**PSYC 440: Forensic Psychology – Science and Pseudoscience (3 credits)**

**Spring 2021**

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# **Course Description**

Participate in a critical, evidenced-based, examination of common practices in the criminal justice system in the areas of forensic psychology and law enforcement. The course is divided into three sections: Biases and the scientific process, forensic psychological practices, and law enforcement practices. The first section of the course begins with an explanation of common cognitive biases, an exploration of the nature of human memory, what makes an expert witness, and what does, or does not, make a practice “pseudoscience.” This is followed by weekly examinations of different, sometimes controversial, topics in forensic psychology including repressed memories, the Rorschach inkblot test, dissociative identity disorder, hypnosis, and risk assessment. The final section of the course focuses on topics that include criminal profiling, lie detection, handwriting analysis, and interrogation and false confessions.

**Blackboard Login Instructions**

Access to [MyMason](http://mymason.gmu.edu) 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](http://itservices.gmu.edu/) website. Navigate to [the Student Support page](https://coursessupport.gmu.edu/Students/) 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 and explain cognitive biases, the processes and issues with human memory, and the legal process for admitting an individual as an expert witness in court.
2. Understand controversial or contentious topics (both common and uncommon) in the field of forensic psychology.
3. Understand common (and uncommon) practices in law enforcement.
4. Critically evaluate the scientific foundation on which each of the chosen topics is based.
5. Identify and classify topic areas with strong support, those that require more investigation, and those that currently lack the support of the scientific community.
6. Discuss the potential personal, societal, and legal ramifications of the findings.

# 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](https://patriottech.gmu.edu/get-started/) 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](http://mymason.gmu.edu). See [supported browsers and operating systems](https://help.blackboard.com/en-us/Learn/9.1_SP_10_and_SP_11/Student/002_Browser_Support_SP_11). Log in to [myMason](http://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/) 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](http://get.adobe.com/reader/), [Flash](http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/), [Java](http://www.java.com/en/download/), and [Windows Media Player](http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/products/windows-media-player), [QuickTime](http://support.apple.com/downloads/#quicktime) and/or [Real Media Player](http://www.real.com/realplayer/search). 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](http://antivirus.gmu.edu/).

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](https://youtu.be/Hmm9Q-T0oTo) 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.

**Completing Assignments:** You will need to follow the specific instructions and guidelines in each module in order to fully understand and complete your assignments. The syllabus serves as a general template of the course, but the specific steps you must take to complete and submit your assignments are outlined in the modules. All due dates and times are listed in the modules for each activity noted. Please begin completing your assignments on the Monday that the module starts. If you don’t follow the module instructions you run the risk of failing to complete some work and you will receive a zero. Please, start the process of reviewing and completing assignments on Monday and work your way through the entire module over the course of the week as indicated by the due dates and times posted within the module.

IMPORTANT: If a due date is **NOT** listed in the module then you should complete it as soon as possible and be sure it is completed **before** the next module begins.

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| **Module 1 – What is Pseudoscience?**  **Begins January 25, 2021** | | |
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| **Order** | **Task** | **Course Material** |
| 1 | Watch | What is Science? |
| 2 | Watch | The Scientific Method |
| 3 | Watch | What is Pseudoscience (Part 1) |
| 4 | Watch | What is Pseudoscience (Part 2) |
| 5 | Watch | What is Pseudoscience (Part 3) |
| 6 | Watch | Protecting Yourself from Pseudoscience |
| 7 | Complete | Module 1 Quiz |

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| **Module 2 – Cognitive Biases**  **Begins February 1, 2021** | | |
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| **Order** | **Task** | **Course Material** |
| 1 | Watch | What is a Cognitive Bias? |
| 2 | Watch | Confirmation Bias |
| 3 | Watch | The Dunning- Kruger Effect |
| 4 | Watch | More Cognitive Biases (Part 1) |
| 5 | Watch | More Cognitive Biases (Part 2) |
| 6 | Watch | Cognitive Biases: Wrapping it Up |
| 7 | Complete | Module 2 Quiz |

