

PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES IN FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY
FP 6500 (Online)
Course Syllabus - Spring 2009
January 10 - March 2, 2009

Professor: Amy Bacharach, Ph.D.
Meeting Times: Online throughout each week of the session
Officer Hours: By appointment via IM or telephone
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Required Reading:

- Ethical Practice in Forensic Psychology: A Systematic Model for Decision Making (2006)
Shane S. Bush, Mary A. Connell, & Robert L. Denney
ISBN: 978-1-59147-395-4
- American Psychological Association's (APA) ethics code – Available online at
www.apa.org/ethics
- Committee on ethical guidelines for forensic psychologists (1991). Specialty guidelines for forensic psychologists. *Law and Human Behavior*, 15(6), 655-665. – Available online at
<http://www.ap-ls.org/links/currentforensicguidelines.pdf>
- Any supplemental materials provided by instructor

Recommended Reading:

- *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 5th Edition (2001)
ISBN: 1-55798-790-4
- *Life Principles: Feeling Good by Doing Good*, 2005
Bruce D. Weinstein
ISBN: 1578602165
- *Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*, 2004
Lynne Truss
ISBN: 1-59240-087-6

Course Description (from university catalog):

This course considers the ethical and legal conflicts or dilemmas within the legal system and includes a discussion of other professional issues such as race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. The course

reviews applicable approaches to addressing or resolving these issues, dilemmas, and conflicts as they relate to forensic psychology.

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 (indicated by bold type). Students may not withdraw from this course after the date 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.

Spring Session I (7.5 week courses): February 13, 2009

Spring Session II (7.5 week courses): April 6, 2008

Spring Full Term (15 week courses): March 18, 2008

Course Objectives:

- To understand from where ethics derive, and how ethics apply to your role in forensic psychology
- To understand specific ethical obligations of psychologists and within the legal system such as being an expert witness, interrogating, and medicating to induce sanity for the purpose of applying the death penalty
- To understand ethical obligations of conducting research in general and with those under the age of 18
- To understand ethical obligations when dealing with children; mandated reporting laws, and domestic violence
- To understand both ethical and legal obligations of practice-related issues such as confidentiality, record keeping, duty to warn, and suicide prevention
- To understand how cultural, racial, religious, and ethnic diversity affects ethical obligations

Program Outcomes: Master of Arts in Forensic Psychology

Program Outcome One:

Students will demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical concepts and methodological approaches to the psychological bases of behavior as it relates to the practice and application of forensic psychology.

Program Outcome Two:

A. Students will be able to distinguish and utilize the underlying theories guiding the interface between the legal system and psychology.

B. Students will be able to establish and analyze the interaction between psychology and the law in all major aspects of criminal and civil justice system.

Program Outcome Three:

Students will demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate the existing literature and body of knowledge in assessment, evaluation and research methods in forensic psychology.

Program Outcome Four:

Students will use leadership, consultative, and ethical knowledge, skills and attitudes that will allow them to succeed as a part of a professional team, capable of expanding the role of psychologists within society.

Schedule:

<u>WEEK</u>	<u>DATES</u>	<u>LECTURE/READING</u>
1	1/10 – 1/18	Bush, Connell, & Denney Ch 1: Law & Psychology; APA ethics code; Ethical guidelines for forensic psychologists; Reporting abuse; Ch 2: Referrals; Paper topic due by 1/18
2	1/19 – 1/25	Ch 3: Collection & Review of information
3	1/26 – 2/1	Ch 4: Evaluations
4	2/2 – 2/8	Ch 5: Documentation; Exam distributed by 2/8
5	2/9 – 2/15	Ch 6: Testimony & Termination; Exam due by midnight on 2/16
6	2/16 – 2/22	Ch 7: Ethical misconduct;
7	2/23 – 3/2	Ch 8: Conclusion and wrap up; Paper due by midnight on 2/23

Evaluation Methods:

1. Exam: 40%

The exam will consist of a possible combination of multiple-choice, short-answer, and/or essay questions. The questions will come from your assigned readings and online lectures. The quality of writing will be used in grading essays.

2. Paper: 40%

Papers may be written on any topic related to the course objectives and content. Please peruse the book's table of contents and this syllabus for topics that we will be covering. **Topics must be approved by January 18.** Students must also read a minimum of two peer-reviewed, academic journal articles related to the topic selected. Each paper must be reviewed by another student with the reviewer's name referenced in a footnote. Reviewers should read for content and style.

