

ARGOSY UNIVERSITY SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

COURSE SYLLABUS: FP6540 Forensic Psychology Seminar

Fall 2010: September 7, 2010 – December 18, 2010

Course Title: Forensic Psychology Seminar

Course Number: FP6540

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Office Hours: By Appointment – Mon, Tues, Weds, Thurs: 12:30-2

Argosy Communications:

If you choose to use an email address other than my assigned Argosy email address, above,, please be advised that you do so at your own risk. Any difficulty receiving Argosy emails will be your responsibility. Please ALWAYS put your name in the Subject Line of emails and on all materials attached to emails.

Required texts: eBooks [At VitalSource Bookshelf]

Baird, R.N. (2011) *Internship, Practicum, and Field Placement Handbook: A Guide for the Helping Professions*. Prentice Hall. 5th Edition [For students choosing Seminar field placement]

Lester, J.D. (2010) *Principles of Writing Research Papers*. Penguin Academics. 3rd Edition. [For students choosing Seminar research paper]

[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.]

Recommended texts:

Goldstein, Alan M. (Ed.) (2006) *Forensic Psychology: Emerging Topics and Expanding Roles*. Wiley.(Hardcover) # ISBN-10: 0471714070 # ISBN-13: 978-0471714

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th Ed.). (2001). Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Please note that there may be other additional readings for this course. Hard copy required readings may be given to you in class. Links to electronic copy required readings will be provided in the appropriate seminar module.

Prerequisites for Course: Successful completion of twenty-one (21) units in the MAFP program at AUSFBA. MS Word 2003 or later required. [Conversion software available at Microsoft Updates]

Course Description:

The Forensic Psychology Seminar (a blended Course) is the capstone or culminating experience for students in the final semester of their candidacy for the Master of Arts in Forensic Psychology at AUSFBA.

The Forensic Psychology Seminar provides students the opportunity to integrate their coursework experience and knowledge of the field of forensic psychology in self-directed independent study through: (1) a major research paper; or (b) forensic fieldwork placement.

The Forensic Psychology Seminar will facilitate student knowledge-sharing of forensic professional development issues; experience and expertise conducting professional presentations; improvement student skills in areas of providing and receiving of constructive professional feedback; integrating knowledge and application of ethical issues as they pertain to forensic research and/or practice (via the field placement); increasing students' ability to synthesize forensic research with a professional work setting experience and/or within an independent research endeavor; and to explore and discuss several "frontier" areas of forensic psychology.

The Core Competency Examination preparation will be reviewed in this Seminar in preparation for taking it; and *the CCE will be given during the Seminar or anytime students wish to take it before they petition to graduate.* Students may choose to not take the CCE at this time but must take it before this degree program is fully completed. Students have three opportunities to take the CCE if they do not pass it the first or second time.

Program Outcomes:

- **Outcome # 1: Psychological Theory and Practice**
 - Apply theoretical concepts and methodological approaches of psychology to the practice of forensic psychology
- **Outcome #2: Legal Theory and Application**
 - Apply theories related to the interaction between the criminal and civil legal systems and psychology.
- **Outcome # 3: Research and Evaluation**
 - Critically evaluate the existing literature and body of knowledge in assessment, evaluation, and research methods in forensic psychology
- **Outcome # 4: Leadership, Consultation, and Ethics**
 - Use leadership, consultative, and ethical knowledge, skills and attitudes to succeed in the practice of forensic psychology
- **Outcome # 5: Interpersonal Effectiveness**
 - Achieve personal development and demonstrate positive relationship skills via effective communication, respect for others, and awareness of their impact on others.

Course Objectives:

At the successful completion of the Forensic Psychology Seminar students will have developed the requisite skills to:

1. Analyze, synthesize and evaluate a major research topic in forensic psychology; **or**

2. Apply and evaluate major forensic psychological theory, concepts of forensic practice methodology ethics, and program evaluation models to the experience of a field placement in a forensic agency or organization.
3. Write and orally present competently a major research paper or field placement report to the student's peers, faculty and colleagues.
4. Analyze, synthesize, evaluate and apply current and important topics and issues in forensic psychology and practice through active participation in seminar activities, independent research and observation, online discussion boards, and peer interaction and debate.