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| **Module 3 – Memory and Expert Testimony Admissibility**  **Begins February 8, 2021** | | |
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| **Order** | **Task** | **Course Material** |
| 1 | Watch | Your Lying Eyes |
| 2 | Watch | The Seven Sins of Memory (Part 1) |
| 3 | Watch | The Seven Sins of Memory (Part 2) |
| 4 | Watch | Why do We Need Experts? |
| 5 | Watch | YouTube Video: “Verbatim: What is a Photocopier?” |
| 6 | Watch | The Frye Standard |
| 7 | Watch | The Daubert Standard |
| 8 | Watch | Charmichael v. Kumho Tire |
| 9 | Complete | Module 3 Quiz |

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| **Module 4 – Repressed Memories of Traumatic Events**  **Begins February 15, 2021** | | |
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| **Order** | **Task** | **Course Material** |
| 1 | Watch | What Are Repressed Memories and Why are They Important? |
| 2 | Watch | Two Sides to This Debate |
| 3 | Watch | YouTube Video: “The Completion Process” by Teal Swan |
| 4 | Watch | Fun (Not Fun) with Statistics |
| 5 | Watch | Repressed Memories: Other Explanations |
| 6 | Watch | “I Can’t Remember” (Part 2) |
| 7 | Complete | Module 4 Quiz |
| 8 | Submit | Doug Jones Report: Paper #1 – Sections A and B |

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| **Module 5 – Hypnosis**  **Begins February 22, 2021** | | |
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| **Order** | **Task** | **Course Material** |
| 1 | Watch | Hypnosis: Introduction |
| 2 | Watch | YouTube Video: “Hypnosis Explained for Skeptics” |
| 3 | Watch | Hypnosis and Brain Waves: What’s the Deal? |
| 4 | Watch | Hypnosis: Promising Results |
| 5 | Watch | Hypnosis: Stacking the Deck |
| 6 | Watch | Hypnosis: You Make the Call |
| 7 | Complete | Module 5 Quiz |
| 8 | Submit | Peer-Grading for Doug Jones Paper #1 – Sections A and B |

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| **Module 6 – Rorschach Inkblot Test**  **Begins March 1, 2021** | | |
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| **Order** | **Task** | **Course Material** |
| 1 | Watch | The Rorschach Inkblot Test: An Introduction |
| 2 | Watch | Administering the Rorschach |
| 3 | Watch | Scoring and Interpreting the Rorschach |
| 4 | Watch | The Rorschach: For and Against (Part 1) |
| 5 | Watch | The Rorschach: For and Against (Part 2) |
| 6 | Watch | YouTube Video: “House, Tree, Person Scoring” |
| 7 | Complete | Module 6 Quiz |
| 8 | Submit | Doug Jones Report: Paper #2 – Section C |

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| **Module 7 – Dissociative Identity Disorder**  **Begins March 8, 2021** | | |
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| **Order** | **Task** | **Course Material** |
| 1 | Watch | YouTube Video: “All of Me: Living With Dissociative Identity Disorder” |
| 2 | Watch | DID – Whispers of a New Diagnosis and Excitement Brewing |
| 3 | Watch | DID – Excitement Waning |
| 4 | Watch | DID – Things Start to Pick Up Again |
| 5 | Optional | DID – Things go Absolutely Bonkers |
| 6 | Watch | DID – (Mostly) Polite Disagreement |
| 7 | Watch | DID – Theories of Creation |
| 8 | Complete | Module 7 Quiz |
| 9 | Submit | Peer-Grading for Doug Jones Paper #2 – Section C |

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| **Module 8 – Assessing Psychological Injury**  **Begins March 15, 2021** | | |
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| **Order** | **Task** | **Course Material** |
| 1 | Watch | Personal Injury Case Study - Clayton |
| 2 | Watch | What is a Tort? |
| 3 | Watch | Post-Event Assessment |
| 4 | Watch | The Assessment of Malingering |
| 5 | Watch | Clayton and PTSD |
| 6 | Watch | YouTube Video: “Adam Ruins Everything – The Truth About the McDonald’s Coffee Lawsuit” |
| 7 | Watch | The Proximate Cause of Harm |
| 8 | Complete | Module 8 Quiz |
| 9 | Submit | Doug Jones Report: Paper #3 – Section D |

