state how Susan does, or does not, meet each criterion.
 - If Susan does not meet a particular diagnostic criterion, that is fine, but you still need to state that she does not meet that particular criteria. The point here... fully explain yourself. State all the criteria, state how she meets that criteria (or if she not meet that criteria), and then bring it all together for a diagnosis.
 - You may find yourself "on the fence" about a particular criterion... that is fine. In these cases, simply state that she currently does (or does not) meet the criteria and state that you can revisit this item if/when more information becomes available.
 - Take this process and repeat it for Susan's (possible) substance abuse diagnosis. However, unlike her diagnosis of schizophrenia, whether or not she meets the criteria for a substance use disorder is up to you. As it currently stands, her diagnosis could go either way. If you think she fits the diagnostic criteria for schizophrenia... make the case. If you do not, make the case for why she does not (it will likely be because you feel you need more information before making a diagnosis).
- **Paper #4 - Treatment Plan**
 - For this part of the paper, you are tasked with creating a jail treatment plan for Susan.
 - Use the "Susan – Paper 4 Template" file available on the Blackboard site for the class and follow the highlighted instructions.
 - On the Blackboard page for the course, in the materials for Susan, is a folder named "Peer-Reviewed Articles for Treatment Paper." This folder contains some articles that you may find useful in justifying your treatment recommendations. However, it should be noted that not all of the articles provided are appropriate to use. It is up to you to read them and decide for yourself. If you wish to use different research articles, you are free to do so.
 - Treatment
 - Susan is going to need to be prescribed medication. However, in this scenario, you are a psychologist and you cannot provide recommendations for specific medications since you are not a medical doctor. This means that you are going to have to refer Susan to a psychiatrist in the jail for medication. You need to state that Susan should be referred to the psychiatrist for possible medication and then

cite peer reviewed literature that proves that medicating the symptoms of schizophrenia is a good idea.

- Susan is also going to need to attend therapy sessions. She is delusional and (as it currently stands) is not sharing much information for fear of the “devil” hearing. Therapy can help with medication adherence and with her gaining insight into her mental illness.
 - If Susan does take medication, her thought process is likely to clear up. When this occurs, she is likely going to realize that she tried to kill her 8-year-old son... and that may not seem like a good idea anymore. If that occurs, therapy can help with the issues that may accompany that realization (like anxiety, depression, etc. – as appropriate). One or two sentences describing this possibility will be sufficient.
 - Using peer-reviewed literature as a guide for what works... describe the treatment plan you would use for the issues Susan faces. You can choose different treatments for different issues.
 - Should Susan receive individual therapy? Group Therapy? Both? Choose what you think would work best if there were no limitations on the available resources but consider whether, in her current state, Susan would be able to participate in group therapy effectively (and without disrupting the group). You can always suggest group therapy sessions for when/if Susan’s symptoms have abated.
 - When you suggest a treatment, please provide a description of the theory, process, etc. of the treatment you are suggesting. Just give a brief overview so the reader understands what the treatment entails.
 - Back up all treatment recommendations with evidence from peer-reviewed literature. Remember, Susan is in jail. This provides some barrier to what can be done, but also some benefits. Make sure to take these into consideration when you choose your treatments.
 - Make sure you treat every issue. Since Susan should be diagnosed with schizophrenia treat that... but if you diagnosed Susan with a substance abuse disorder, treat that as well.
 - If you did not diagnose Susan with a substance abuse issue, simply mention that in this section and state that treatment recommendations will be provided if she even meets the diagnostic criteria for a substance use disorder.
 - You do NOT need to provide treatment recommendations for other issues like depression or anxiety.
 - Be sure to include a reference section at the end of the paper that clearly outlines the information required in order for someone else to find the articles including author(s) names, date, article title, and all necessary journal information. APA format works well but is not required if all the required information for your references is present.
- **Paper #5 - Competency Evaluation:**
 - Use the “Susan – Paper 5 Template” file available on the Blackboard site for the class and follow the highlighted instructions.