Papers must adhere to formatting and style set forth in the APA Publication Manual and are expected to contain no grammar or spelling errors. The quality of your writing will impact your grade. Papers should not exceed 10 to 15 pages including title page and references. Writing should be for quality rather than quantity. **Papers will be due via email by February 23.**

Grading of the paper shall be based on the following criteria:

- a) Clarity of content
- b) Integration of information that demonstrates knowledge and understanding of ethics related to topic

- c) Following APA style in format, citations, and references
- d) Grammar
- e) Punctuation
- f) Sentence structure
- g) Following instructions for writing and turning in the paper

3. Attendance/Participation: 20%

Due to the nature of online classes, participation in online discussions is very important. Students are expected to complete any required reading on time. “Lectures” will be posted by Monday evenings for that week’s topic. Following each posted lecture, discussion questions or topics will be posted. Students are required to respond to those questions or topics within that week. **Students are required to post a thought, question, or response to someone else’s questions, or otherwise contribute to the forum, a minimum of two times per week.** In addition, students are required to complete any posted exercises.

Grading:

Important Note: All writing must adhere to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Edition (2001)*. This includes in-text citations, references, gender-neutral writing, running heads (if used), etc. Also important is your writing. **YOUR WRITING WILL INFLUENCE YOUR GRADE.** It is important to proofread anything submitted for grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc. At this point in your academic career, you should know how to write well. In addition to substantive topic information, this class will also cover basic writing skills. Questions about writing style are welcome and encouraged.

Exams, Papers, and Assignments will be graded from 0 to 100 points.

Grading Scale:

- 90 - 100 = A
- 80 - 89 = B
- 70 - 79 = C
- 65 - 69 = D
- Below 65 = F

Please note policy on plagiarism below. I do not tolerate plagiarism and any student caught plagiarizing will fail the class.

University Policy on Plagiarism and Screening for Plagiarism

Argosy University seeks to foster a spirit of honesty and integrity. 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, and the extent to which any sources have been used must be apparent to the reader. Argosy University further 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 course instructor about how much help may be received in completing an assignment or exam

or project and what sources may be used. Students found guilty of academic dishonesty or plagiarism shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from Argosy University.

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 to 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.

ADA Accommodations

Argosy University is committed to providing qualified students with a disability an equal opportunity to access the benefits, rights and privileges of college services, programs and activities in compliance with The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If you have a disability-related need for accommodations in this class, contact the Campus Director of Student Services at 510-215-0277.

Course Policy:

The schedule and procedures for this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. If substantive changes are required, you will receive a revised syllabus. This class follows the University’s policies as written in the Catalog.

Students are welcome and encouraged to contact the professor with questions, comments, or issues regarding course content or assignments.

Argosy University Ethical Code of Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical, professional, and civil manner. Unprofessional behavior includes, but is not limited to, hostile or careless uses of profanity or obscenities, physical displays of anger or aggressiveness, threatening gestures or comments, violence or harassment, insubordination or persistent, disrespectful arguing with supervisors, or any other illegal or unethical conduct. Unprofessional behavior may be cause for disciplinary action.

Argosy University is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge and learning, as well as to the development of responsible personal and social conduct. Each student, by registering, assumes the responsibility of becoming familiar with, and abiding by, the general standards of conduct expected by Argosy University. This set of standards, known as the Argosy University Ethical Code of Conduct, is not to be confused with the guidelines set forth in other professional association ethics codes. Specifically, each student is expected to refrain from engaging in the following:

- Academic dishonesty of any kind with respect to examinations or coursework. This includes any form of cheating and plagiarism.
- Falsification or alteration of Argosy University documents, records, or identification cards
- Forgery, issuing bad checks, or not meeting financial obligations to Argosy University
- Theft or the deliberate damaging or misusing of property belonging to others or the property of Argosy University
- The manufacture, possession, use, or distribution of any form of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs while on Argosy University property

- Possession, display, or use of any dangerous instrument, weapon, or explosives (certified law enforcement officers required by their employer to carry a firearm are excluded)
- Disrupting the study of others or of Argosy University activities, or interfering with the freedom of movement of any member or guest of the Argosy University community.
- Deliberate interference with academic freedom, freedom of speech, or movement of any member or guest of the Argosy University community
- Participation in any activity that disrupts or interferes with the education of others or the orderly operation of Argosy University
- Physical abuse, threatening acts, or harassment toward others

In addition, students in the clinical psychology programs are also required to adhere to the standards set forth in the *American Psychological Association Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*.

Students found guilty of violating Argosy University's Ethical Code of Conduct are subject to sanctions up to and including dismissal from Argosy University.

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/>

The Argosy University Statement Regarding Diversity

Argosy University prepares students to serve populations with diverse social, ethnic, economic, and educational experiences. Both the academic and training curricula are designed to provide an environment in which students can develop the skills and attitudes essential to working with people from a wide range of backgrounds.