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| **Module 9 – Offender Identification**  **Begins March 22, 2021** | | |
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| **Order** | **Task** | **Course Material** |
| 1 | Watch | Offender Identification: Introduction |
| 2 | Watch | YouTube Video: “When Eyes Deceive – Eyewitness Testimony” |
| 3 | Watch | Offender Identification – Procedure |
| 4 | Watch | Individual Factors Affecting Offender Identification |
| 5 | Watch | Police Lineups – What Does the Data Say? |
| 6 | Watch | Police Lineups – So What do We Do? |
| 7 | Complete | Module 9 Quiz |
| 8 | Submit | Peer-Grading for Doug Jones Paper #3 – Section D |

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| **Module 10 – Interrogation and False Confessions**  **Begins March 29, 2021** | | |
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| **Order** | **Task** | **Course Material** |
| 1 | Watch | Interviews vs. Interrogations |
| 2 | Watch | Interrogations: Disparate Opinions |
| 3 | Watch | Interrogation Tactics: The Basics |
| 4 | Watch | The Reid Technique and Risk Factors |
| 5 | Complete | Module 10 Quiz |
| 6 | Read | “The Three Errors: Pathways for False Confessions and Convictions” By Leo and Drizin (located in the “Doug Jones” folder on the left side of the screen under “Research Articles”) |
| 7 | Read | “Police Induced Confessions” By Kassin, et. al. (located in the “Doug Jones” folder on the left side of the screen under “Research Articles”) |
| 8 | Complete | Other research required for Doug Jones Paper #4 – Section E |
| 9 | Submit | Doug Jones Report: Paper #4 – Section E |

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| **Module 11 – Polygraph:**  **Begins April 5, 2021** | | |
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| **Order** | **Task** | **Course Material** |
| 1 | Watch | The Nature of Lying |
| 2 | Watch | YouTube Video: “How it Works: The Polygraph Test” |
| 3 | Watch | The Polygraph Test (Part 1) |
| 4 | Watch | YouTube Video: “Polygraph Expert Explains How to Beat a Lie Detector Test” |
| 5 | Watch | The Polygraph Test (Part 2) |
| 6 | Read | “Trial by Polygraph” by David Lykken |
| 7 | Complete | Module 11 Quiz |
| 8 | Submit | Peer-Grading for Doug Jones Paper #4 – Section E |

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| **Module 12 – Other Lie Detection Methods:**  **Begins April 12, 2021** | | |
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| **Order** | **Task** | **Course Material** |
| 1 | Watch | “The Wire” – Photocopier Lie Detector |
| 2 | Watch | Microexpressions |
| 3 | Watch | YouTube Video: “Microexpressions in 4K” |
| 4 | Watch | Voice Stress Analysis |
| 5 | Watch | YouTube Video: “Computer Voice Stress Analyzer” (an advertisement for the National institute for Truth Verification) |
| 6 | Watch | YouTube Video: “ABC News Exposes NITV CVSA Scam” |
| 7 | Complete | Module 12 Quiz |
| 8 | Skip | There is NO Doug Jones paper due this week! |

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| **Module 13 – Criminal Profiling:**  **Begins April 19, 2021** | | |
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| **Order** | **Task** | **Course Material** |
| 1 | Watch | YouTube Video: “Criminal Profiling Introduction” – Dr. Barbara Masser |
| 2 | Watch | Criminal Profiling – Organizational Structure |
| 3 | Watch | YouTube Video: “Criminal Profiling Methods” – Dr. Barbara Masser |
| 4 | Watch | Criminal Profiling – Getting Specific |
| 5 | Watch | YouTube Video: “Are Professional profilers Better?” – Dr. Barbara Masser |
| 6 | Watch | Criminal Profiling – The Final Verdict |
| 8 | Complete | Module 13 Quiz |
| 9 | Skip | There is NO Doug Jones paper due this week! |

