Unit Outline 2014
Faculty of Health

Introduction to Forensic Psychology
8831
This Unit Outline must be read in conjunction with:

a) *UC Student Guide to Policies*, which sets out University-wide policies and procedures, including information on matters such as plagiarism, grade descriptors, moderation, feedback and deferred exams, and is available at *(scroll to bottom of page)*

b) *UC Guide to Student Services*, and is available at *(scroll to bottom of page)*

c) Any additional information specified in section 6h.

1: **General Information**

1a  Unit title: Introduction to Forensic Psychology

1b  Unit number: 8831

1c  Teaching period and year: Winter 2014

1d  Credit point value: 3

1e  Unit level: 2

1f  Name of Unit Convener and contact details (including telephone and email)

   Associate Professor Stephen Moston  
   Centre for Applied Psychology  
   Faculty of Health  
   University of Canberra ACT 2601  
   Phone: +61 (0)2 6201 5288  
   Email: [Stephen.Moston@canberra.edu.au](mailto:Stephen.Moston@canberra.edu.au)

   Other staff: Dr Terry Engelberg

1g  Administrative contact details (including name, location, telephone and email)

   Ms Jeanine McMahon  
   Room: 12D20  
   Phone: 6201 2653 (Psychology administration office)  
   Email: Jeanine.McMahon@canberra.edu.au
2: Academic Content

2a Unit description and learning outcomes
Forensic psychology explores emotional and behavioural issues that relate to the law and legal systems. Psychological knowledge is applied to the understanding of crime and criminal justice. This subject examines the role a forensic psychologist plays in the provision of advice to personnel within the justice system.

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. demonstrate an understanding of the role of a forensic psychologist in the investigation of crime; and the role of a forensic psychologist in the assessment and treatment of offenders.
2. to think critically, to analyse and evaluate claims, evidence and arguments, and to reason and develop evidence clearly and logically;
3. to deploy critically evaluated information to practical ends.

2b Generic skills
The unit addresses all five of the generic skills required for coursework units at The University of Canberra. These are:

1. Communication - The ability to present knowledge, ideas and opinions effectively and communicate within and across professional and cultural boundaries.
2. Analysis and Inquiry - The ability to gather information, and to analyse and evaluate information and situations in a systematic, creative and insightful way.
3. Problem Solving - The ability to apply problem-solving process in novel situations; to identify and analyse problems then formulate and implement solutions.
4. Working Independently and with Others - The ability to plan their own work, be self-directed and use interpersonal skills and attitudes to work collaboratively.
5. Professionalism & Social Responsibility - The capacity and intention to use professional knowledge and skills ethically and responsibly, for the benefit of others and the environment.

2c Prerequisites and/or co-requisites
Psychology 101 (4309) OR Psychology 102 (4310) OR by permission of the unit convenor

3: Delivery of Unit and Timetable

3a Delivery mode
This unit is delivered in on-campus delivery mode. The format of the classes means that attendance is required throughout the six days of teaching. Occasional absences (e.g., to attend another class) are permitted. At the start of the day, please let the lecturer know when you are likely to be absent (it may be possible to schedule breaks around periods when there are conflicts with other units).

The unit comprises six days of teaching, organised into two blocks of three days. The first block of teaching is scheduled for week 2, Tuesday to Thursday. The second block is scheduled for week 5, again, Tuesday to Thursday. Teaching will commence at 9.00am (any changes will be advertised in advance) and conclude when the content for the day has been covered. Students should expect to be in class from 9.00 until approximately 4.00pm. Teaching on some days will conclude earlier as students are assigned tasks that need to be completed by the following day. Teaching will take place in the following venues:
Week 2
Tuesday  Room 02B04  9.00am to 4.00pm
Wednesday  Room 02B02  9.00am to 4.00pm
Thursday  Room 02B02  9.00am to 4.00pm

Week 5
Tuesday  Room 02B04  9.00am to 4.00pm
Wednesday  Room 02B02  9.00am to 4.00pm
Thursday  Room 02B02  9.00am to 4.00pm

Please note that the teaching is highly interactive, with integrated lectures, demonstrations, and other activities. While there is no group assessed work, students will be required to work in groups to solve problems set by the lecturer.

