

Individual Assessment Course Syllabus

Forensic Psychology (FP 6020 BLA, Fall II, 2010)

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Office hours: By appointment,
email and/or telephone

Dates of Class: Course begins online **October 28, 2010**, meets on the weekends of **November 13 & 14** and **December 11 & 12**, and concludes on **December 18, 2010**. There will be weekly instruction online throughout the term.

Final Date to Drop the Class:

To receive a “W” grade a student must officially drop this class by the date listed below that corresponds to this course’s term and length. Students may not withdraw from this course after this date. If a student chooses to discontinue course work after the final drop date, the student may receive an “F” grade for the course.

Session II (7.5 week courses):
Deadline for withdrawal “W”: December 1st, 2010

Required Texts:

Ackerman, Marc J. (1999). *Essentials of Forensic Psychological Assessment*. New York: John Wiley and Sons ISBN: 0471331864 (ELECTRONIC BOOK)

Morrison, James (2007). *Diagnosis Made Easier: Principles & Techniques for Mental Health Clinicians*. Located on the Argosy Library NetBooks link.

eBook access and links are available at the course eCollege website. Students should familiarize themselves with the eBook use resources and the VitalSource Bookshelf website and tutorials to develop competence in using the eBook format.

DVD’s or Videos required:

Students will need to locate the following videos to use for assessment write up:

The Soloist (see assignment grid for due date.)

Aileen Wurnos: Life and Death of a Serial Killer. (these are her 2002 interviews) for full assessment (see assignment grid for due date.)

Please locate these in advance so that you have enough time to complete the assignments.

Highly recommended: This book would be helpful in learning terminology, interview questions, and how to write reports. Earlier versions are available for lower cost.

Zuckerman, E. L. (2010) *Clinician’s Thesaurus: The Guide to Conducting Interviews and Writing Psychological Reports: The Clinician’s Toolbox, 7th Ed.* New York: Guilford Press. ISBN: 1572304375

Other Recommended Texts :

- Chesney-Lind, M. & Pasko, L. (2004) *The Female Offender: Girls, Women, and Crime*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Grisso, T. (2003) *Evaluating Competencies: Forensic Assessments and Instruments*. New York: Kluwer/Plenum.
- Hare, R. D. (1999). *Without Conscience: The Disturbing World of the Psychopaths Among Us*. New York: Guilford Press. ISBN: 1572304510
- Meloy, J. R. (2002) *The Psychopathic Mind: Origins, Dynamics, And Treatment*. Oxford: Jason Aronson.
- Meloy, Reid (2000). *Violence Risk and Threat Assessment: A Practical Guide for Mental Health and Criminal Justice Professionals*. Specialized Training Services: San Diego, CA. ISBN: 0-9703189-0-1
- Peck, M.S. (1983) *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Samenow, S. (2004) *Inside The Criminal Mind*. New York: Crown.
- Shea, S. C. (2002) *The Practical Art of Suicide Assessment: A Guide for Mental Health Professionals and Substance Abuse Counselors*. New York: John Wiley & Sons. ISBN: 0471237612

Course Description:

Introductory graduate course focusing on individual assessment in forensic settings and contexts. What should be included in a good clinical assessment will be covered including risk assessment and considerations for civil commitment procedures. The differences between clinical and forensic assessment will then be delineated including assessing for trial competency, standards for NGI (Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity), and court requests for psychiatric evaluation (4011.6). Accepted standards of assessment practice will also be reviewed for specialized forensic populations.

Course Objectives:

- Students will gain an understanding of the theoretical foundation and clinical method of assessing individuals.
- Students will learn what types of specific assessments might occur in forensic settings and how forensic assessments vary from clinical assessments.

- Students will gain additional competence in structuring a clinical interview, mental status examination, performing a thorough risk assessment, and differential screening process when evaluating individuals in forensic settings.
- Students will be exposed to instruments that are generally utilized only in forensic settings to determine an individual's risk of recidivism, or to determine sociopathic characteristics.
- Students will gain specific exposure in recognizing malingering and deception.

MISSING CLASS POLICY: Attendance is required for all four days of in class weekend meetings. If you have another commitment conflict, please reschedule that commitment OR choose to take this class at a later date. Missing a day of class will result in not passing the class.

Methods of Instruction:

This course will be delivered in a **blended format**, including in class lecture and discussion, video, and role-plays combined with online instruction. In addition to the two required weekends on campus, students are required to participate online on a weekly basis for the term of the course.