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| **Module 14 – Treating Psychopaths**  **Begins April 26, 2021** | | |
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| **Order** | **Task** | **Course Material** |
| 1 | Watch | 10-Minute Psychopaths |
| 2 | Watch | Treating Psychopaths |
| 3 | Optional | Psychopaths (Part 1) (Optional for those what want more in depth information on psychopaths) |
| 4 | Optional | Psychopaths (Part 2) (Optional for those what want more in depth information on psychopaths) |
| 5 | Optional | Psychopaths (Part 3) (Optional for those what want more in depth information on psychopaths) |
| 6 | Complete | Module 14 Quiz |
| 7 | Submit | Doug Jones Report: Paper #5 – Section F |

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| **Module 15 – Handwriting Analysis and Other Pseudoscience:**  **Begins May 3, 2021** | | |
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| **Order** | **Task** | **Course Material** |
| 1 | TBD | Content to be Posted Online |
| 2 | Complete | Module 15 Quiz |
| 3 | Submit | Peer-Grading for Doug Jones Paper #5 – Section F |

# Assignments Description

**Weekly Quizzes (55% total):** There are 10 quizzes during the course of the semester.

* 1. Online quizzes must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm of the week it is assigned… after that, late penalties apply. Missed quizzes can be made up, butt will be subject to a late penalty as outlined in this syllabus (5% deduction per day for every day late).
  2. 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.
  3. Each quiz is worth 3.66% of your overall grade in the course.

**Doug Jones Report – Overview (45% total – all five papers combined)**

For this assignment you are going to assume the role of a psychologist who was hired by the prosecution (i.e. NOT Doug’s side) as an expert witness. You have been asked to provide an expert opinion on the behaviors and investigative procedures used by the investigators (in this case, state troopers). To understand your role and responsibilities, please review the following bullet points:

1. All of the information provided to you is real. These are the actual documents I received when I worked this case. Mr. Jones’ name has been changed, as has the location and other identifying information, but this case is real. Please don’t bother searching the internet for who the “real” Doug Jones may be. Not surprisingly, many men have shot their wives and looking for article on the real case will not help you get a better grade on this assignment since I’ve changed other details.
2. On day 1 of the investigation, Mr. Jones stated one version of events in which he depicted himself as a victim and his wife as a victim as well. On day 2 of the investigation, Mr. Jones changed his story to reflect that fact that his own actions accidentally resulted in the death of his wife and that he subsequently attempted to cover up his accident to make it appear as though he was also a victim. On day 14 of the investigation, Mr. Jones stated that he was manipulated by investigators, that his grief was used against him, and that he stated things that were clearly untrue in the midst of overwhelming grief. Mr. Jones then stated that his initial version of events was actually the correct version of events.
3. You have been retained by the prosecution in this case (the jurisdiction that is prosecuting Mr. Jones) to answer the following questions:
   1. **Ultimate question**: *In your expert opinion, did Mr. Jones, as a result of the actions of the investigators, and his own individual psychological factors, falsely confess to mortally injuring his wife when he changed his story on day 2?*
4. All the material you need to review (and there is quite a bit) is located on the Blackboard site for the course under “Doug Jones” in the column on the left-hand side of the screen.
   1. All information provided must be reviewed and utilized when necessary.
5. Please use the template provided on Blackboard (titled “Report Template – Doug Jones) for your paper. Failure to use the provided template will result in lost points.
   1. Instructions are written in the template in highlighted text. Please delete these instructions as you complete the report.
   2. Use single spacing in the report.
   3. Do not change the format. Use what you are given, even if you think there is a better way.
6. The report will be completed in sections (as outlined below). By the end of the semester, you will have a fully completed expert’s report on the incident.
   1. As we progress through the semester, simply add information to the first report you submitted and make adjustments to previous sections as needed.
   2. You may leave the highlighted text and instructions for future sections of the report in the report you turn in without penalty. However you must delete the highlighted text and instructions of the completed sections.
7. This assignment is going to be graded via peer-review. You are going to be asked to grade the reports of two of your fellow classmates using the rubric available on the course Blackboard site. Your overall grade on the report will be the average of these two grades.
   1. In the case that you feel your peer-graders applied the rubric too rigidly, or were unfair in some way, I will grade the report myself and make a decision.
   2. However, the rubric is available to you online before you write the report, so use that as a guide when completing the assignment.
   3. I will review how to turn in, and grade, peer reviewed reports in a video posted to the course Blackboard site.
   4. Late assignments will NOT participate in peer review. Late assignments can be graded, however, you will lose the points associated with peer-review since you will be unable to participate.