- For this part of the evaluation, you are going to use the audio file (not a video) of Susan’s Mac-CAT interview (the file is located online and is named “Susan – Competency to Stand Trial Interview.”
- Assume this evaluation is occurring on “Day 45 at 11:15 hours.”
- You are to follow along with the Mac-CAT interview and score it as you see fit. Susan’s overall scores (and subsection scores) on the Mac-CAT will assist you in determining her competency to stand trial. Please consult the lecture materials for further guidance.
- You will be graded on how accurately you score the Mac-CAT. However, I realize that you are new to the Mac-CAT, so there is a “range” of scores that are acceptable as you listen to the interview and score the Mac-CAT yourself. Just try your best and follow the instruction in the Mac-CAT booklet (PDF available online in Susan’s folder).
- You are to use the Dusky Standard for competency to stand trial as your legal framework (the Dusky Standard can be found in the lecture material).
- Your report should contain the following section (in addition to the previous sections):
 - “MacArthur Competency Assessment”
 - Paragraph 1: An introduction why Susan requires a competency evaluation.
 - Paragraph 2: When using any assessment instrument, provide a brief description of the instrument (purpose and format). One to two sentences. Also, outline the three sections of the Mac-CAT and describe what they measure.
 - Paragraph 3: Understanding. In this section you should outline Susan’s performance on the “understanding” section of the Mac-CAT. Provide her score as you scored it from the interview (X out of a possible X) and explain what that score means in terms of her level of impairment (if any). Then review, in broad terms, her performance on the understanding section. What did she do well on? Where did she struggle?
 - Do NOT provide a question by question analysis. Instead, give a broad overview of her performance and use direct quotes from the interview to highlight her types of answers and her performance. Provide a couple of concrete examples that you think are indicative of their performance on that section (“for example, when Susan was asked about “X,” she stated, “Y.” Then summarize).
 - Paragraph 4: Reasoning. Same as “understanding” paragraph.
 - Paragraph 5: Appreciation. Same as “understanding” paragraph.
 - “Ultimate Opinion on Competency to Stand Trial”
 - Provide the Dusky standard (verbatim) so everyone understands what the rules are for competency.
 - Use the lecture material to clearly explain and highlight how Susan does (or does not) meet every part of the Dusky standard. Break it down... Not everyone is a lawyer.
 - Explain your decision-making process.
 - Provide an ultimate opinion as to Susan’s competency to stand trial.

- If you do this, your papers will be logical and difficult to argue with. Write the papers as if I am going to be an expert helping the other side of the case. Make your points in a way so that I have nothing to use when I try and help the opposing attorney negate the case you are making.
 - This is not going to be the most engaging reading on the planet. If you feel that the report is "boring" to read, you are probably doing it right. It should consist of facts and statements about psychological states backed up with observations that make the point.
- **Paper #6 - Criminal Responsibility Evaluation:**
 - Use the "Susan – Paper 6 Template" file available on the Blackboard site for the class and follow the highlighted instructions.
 - For this assignment, you are to use the interview video with Susan posted online named "Susan – Criminal Responsibility Video."
 - Use all the data available to you in order to conduct an evaluation on the criminal responsibility of Susan's actions the day of the instant offense. In order to conduct this evaluation, you will need to use the Virginia legal standard for determining criminal responsibility (also posted online).
 - Your grade will not be based on your ultimate opinion on Susan's criminal responsibility. Instead, your grade will be based on your ability to integrate the many sources of information into a cohesive whole and apply this information to the Virginia standard for criminal responsibility.
 - Assume this evaluation is occurring on "Day 107 at 15:10 hours."
 - Please include the following sections in your final report:
 - "Psychological Testing"
 - This has been provided for you in the report template. Use this data, (...and there is a lot of it) to help make your determination on criminal responsibility. You must incorporate this data into your overall opinion of Susan's responsibility. If you have any questions about the tests used, or what they measure, please ask.
 - "Assessment of Criminal Responsibility"
 - Paragraph 1: State why there is a need for this evaluation. This may be brief, but make the relevant points required in the grading rubric.
 - Paragraph 2: Introduction to criminal responsibility. Outline the process that you will be using to make the determination (this is to be taken from the "decision tree" on the second page of the Virginia standard for criminal responsibility).
 - Paragraph 3: Malingering – There is a lot of information in the "testing results" section that does not line up cleanly. Use the possible choices outlined in the lecture material to help make your determination as to whether or not Susan is malingering. Be sure to include ALL the test results. Do not simply ignore data that does not fit your theory. Explain the test results and how these results fit into your theory of whether Susan is malingering or not.
 - Paragraph 4: Diagnosis of mental disease or defect – You have already covered this information in your "diagnosis" section so

just refer back to that. One or two well written sentences should be appropriate.

- Paragraph 5: Loss of behavioral or cognitive control – Use the information from Susan’s criminal responsibility interview, in addition to all other available information how Susan’s behaviors at the time of the crime do (or do not) reflect a loss of cognitive or behavioral control at the time of the crime (use of direct quotes can be helpful here).
- Paragraph 6: Was the loss of behavioral or cognitive control the result of a mental illness? – Now you start putting ideas together to make your argument one way or the other with respect to Susan’s criminal responsibility. Essentially, you are combining the information from paragraphs 3 and 4 to connect the dots with respect to Susan’s behavior the day of the crime.
- “Ultimate Opinion on Criminal Responsibility” (main heading)
 - Paragraph 1: State the Virginia standard for criminal insanity – In order for everyone to be on the same page, you need to clearly state the Virginia standard for criminal insanity.
 - Paragraph 2: Making the case for (or against) and finding of criminal insanity – This is the part where you apply the specific language in the Virginia standard to the information you presented in the previous section. However, this time you are going through the Virginia standard point by point outlining where Susan does (or does not) meet the criteria. Leave no stone unturned. Address all aspects of the Virginia standard highlighting statements made earlier to make the relevant points.
 - This “paragraph” may actually be several paragraphs broken down for each part of the Virginia insanity standard.
 - Paragraph 3: State your ultimate opinion – After all of this thought and explanation, be sure to clearly state your opinion as to Susan’s criminal responsibility. This can be only one sentence long.