Course Assignments and Student Expectations:

WEEK	READINGS	ASSIGNMENT DUE
Week One	<i>Morrison, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4 Ackerman, Chapter 1 Read online lecture Articles posted in Readings & Assignments</i>	<i>1. Sign into discussion group online and introduce yourself (by Sunday, October 1st.)</i>
Week Two	<i>Morrison Chapters 5, 6, 7,8 Read online lecture Articles posted in Readings & Assignments Skim through Zuckerman to become familiar with the layout of the book. Zuckerman is primarily a good resource, but not something you actually read through cover to cover.</i>	<i>Read online info on Torticelli case. 2. Online discussion and assignment. To be completed by November 8th. Meet in class on November 13 & 14 Please bring Morrison & Zuckerman to class.</i>
Week Three	<i>Morrison Chapters 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 Electronic readings on interview technique..</i>	<i>Assignment using The Solist (chapter 17, section 1:31-1:37); Chief complaint, Hx of presenting problem, MSE) Send your write up to me at bfriendly@earthlink.net by</i>

		<i>November 15 at midnight.</i>
Week Four	Ackerman Chapters 7 (Juvenile assessment) & 8 (Substance abuse assessment) Electronic readings on intelligence testing. Doc Share readings on suicide	<i>Interview an acquaintance and gather their history. Write a short two page summary using the format provided in class. Due November 22 Send to bfriendly@earthlink.net</i>
Week Five	Ackerman Chapters 4 (Malingering), 5 (Competency), 6 (Civil Commitment) Electronic readings on Rorschach.	We won't have an assignment due on Nov 29 since that is Thanksgiving week, BUT you could use this week to work on Wuornos and the midterm.
Week Six	Ackerman Chapters 3 (Personal injury, BUT primarily a review of neuropsych assessment), 9 (Maltreatment) & 10 (Violence and risk assessment) Doc share readings on violent risk assessment	Midterm :Due December 6 by midnight. Meet December 11 & 12
Week Seven	Complete Wuornos assignment	Due December 18

- Students will be expected to attend class regularly and be ready to discuss required readings.
- Participation in class discussion and group work (e.g. in-class vignettes and/or role play exercises) is required.
- There will be a midterm take home exam (see assignment grid for due date.)
- Online participation is required. There will be four short assignments online (see weeks 1, 2,3, 4) each worth 25 points. Week 1 just requires you to log in and introduce yourselves. Week 2 assignment will be posted online. Week 3 & 4 will be explained at the first class meeting.
- One clinical assessment will also be assigned. You will be writing an assessment on Aileen Wuornos (a woman found guilty of serial murder). See assignment grid for due date. Submit to bfriendly@earthlink.net. Details on how this assessment should be done will be discussed at the first class meeting and through online instruction.

- **Late assignment policy:** Each day an assignment is late 10% of points will be deducted. No assignment graded after being 5 days late. Assignment due dates are listed. The final assignment (due last day of class) will not be accepted after that date, UNLESS prior discussion with the instructor has occurred with a request of an Incomplete. Incompletes are considered under rare circumstances.
- One can potentially earn up to 400 points (100 points for exam, 100 points for the clinical assessment, 100 points for the online assignments (25 points each) and 100 points for participation.)

COURSE OUTLINE

Please review the above grid for weekly assignments. Weekend meeting topics discussed below.

First Class Weekend: Read Morrison's, *The First Interview* and familiarize yourself with Zuckerman's *Clinical Thesaurus* prior to the first class meeting. **Please bring the Zuckerman book to class as you will be using it in to aid you in doing assessments that weekend.** The Zuckerman book is a great reference book and not really the kind of book you read cover to cover---but do familiarize yourself with its layout as well as the key elements that are expected in a good clinical assessment.

Saturday

- Introductions. Course overview and expectations.
- Key elements of a clinical assessment.
- Conducting a mental status exam.

Sunday

- Civil commitment procedure
- Differentiating forensic assessment from general clinical assessment.
- Penal code driven evaluation
- Overview of assessing for NGI (not guilty by reason of insanity) and 4011.6 (court ordered psychiatric evaluations.)

Second In Class Weekend: Readings as assigned. **Also bring Zuckerman book to class again.**

Saturday

- Practice with forensic assessment.
- More on incompetence assessment.
- Psychopathy.
- Malingering and/or factitious disorder.

Sunday

- Risk assessment (suicide and violence).
- Special population considerations.

GRADING:

Assessment One	100 points	A	381-400
Online assignments	100 points (25 pts each)	A-	360-380
Final Exam	100 points	B+	347-359
Participation	100 points	B	333-346
		B-	320-332
		C	281-319
		F	<280
Total Class Points: 400			

Grading Criteria for Assessments:

A=90+ Assessment is in appropriate format as suggested by instructor, well organized, thought out, provides excellent picture of client's presentation.

B=80-89 Assessment is well organized and thought out, but is missing one component of format OR picture of client is only adequate or is somewhat limited.

C=70-79 Assessment is disorganized, client presentation is inadequate, grammar is poor.

F=<70 Evidence of plagiarism or assessment not submitted.

Grading Criteria for Participation:

A=90+ Student actively participated in discussions in >80% of class sessions; nearly all comments were thought provoking and incorporated material from the assigned readings.