**Doug Jones Report – Sections “A” (Introduction) and “B” (Materials to Review) (5%)**

1. This is the easiest section of the report to complete… Think of it as a warmup.
2. For this assignment you must:
   1. Complete “Section A” as outlined in the report template.
   2. Complete “Section B” as outlined in the report template.
3. A couple things to consider:
   1. “Section B” should include all the documents provided to you on Blackboard.
   2. “Section B” (Materials to Review) may change over time. Initially, you will provide the names of all the documents that are provided for you to review on Blackboard. However, as the overall report progresses, you may find that you need to add items to this list. For example, you may review a research article in subsequent sections and include that information in your paper. If this is the case, simply add that research article later, when that section of the report is completed. Again, this section should initially include all of the provided materials.
   3. If this seems like a lot of material to review, please know that I have whittled down the documents to include only the documents that have relevant information. When I was initially hired as an expert on this case, the attorney sent me over 600 pages of documents to review. Not fun.

**Doug Jones Report – Section “C” (Trooper’s Report of the Incident) (10%)**

1. This section is a recounting of the entire incident from the perspective of the Troopers. It is probably going to be pretty long.
2. This is going to take some time since it involves reviewing all the documents provided and writing out a cohesive narrative of the events.
3. Remember, you are the expert in this case, you need to communicate that you have an understanding of what occurred. All of the information you provide in this section (and the next) will be mixed with, and compared to, all the information in “Section F” to form your opinion.
4. There should be no opinions in this section (or anything that resembles an opinion). Facts only. You are not allowed to share an opinion until “Section F,” after you have laid out all the facts.
5. Please be sure to:
   1. Include all the information from the documents provided that tell the story from the Trooper’s perspective. If you find yourself wondering whether or not a particular piece of information is relevant, include it.
   2. Recount the events in chronological order.
   3. Include all information that is relevant to the case. Remember, the Trooper’s account of the initial crime scene is important, even though not directly related to their questioning of Mr. Jones, since their perception of the crime scene (and their perception of whether or not Mr. Jones may have intentionally murdered his wife) can influence the way Mr. Jones was questioned, interrogated, and treated by the Troopers.
   4. Write in a narrative format (do not use bullet points or lists).
   5. Use direct quotes, but only when necessary. If an individual stated something relevant, or is quoted in the police report, you can include it. However, if something from the report can be stated in a different way, or made more concise, paraphrase.
   6. Make sure you state the source of the information. For example, you may state, “Trooper A stated that the house was disheveled and…” Don’t simply state, “When the Troopers arrived the house was disheveled and…” Make sure you add the source of the information. There are a lot of people involved, maybe some acted ethically while others did not.
      1. You may want to use phrases like, “Individual A communicated…,” “Individual A stated…,” “Individual A reported…,” or “As stated by Individual A…” to make things seem less repetitive.
6. Do not:
   1. Add any details from Mr. Jones that contradict what the Troopers are stating, that information is added to the next section.
   2. Quote large sections of the police report in an effort to make things easier/move faster.