3b  Timetable of activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Textbook Chapters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction to forensic psychology</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Offender profiling</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Eyewitness testimony</td>
<td>Chapters 5 &amp; 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Police interrogation</td>
<td>Chapters 7 &amp; 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sexual harassment</td>
<td>Chapter 2 (background reading)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Discrimination and hate crimes</td>
<td>Chapter 4 (background reading)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Crime in sport</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2- 3</td>
<td>Miscarriages of justice</td>
<td>Chapter 14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional readings for all topics will be listed on Moodle.

4:  Unit Resources

4a  Lists of required texts/readings

The set text is:

For those interested in an alternative (or additional set of readings)

For those looking for additional reading that places the unit into an Australian perspective:
All three of the above books are highly recommended. Together, they offer a coherent and largely accurate depiction of the field of forensic psychology (and beyond).

4b Materials and equipment
None. Although access to a tablet/notebook would be helpful during many of the activities.

4c Unit website
To find your unit site online, login to LearnOnline(Moodle) using your student ID. Note that your unit site has a profiles page that displays your name and email address for the benefit of other students. If you prefer to hide your email address, click here for instructions.

5: Assessment

5a Assessment overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment item</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Addresses learning outcome(s)</th>
<th>Related generic skill(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Friday 27 June</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(25% per case file)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Friday 18 July</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(25 per case file)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UC Generic Skills
1 – Communication; 2 - Analysis and Inquiry; 3 - Problem Solving; 4 - Working independently and with others; 5 - Professionalism and Social Responsibility

5b Details of each assessment item

Assignment 1: Two case files (approx. 500 words each)

Forensic psychology is a uniquely challenging area of work because the ‘truth’ is often an elusive concept. In this assignment you will be asked to research two specific cases (or topics), to select appropriate source material (both academic resources and non-academic sources such as media reports, or court transcripts) and to then produce a short report that could be used as a briefing document to be submitted to members of the criminal justice system (e.g., the police, lawyers, or judges). A high standard of professional logic, detailed research, clear writing and excellent presentation skills will be necessary.

Complete any TWO ‘case files’ from the selection of FOUR case files available on Moodle. These case files will be based directly on the content of the teaching in the first three days of workshops. They should not be attempted without having attended the relevant lectures and practical activities. Full details of the case files will be provided during the classes and then online (only available after the relevant teaching session). Time will be spent during each workshop directly addressing the requirements of each of the four available case files.

Each case file should be about 500 words in length (range 450 and 550 words). In addition to your written work, you may include photographs, timelines or other materials (excluding audio and video files) that you consider relevant.

Each case file should be submitted electronically via Moodle in a separate Word document (i.e., TWO files will be submitted). Please label the files in the following format:
Assignments will be submitted and marked electronically. Hard copies are not required. **Assignments must not be submitted via email.** If you experience difficulties with Moodle please contact the Moodle helpline and request a job number for your problem.

There will be allocated spaces on the Moodle site to submit each of your two assignments. Each separate case file will be marked out of 25. You may submit the two case files at different times, as long as you meet the deadline.

The four case files topics will include:

- Psychic detectives
- Offender profiling
- Eyewitness testimony
- Police interrogation

**Assignment 2: Two case files (approx. 500 words each)**

The requirements here are the same as for the first assignment, however the selection of four possible topics will now include the following:

- Sexual harassment
- Hate crimes
- Crime in sport
- Miscarriages of justice

Once again, you should choose any two of the four available case files.