Course Policies

- **Late Assignments:** Late work will be penalized at 5 percent per day. If an assignment is worth 100 points, and is 5 days late, 25 points will be automatically deducted and grading will start at 75. If there is a legitimate emergency, non-penalty extensions will be considered.
- **Make-up Policy:** Make-up exams will only be administered in special circumstances. Prior approval should be obtained if circumstances allow. Please let me know as soon as possible if you are unable to take an exam at the scheduled time.
- **Extra-Credit Assignments:** There will be no extra credit assignments in this course. Please complete assignments and quizzes accordingly

- **Instructor-Student Communication:** I will respond to your emails within 48 hours. If I will be away from email for more than one day, I will post an announcement in the Blackboard course folder. Before sending an email, please check the following (available on your Blackboard course menu) unless the email is of a personal nature: 1) Syllabus, 2) "Ask the Professor Forum," (feel free to respond to other students in the Ask Professor forum if you know the answer) or 3) On-demand Blackboard videos on how to use Blackboard features, and Technical Requirements.
- **Technology.** You will need a reliable computer and internet access to view course materials in Blackboard. You will need to video record your two role-plays and you can do that with a smartphone or other video camera, such as Kaltura CaptureSpace in Blackboard.

Grading Criteria

Assignment	Grade Percentage
Papers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Information/Instant Offense • Behavioral Observations • Diagnosis • Jail Treatment Plan • Competency Evaluation • Criminal Responsibility Evaluation 	56% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5% • 10% • 8% • 8% • 12% • 13%
Weekly Quizzes	30%
"Get to Know..." Quizzes	14%
Total:	100%

Grading Scale

A+	97-100%
A	93-97%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D	65-69%
F	Less than 65%

University Policies and Resources

- a. Academic Honesty: GMU seeks to foster a spirit of academic honesty and integrity. This is as important to your professional development as the knowledge you gain in your course work. Violations of academic integrity includes: cheating on exams or homework assignments (e.g. copying the work of others), passing off someone else's ideas as your own (plagiarism), and engaging in dishonesty of any kind with respect to your classroom participation and assignments. Failure to uphold these standards will result in immediate consequences (i.e. not a warning) commensurate with the violation, which may include a failing grade on the assignment and/or referral to the appropriate University resources. You are expected to be familiar with and abide by the University's Honor Code. The Code can be found [here](#).
- b. Plagiarism: Any work submitted by a student must represent original work produced by that student. Any source used by a student must be documented through normal scholarly references and citations. The extent to which any sources have been used must be apparent to the reader. Everything used from other sources - ideas from other's or actual language - must be cited. This policy includes the use of materials from the World Wide Web. With respect to plagiarism, it is always best to err on the side of caution. If you are caught plagiarizing material, the assignment will receive a failing grade and you will not have the opportunity to re-submit the assignment. Additionally, depending on the severity of the violation, you may be referred to the appropriate University resources.
- c. Students must follow the university policy for [Responsible Use of Computing](#)
- d. Student services: The University provides range of services to help you succeed academically and you should make use of these if you think they could benefit you. I also invite you to speak to me (the earlier the better).
- e. Privacy and Communication: Student privacy is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). As a result, students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important information about this class, including any communication with the professor via digital communication. Please allow 24 hours (48 on weekends) for a response to email messages. Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- f. [The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance. Counseling Center: Student Union I, Room 364, 703-993-2380.
- g. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the [George Mason University Office of Disability Services \(ODS\)](#). If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should: 1) make sure this documentation is on file with the Office of Disability Services (SUB I, Room 4205; 703-993-2474) to determine the accommodations you need; and 2) talk with me by the second week of class to discuss your accommodation needs. Accommodation scan only be made in cases in which proper documentation has been provided through the Office of Disability Services.
- h. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

- i. [The George Mason University Writing Center](#) staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing. University Writing Center: Robinson Hall Room A114, 703-993-1200. The writing center includes assistance for students for whom English is a second language.
- j. [Diversity](#): An emphasis on diversity and inclusion is essential to achieve our goals as a campus community. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds, and practices have to opportunity to be heard and respected. This commitment to diversity is included in all University settings. GMU promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment with respect to diversity and seeks to incorporate diversity and inclusion within the philosophies and actions of the individual, group, and organization to make improvements as needed. If you feel, in any way, that any aspect of your personal characteristics, viewpoints, or perspectives are not being respect, please talk to me. I will listen.