**Doug Jones Report – Section “D” (Interview of Mr. Doug Jones and Psychological Testing Results) (10%)**

1. This is the section in which Mr. Jones gets to state his case. Since you have already recounted to entire incident from the perspective of the Troopers involved, this section just needs to highlight where Mr. Jones sees things differently.
2. This is going to take a bit less time than “Section C” since you have already written a cohesive narrative of the events.
3. Like the previous section, there should be no opinions in this section (or anything that resembles an opinion). Facts only. You are not allowed to share an opinion until “Section F,” after you have laid out all the facts.
4. Please be sure to:
   1. Include all the information from the documents provided that tell the story from the perspective of Mr. Jones. Again, if you find yourself wondering whether or not a particular piece of information is relevant, include it.
   2. Compare and contrast the perspective of Mr. Jones with that of the Troopers. For example: “Trooper A described the interaction as… however, Mr. Jones stated that he felt…”
   3. Include direct quotes from Mr. Jones when necessary.
   4. Recount the events in chronological order.
   5. Write in a narrative format (do not use bullet points or lists).
   6. Make sure you state the source of the information. This will likely be Mr. Jones given the fact that this section is dedicated to his perspective.
5. Psychological Testing Results:
   1. Leave the “Psychological Testing” section in your report.
   2. The results of the psychological tests will be used later in “Section F” as you integrate the information from research and make your case for (or against) whether Mr. Jones knowingly and voluntarily confessed.

**Doug Jones Report – Section “E” (Analysis) (10%)**

1. This is the section where you need to be an expert and a teacher. The lawyers, judge, and jury (if this goes to trial), do not understand how or why false confessions occur. You need to be the one to explain it to them.
2. I’ve provided you with 2 articles (Leo & Drizin and Kassin) that will help get you started in explaining how false confessions occur. You need to provide 2 additional articles (minimum) and incorporate those explanations into your report as well.
3. Be sure to be thorough and include information about:
   1. Misclassification error
   2. Coercion error
   3. Contamination error
   4. Any other law enforcement-related errors or behaviors and actions that influence false confessions not covered in coercion error.
   5. Individual factors that influence false confessions like: vulnerable populations (juveniles, etc.), intelligence level, mental illness, personality traits, etc. (These are not really covered in the articles I gave you in any detail and you will likely have to do your own research).
4. Explain everything in detail whether you think it is relevant to the case or not. I suspect this section will be about 1-2 single spaced pages.

**Doug Jones Report – Section “F” (Findings) (10%)**

1. Congratulations. After all that work, you finally get to have an opinion.
2. Remember, the purpose of this evaluation is to determine whether Mr. Jones gave a knowing, voluntary, and intelligent confession the first time he confessed.
3. Begin this section with a statement like (feel free to cut and paste): “Within the bounds of reasonable psychological certainty, and subject to change if additional information becomes available, it is my professional opinion that Mr. Jones…”
4. Apply the research from the previous section to all of the information in “Section C” and “Section D” (including the results of the psychological testing when necessary”
   1. Be logical and factual. If the evidence doesn’t support something, great. If the evidence does not support something, don’t try and make it fit or ignore it.
   2. There are bound to be pieces of evidence that contradict each other or do not fit nicely into a cohesive narrative of what happened. Life is like that. It is your job to take all the information and make a decision one way or the other. No standing on both sides of the line.
   3. Form your opinion and make the case for it… but address issues with information that does not fit your theory.
   4. Leave no stone unturned.
5. With the exception of your ultimate opinion, this section is all review. There should be no new information. This is a brief summary of everything you covered with the arguments for and against your opinion included.

# Course Policies

* **Hate Speech**: The University setting fosters and supports free speech and the civil expression of differing viewpoints. However, hate speech, speech that incites violence, intimidating speech that fosters fear and disrupts the educational process will not be tolerated. Individuals who violate this course policy, verbally or in writing, will be reported to the appropriate authorities for review and determination of consequences.
* Late Assignments: Late work will **not** be accepted for this course. If there is a legitimate emergency, your score of zero will be exempted from your total average. This exception will be allowed only **once** during the semester. After applying this exception, all grades of zero will be included in calculating your final grade.
* 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 try to respond to your emails within 48 hours. I am not available by email during the weekends. 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, it is incredibly helpful and efficient) 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 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

1. 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](https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/).
2. 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.
3. Students must follow the university policy for [Responsible Use of Computing](http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/)
4. 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).
5. 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.
6. [The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)](http://caps.gmu.edu/) 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.
7. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the [George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS)](http://ods.gmu.edu/). 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.
8. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
9. [The George Mason University Writing Center](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/) 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.
10. [Diversity](http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement/): 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.