B=80-89 Student actively participated in discussions in >70% of class sessions; most of the comments were thought provoking and incorporated material from assigned readings.

C=70-89 Student participated in discussions in >60% of class sessions, comments/questions demonstrate only a surface level understanding of topics

F=<70 Poor understanding of course topics and demonstration that course materials have not been read.

Instructor Bio:

Dr. Frechette has worked in the community mental health field for 37 years, primarily specializing in psychiatric crisis and addiction work. She currently works in the California prison system as a psychologist at a 50 bed crisis unit treating inmates who have become suicidal or unable to function because of an acute mental illness. For ten years prior to this she was the supervisor of Marin County's psychiatric emergency service, served as that county's disaster mental health coordinator, as well as supervising their forensic unit (jail mental health, a case management unit for the severely mentally ill with criminal charges, and starting up and coordinating mental health court.) As an addiction specialist, she was a therapist on NIDA addiction studies at the San Francisco Veteran Administration and UCSF; a director of an inpatient chemical dependency unit, as well as outpatient intensive treatment and aftercare; a director of a crisis response unit, and a director of an outpatient detoxification program. Dr. Frechette's therapeutic style is primarily phenomenological as she has been trained in brief therapies, hypnosis, systems theory, biofeedback, somatics, and cognitive behavioral therapy. She received her Masters degree at Northern Arizona University and her Doctorate degree at California Institute of Integral Studies. She currently is licensed in California as both a psychologist and as a marriage and family therapist. Dr. Frechette has been working as an educator offering training and workshops, as well as acting as adjunct faculty at numerous universities, for the past twenty years.

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism:

In an effort to foster a spirit of honesty and integrity during the learning process, Argosy University requires that the submission of all course assignments represent the original work produced by that student. All sources must be documented through normal scholarly references/citations and all work must be submitted using the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Edition (2001)*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association (APA) format. Please refer to Appendix A in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Edition* for thesis and paper format. Students are encouraged to purchase this manual (required in some courses) and become familiar with its content as well as consult the Argosy University catalog for further information regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism.

Additionally, Argosy University considers resubmission of a work produced for one course in a subsequent course or the submission of work done partially or entirely by another to be academic dishonesty. It is the student's responsibility to seek clarification from the instructor regarding how much help may be received in completing an assignment, exam or project and what sources may be used.

Scholarly writing: The faculty at Argosy University is dedicated to providing a learning environment that supports scholarly and ethical writing free from academic dishonesty and plagiarism. This includes the proper and appropriate referencing of all sources. You are responsible for maintaining an electronic copy of any work submitted, because you may be asked to submit your course assignments through "Turnitin," (www.turnitin.com), an online resource established to help educators develop writing/research skills and detect potential cases of academic dishonesty. Turnitin

compares submitted papers to billions of pages of content and provides a comparison report to your instructor. This comparison detects papers that share common information and duplicative language.

Library

All resources in Argosy University's online collection are available through the Internet. The campus librarian will provide students with links, user IDs, and passwords.

Library Resources: Argosy University's core online collection features nearly 21,000 full-text journals and 23,000 electronic books and other content covering all academic subject areas including Business & Economics, Career & General Education, Computers, Engineering & Applied Science, Humanities, Science, Medicine & Allied Health, and Social & Behavior Sciences. Many titles are directly accessible through the Online Public Access Catalog at <http://library.argosy.edu>. Detailed descriptions of online resources are located at <http://library.argosy.edu/misc/onlinedblist.html>.

In addition to online resources, Argosy University's onsite collections contain a wealth of subject-specific research materials searchable in the Online Public Access Catalog. Catalog searching is easily limited to individual campus collections. Alternatively, students can search combined collections of all Argosy University Libraries. Students are encouraged to seek research and reference assistance from campus librarians.

Information Literacy: Argosy University's Information Literacy Tutorial was developed to teach students fundamental and transferable research skills. The tutorial consists of five modules where students learn to select sources appropriate for academic-level research, search periodical indexes and search engines, and evaluate and cite information. In the tutorial, students study concepts and practice them through interactions. At the conclusion of each module, they can test their comprehension and receive immediate feedback. Each module takes less than 20 minutes to complete. Please view the tutorial at <http://library.argosy.edu/infolit/>

ADA Policy

It is AU/San Francisco Bay Area Campus policy not to discriminate against qualified students with a documented disability in its educational programs, activities or services. If you have a disability-related need for accommodations in this class, contact the Campus Director of Student Services at 510-215-0277.

Your instructor is responsible for delivering this curriculum in a format that will ensure the objectives are met and measured. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways depending upon the experience, orientation, technological acumen, emphasis and preferences of the instructor as well as the resources available. Your instructor is also required to ensure that the course Outline include details regarding assignments and method of instruction.

Argosy Communication:

If you choose to use an email address other than the assigned Argosy email, please be advised that you do so at your own risk. Any difficulty receiving Argosy emails will be your responsibility.