Methods of Instruction – This course will be delivered in a **blended format**, including three to four Seminars on-campus, Fridays and/or (usually) Saturdays, one-day seminars monthly over the four months of the semester combined with weekly online instruction, posting, assignments and discussion. Online course participation will be at eCollege at <http://www.myeclassonline.com/> **on a three times weekly basis and in a timely and thought-provoking manner** during the entire semester of the course.

This blended course begins online on September 7, 2010, meets four times (monthly) until the semester concludes on December 18, 2010.

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 (15 week courses):

Deadline for withdrawal “W”: November 14th, 2010

Seminar Meeting Schedule:

As of today, August 15, 2010, it appears we will meet Saturdays on September 25th, October 30th, and December 18th, and on Friday, November 19th and beginning at 9:15 AM and ending then we complete our work, no later than 6 PM.

*Seminars #1 and #4 are absolutely mandatory. I allow students to miss Seminar #2 **or** #3 if they absolutely must. At least one student is flying in from the East Coast, so she may want to miss the Friday seminar on November.*

Usually I offer students the opportunity to take the MACP-CCE on the morning of Seminar #2, but students can take it anytime they wish before they petition to graduate. The CCE may be taken up to three times to achieve a “Pass” determination prior to graduation.

Course Requirements:

Research Paper: In and about an area of forensic psychology theory, practice and/or research of major and central importance in the field and addressing a “cutting edge” issue or phenomenon in the field.

- Development of a Topic of Research
- Submission and Approval of Research Proposal

- History and Relevance of the Topic in Law and Forensic Psychology
- Current Status of Research and Findings
- Areas of Controversy
- Critique and Analysis of Existing Research
- Development of Original Ideas and/or Interpretations
- Suggestions for Further Research or Practice
- Extensive Relevant Bibliography
- Submission of Paper and Presentation in Forensic Psychology Seminar.

[Instructor is available at any time for consultation regarding the choice, process and completion of the research paper.]

Field Placement: The focus the Forensic Psychology Seminar involves research, policy development, program planning and evaluation, administration, observation and participant observation, training, and other non-clinical activities in a forensic agency, organization, institution or program serving or offenders or victims. The field placement will involve:

- A natural history of the placement setting
- The application of criminal or civil laws and procedures
- An integration of forensic psychological knowledge and principles
- The application of ethical principles where appropriate
- Recognition and analysis of issues of consultation and communication with forensic and other professionals
- Addressing program development, implementation and evaluations issues
- The application and synthesis of relevant research to the placement setting and activities.
- Analyzing approaches, methods and interventions for service, assessment and/or treatment with offenders and/or victims
- Submission of Report and Its Presentation in Forensic Psychology Seminar.

[Instructor is available at any time for consultation regarding the choice, process and completion of the research paper.]

For both research papers and field placements students must provide weekly reports of actual progress on these assignments. The instructor's experience in the Seminar is that it is often too easy to put off work which leads to mediocre results and poor grades.

Content Areas:

1. Research Paper topics and Field Placement Sites to be chosen by students and approved by the seminar instructor.
2. Students will submit a weekly journal or report of their activities and progress with the expectations and assignments of the seminar. Office hours, telephone and email consultation will be available for students and the instructor at their mutual convenience.
3. Students and the instructor will confer about course content other than that relating to the Research Paper and Field Placement to be included in the Forensic Psychology Seminar. Such topics might include detailed exploration of a forensic psychology issue or topic, media presentations, in-depth group discussions and debates.

4. Students will be required to post weekly on the Forensic Psychology Seminar website and Discussion Board, and the postings will involve journal and progress reports as well as discussions of topics and issues presented by the instructor and through suggestions from seminar members.