Each case file should be submitted electronically via Moodle in a separate Word document (i.e., TWO files will be submitted). Please label the files in the following format:

```
FAMILY NAME (ID NUMBER) CASE FILE X TOPIC
e.g., Valjean (24601) Case file 3 Hate crimes.docx
e.g., Valjean (24601) Case file 4 Crime in sport.docx
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5c **Submission of assessment items**

All assessment items will be submitted online via the unit Moodle site. The first page of each assessment submission should include the following information:

Student Name:
Student ID:
Assessment Name:
Word Count (excluding references):

5d **Special assessment requirements**

An overall aggregate mark of 50% and above is required to pass the unit. Students must also submit/complete all assessment items to complete this unit. Students requesting extensions and special arrangements must submit a completed Variation to Assessment form prior to the due date and time. In general, there will be no extension of time beyond the last day of semester, and only one extension will be considered for a single assessment. If the extension is granted, the unit convener will specify the revised due date. Work submitted after the due date, without an extension having been previously given, will incur a penalty of 5% of the maximum value of the assignment per day (including weekends), up to a maximum of 7 days. Work submitted after one week will be graded to a maximum of 50% of the maximum value of the assignment.
Supplementary assessment
Refer to the UC Supplementary Assessment Policy

Academic Integrity
Students have a responsibility to uphold University standards on ethical scholarship. Good scholarship involves building on the work of others and use of others’ work must be acknowledged with proper attribution made. Cheating, plagiarism, and falsification of data are dishonest practices that contravene academic values. Please see UC’s Academic Integrity Policy.

To enhance understanding of academic integrity, it is expected that all students will complete the LearnOnline Academic Integrity Module (AIM) at least once during their course of study. The module is automatically available as a listed site when students log into LearnOnline.

Use of text-matching software
The University of Canberra has available, through LearnOnline (Moodle), text-matching software that helps students and staff reduce plagiarism and improve understandings of academic integrity. Known as URKUND, the software matches submitted text in student assignments against material from various sources: the internet, published books and journals, and previously submitted student texts. Click here for further information on the URKUND text-matching software.

Student Responsibility

Workload
The amount of time you will need to spend on study in this unit will depend on a number of factors including your prior knowledge, learning skill level and learning style. Nevertheless, in planning your time commitments you should note that for a 3cp unit the total notional workload over the semester or term is assumed to be 150 hours. These hours include time spent in classes. The total workload for units of different credit point value should vary proportionally. For example, for a 6cp unit the total notional workload over a semester or term is assumed to be 300 hours.

Inclusion and Welfare
Students who need assistance in undertaking the unit because of disability or other circumstances should inform their Unit Convener or Inclusion and Welfare as soon as possible so the necessary arrangements can be made.

Participation requirements
Students are expected to attend all six days of teaching, which are in a workshop format (combining lectures, tutorials, and other activities). Announcements and information presented during lectures is deemed to have been made to all students enrolled in the unit. Lectures will be audio-recorded. As has already been stated on Moodle, some absences (for other classes) will be acceptable. Please inform the lecturer about any absences at the start of the teaching day.

Forensic psychology is a complex and challenging area of study. It is important that students participate actively in the activities (through preparatory reading, completing their set activities entries, and asking questions). Some of the material is potentially disturbing, yet every effort will be made by the lecturer to avoid displaying overly disturbing images or materials. Students should adhere to the same standards when presenting material in class or in assignments.

Withdrawal
If you are planning to withdraw please discuss with your unit convener. Please see Withdrawal of Units for further information on deadlines.
6e  Required IT skills
Nil.

6f  In-Unit Costs
(Note: To calculate your unit fees see: How do I calculate my fees?.
The online UC Co-op Textbook Search is available for purchasing text books.)

6g  Work placements, internships or practicums
Nil.

6h  Additional information
Nil.

7:  Student Feedback

All students enrolled in this unit will have an opportunity to provide anonymous feedback on the unit at the end of the Semester via the Unit Satisfaction Survey (USS) which you can access by logging into MyUC via the UC homepage: http://www.canberra.edu.au/home/. Your lecturer or tutor may also invite you to provide more detailed feedback on their teaching through an anonymous questionnaire.
The current unit was moved to Winter term as a result of suggestions from students in 2013.
The multiple choice assessment task was removed following feedback in 2013.

8:  Authority of this Unit Outline

Any change to the information contained in Section 2 (Academic content), and Section 5 (Assessment) of this document, will only be made by the Unit Convener if the written agreement of Head of Discipline and a majority of students has been obtained; and if written advice of the change is then provided on the unit site in the learning management system. If this is not possible, written advice of the change must be then forwarded to each student enrolled in the unit at their registered term address. Any individual student who believes him/herself to be disadvantaged by a change is encouraged to discuss the matter with the Unit Convener.