

Mystery, Murder, and Madness
PSYC 405

Instructor: Min Ji Kim (First name is Min Ji)
Office Hours: By appointment only

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Course Description and Objectives

Psychology 405 is an exciting course where you'll learn to apply psychological principles to areas related to mystery, murder, and madness! The course covers psychological topics related to season 1 of the Serial Podcast, serial killers Richard Kuklinski & Luka Magnotta, and the vigilante Batman. The end of the semester will consist of student group presentations on a semester long project.

Required Materials

- Netflix!

Course Breakdown

Lecture Summaries- 25%

For every lecture posted, you will be required to write a 1-2 paragraph summary of the lecture. The assignment will be due the Sunday of the week that the lecture is posted on. If you need an extension for the summaries, please contact me within 2 weeks of the summaries due date and I will approve the extensions on a case-by-case basis.

Journal Article Summaries- 20%

For each week that I post a journal article(s), you will be required to write a summary for the articles. You will not get articles to read every week. You are required to write one paragraph per article, and you will only submit ONE file per week. Please compile the summaries into one document and submit only that one document. Within each paragraph, summarize the journal article and relate it to topic(s) from the podcast (you may relate information from the journal article to information from any episode of the podcast). If you need an extension for the summaries, please contact me within 2 weeks of the summaries due date and I will approve the extensions on a case-by-case basis.

Weekly Discussions and Responses- 20%

There will be weekly discussion forums to discuss topics related to that week's material. You are required to make three posts, and five responses to other students' posts throughout the semester. These threads are meant to spark discussions on the particular psychological principles we are discussing that week. Please make sure to make insightful questions and comments in the discussion board. No late discussion posts will be accepted as the discussion boards move along with class.

Final group presentation- 35%

In the middle of the semester, I will assign you to groups, (of about 4-5 people) and you will begin working on a project within your individual group. The project is to create a 10 min presentation in which you psychologically analyze a topic related to mystery, murder, and/or madness. I will give more information about this when the time comes.

Grading Breakdown

A	94+
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D	60-69
F	0-59

Grading Policy

Grades are non-negotiable and no extra credit will be given other than what is mentioned in the extra credit section. Grades will be rounded to the nearest whole number percentage at the end of the semester. For example, if a student gets 88.5% or higher, their grade will be rounded to 89%. If a student gets 88.4% or lower, their grade will be rounded to 88%. Whole number percentages will not be rounded to a higher grade. For example, 89% will not be rounded to a 90%. This is non-negotiable. Emails/inquiries about rounding your grade up will be ignored.

Extra Credit

Students have the opportunity to earn up to 2% extra credit through research participation. Each hour of research participation is worth 0.5% extra credit. Opportunities for participation can be found at: <http://gmu.sona-systems.com/>

Add/drop deadlines

- Last day to add/drop with 100% tuition refund: February 12th
- Last day to drop with partial tuition refund: February 16th
- Last day to drop with no tuition refund: March 1st

Official Communications via GMU E-Mail

Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are

required to activate that account and check it regularly. When you email me, please put PSYC 317 in the subject line. This will put your email in a specific folder that I will check often.

Academic Integrity

It is expected that students adhere to the George Mason University Honor Code as it relates to integrity regarding coursework and grades. The Honor Code reads as follows: “To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the University Community have set forth this: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal and/or lie in matters related to academic work.” More information about the Honor Code, including definitions of cheating, lying, and plagiarism, can be found at the Office of Academic Integrity website at <http://oai.gmu.edu>

Disability Services

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to upholding the letter and spirit of the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. Under the administration of University Life, Disability Services implements and coordinates reasonable accommodations and disability-related services that afford equal access to university programs and activities. Students can begin the registration process with Disability Services at any time during their enrollment at George Mason University. If you are seeking accommodations, please visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474

Student Services

- Counseling and Psychological Services: 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 (See <http://caps.gmu.edu>).
- Student Support and Advocacy Center: The George Mason University Student Support and Advocacy Center offers one-on-one support to students, interactive programming, and off-campus resources. Some of the topic areas they address include healthy relationships, stress management, nutrition, sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, stalking, drug and alcohol use, and sexual health. See <http://ssac.gmu.edu> for more information.

Religious Holidays

Please refer to George Mason University's calendar of religious holidays and observations (<http://ulife.gmu.edu/calendar/religious-holiday-calendar/>). It is the student's responsibility to speak to the instructor in advance should their religious observances impact their participation in class activities and assignments.

Student Privacy

George Mason University strives to fully comply with FERPA by protecting the privacy of student records and judiciously evaluating requests for release of information from those records. Please see George Mason University's student privacy policy <https://registrar.gmu.edu/students/privacy/>

Mason Diversity Statement

George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty, and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.