Weekly Schedule -- Forensic Seminar

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The course weekly schedule for readings, Discussion Group postings, in-class assignments will be posted online by September 7, 2010 and then every Sunday thereafter beginning September 12, 2010 until the completion of the course. The instructor will be circulating and handing out many materials and articles for reading assignments. The initial reading assignments are listed above under

Student Performance Evaluation Criteria and Procedures

Class Participation: Active, thoughtful, productive, relevant, and thought-provoking Participation in class and online in the Forensic Psychology Seminar. **(30%)**

Research Papers: A comprehensive research paper and literature review (outline, above) of the student's research topic written in APA Format is required; **OR**

Field Placement Report: A comprehensive qualitative research report (outline, above) and literature review, if appropriate, of the student's field placement experience and analysis written in APA Format is required. **(50%)**

Presentations: The Forensic Psychology Seminar involves the oral presentation of the Students' Research Paper or Field Placement Paper at the final, fourth Seminar meeting.

Students will be required to post their written Research Paper or Field Placement summaries online the week before the presentation date. The oral presentation, then, will be a time to present and explore the papers in more detail and with greater nuance and should not be read *verbatim*. For the oral presentations, students are recommended to use either an LCD projector with Power Point or an overhead projector if they would enhance the presentation in important ways. The completed papers themselves will be emailed in electronic (attachment) form to the instructor by December 26, 2009. **(20%)**

NOTE: *Presentations will be done without solely reading any material (written or PPT) to the Seminar members during the presentation, except brief quotes. The presenter will quote research and not use the ubiquitous "They" or "It says here"! The presentation should have purpose other than imparting information, history, and facts, and also include some sort of a hypothesis or objective the presenter want to substantiate or support, something new and creative if at all possible. This is a capstone graduate seminar not an undergraduate survey of a topic, and students will have an opportunity to present in a professional manner!*

Media may be used BUT ONLY to augment the presentation. There will be no reading of PowerPoints or handouts while the class is reading the same material on the screen or from handouts!

Criteria for Class and Online 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 **>80%** of class sessions; **most** of the comments were thought provoking and incorporated material from the assigned readings

C = 70 – 79 Student participated in discussions in **>70%** of class sessions; comments/questions demonstrate a surface level understanding of course topics

F = <70 Student participated in **<70%** of class sessions; comments/questions did not demonstrate an understanding of course topics, or **student did not participate** in class discussions.

Criteria for Class Presentations:

A = 90+ Presentation is well organized and provides **excellent** coverage of the topic area; informative visual aids provided to the instructor and classmates

B = 80 – 89 Presentation is well organized and provides **adequate** coverage of the topic area

C = 70 – 79 Coverage of material is marginal; presentation is slightly disorganized

F = <70 Presentation is **disorganized** and does not provide adequate coverage of the topic area, or presentation was **not completed** by student.

Criteria for Research Papers and Field Placement Papers:

A = 90+ Paper is in appropriate APA format, well thought out and provides **excellent** coverage of material

B = 80 – 89 Paper is well thought out, but is missing one component of APA format OR coverage of material is **adequate**

C = 70 – 79 Insufficient number of references provided AND **limited** coverage

F = <70 Paper is disorganized AND coverage is not adequate AND does not conform to APA format, or there is evidence of **plagiarism**, or paper not submitted

Grading

93-100 A
90-92 A-
87-89 B+
83-86 B
80-82 B-
77-79 C+
73-76 C
70-72 C-
69 below F

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/>

Academic Policies

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. 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 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.

Americans with Disabilities Act Policy: It is the policy of Argosy University to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If a student with disabilities needs accommodations, the student must notify the Director of Student Services.

Procedures for documenting student disability and the development of reasonable accommodations will be provided to the student upon request.

Students will be notified by the Director of Student Services when each request for accommodation is approved or denied in writing via a designated form. To receive accommodation in class, it is the student's responsibility to present the form (at his or her discretion) to the instructor. In an effort to protect student privacy, the Department of Student Services will not discuss the accommodation needs of any student with instructors. Faculty may not make accommodations for individuals who have not been approved in this manner.

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.