

**Psychology and Law
PSY 470, Section M70
Course Syllabus Summer 2021**

Course Information: PSY 470-M70 CRN-41121

Class Location and Time: Web instruction

This is a fully online course. All course material will be uploaded onto Blackboard, the course website.

Instructor: Mel A. Baker, Ph.D.
Office: Gary Ransdell Hall 3043
Email: melissa.baker@wku.edu
Phone: 270-745-2199

Office Hours: MTR 8:00AM-10:00AM, and also available other times by appointment

All office meetings will be held virtually. Meetings will be set up with WKU's Zoom Video Conferencing services. Please email me beforehand and schedule an appointment with me.

Course Description and Goals: This course is designed to provide students with an overview of the discipline of psychology and law. In this course we will discuss the application of psychology to many areas in the legal system. We will cover research findings, court cases, and legal policies related to the behaviors of individuals in various parts of the legal system. Topics covered in this course include interrogations and confessions, lie detection, attitudes toward police, criminal profiling, recovered memories, eyewitness testimony, jury selection, legal decision making, and more.

Required Text: Costanzo, M., & Krauss, D. (2018). *Forensic and Legal Psychology* (3rd ed.). New York: Worth Publishers. ISBN: 9781319060312, 1319060315

Additional required readings will be provided on Blackboard: <https://blackboard.wku.edu/>.

Course Expectations: Research suggests that students who have clear expectations about a course will feel more comfortable and learn more. With this in mind, here are some of the course-wide expectations:

It is important that you prepare, read, and study for this course. I strongly recommend that you read each day and on weekends. You will be glad you did this when you begin having exams (not just in this class, but in other classes too). All material covered in class is testable! This includes textbook readings, additional readings, and any video uploads. Research demonstrates that actively writing down (more so than typing) material makes it easier to recall later.

Because this is a web course, learning the course content falls heavily on you. Please read the chapters and look over notes and PowerPoints each day so that you can manage the material.

Also, reach out to the instructor if you have questions about any of the material and expectations – that’s what the instructor is for!

I will use video uploads to explain the expectations for the week and to remind you of the week’s readings and main things to focus on in the chapters. Videos will be uploaded on to Blackboard at the beginning of each week.

Web Classroom Behavior: Students are expected to behave appropriately and professionally in this web class. Please keep track of exams and assignment due dates.

Online Class Etiquette: While this is an online class, it is important that you keep track of all dues dates for exams and assignments. It is also important that you communicate with the instructor regarding any questions that you may have regarding the course.

It is highly encouraged that you turn on your camera during online class instruction. While this is an online class, an important aspect of this class will be interacting with the instructor and fellow classmates. There will many in-class activities and it will be meaningful to interact with the instructor and classmates if your camera is on.

While this is an online class and you will be using the computer to participate in this class, please do not engage in other computer activities (check email, play games, etc.) while instruction is currently going on. It is important that you pay attention to the instructor and other students during class time.

Email Etiquette: When emailing the instructor, please put the course and course section in the subject line (e.g., PSY 470-M70).

Course Breakdown: Below you will find a break-down of the assignments in this course along with the points and percentage of your final grade they account for.

Assignments	Points	Percentage
Exams (4)	200 (50 each)	66.7%
Paper	100	33.3%
Total	300	100%

Exams: Four exams (that includes the final exam) will be given throughout this course. Exams will be online and will be posted on the course website. Exams will be held on Fridays and are scheduled on the Course Outline. Each exam will consist of 50 multiple choice and true/false questions. Exam questions will not require simple regurgitation of definitions, but will require higher order applications of information covered in the readings, class, demonstrations, and in-class activities. To help you prepare, I encourage you to ask questions during class and/or office hours about any material that you are having difficulty with. We will also have in-class reviews the class period before the exam period. That is your time to come to class with questions. Exams will not be cumulative; rather each will cover material from the text in addition to any supplemental readings, lecture material, discussion topics, or demonstrations covered since the previous exam. The exams will account for 50% of your final grade.

While, we will not hold a class meeting during the time of the exam, the exam must be started and completed during the scheduled time, Friday 8:00AM-5:00PM. All exams must be completed on the scheduled Friday listed on the Course Outline. You may not use your notes, textbook, peers, and/or search engine during an exam. Your answers should reflect your own knowledge. Exams will be limited to the 50 minute time frame. As a result, referring to your notes, textbook, etc. will likely consume too much time and keep you from completing the exam within the 50 minute time limit.

Paper: For this course you will write a paper. The paper assignment is to critique a media portrayal of forensic psychology. You will watch a feature film (of your choosing) and comment on the extent to which the portrayal is consistent with scientific research on a particular topic. You may choose the topic, but the topic must be something that we have or will cover in the course. The paper will be graded according to the 'Paper Rubric' posted on Blackboard. I will also provide an example media portrayal in class, so you will know what I expect. The due date for the paper is on the Course Outline. You may submit your paper any time prior to the due date. The paper will account for 25% of your grade.

Calculating Your Final Grade: In order to find out your course grade, simply add up your total points earned on all assignments and divide by the total points possible (300). Then multiply that by 100. For example, if you have 250 points, then $250/300 = .833$. $.833 \times 100 = 83.3$; thus, your course grade is an 83.30%, B. Additionally, you will find the grading scale (see below) that I will use when computing your final grade. Grades will be posted on Blackboard.

Grading Scale: Information on current Western Kentucky University policies for assigning grade points can be found at http://www.wku.edu/advising/current_standing.php.

Letter Grade	Points	Percentage
A	360-400	90-100%
B	320-359	80-89%
C	280-319	70-79%
D	240-279	60-69%
F	0-239	59% and below

Make-Up Exams: I will allow make-up exams if you are for some reason unable to attend the scheduled exam. If you need to make-up an exam, I need you to let me know before the scheduled exam and take the make-up before the rest of the class takes the regularly scheduled exam. If you are not available during my office hours (see above), we may schedule an alternative time for make-up exams. The exception to this rule is the final exam, which all students must take at the scheduled time during finals week.

Attendance Policy: Attendance will not be taken in class. With that said, students who regularly attend class perform better than students who do not. Additionally, there will be in-class activities in class that students cannot make-up outside of class.

Course Incompletes: Incomplete (I) grades will not be assigned without preapproval by the instructor. The instructor will only approve incompletes in extreme circumstances. Students receiving permission to take an incomplete will be required to adhere to a contract, devised by the student and instructor, specifying required assignments and due dates. All incomplete work must be completed by Week 12 of the following semester to avoid the incomplete converting to an F.

Academic Honesty Policy: Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any student suspected of academic dishonesty will be required to meet with the instructor and may be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs in order to determine the consequences of the student's actions. Details on the university's academic dishonesty procedures can be found at <http://www.wku.edu/judicialaffairs/process-for-academicdishonesty.php>.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, 1074. SARC can be reached by phone number at 270-745-5004 [270-745-3030 TTY] or via email at sarc.connect@wku.edu. Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

Title IX: Western Kentucky University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, marital status, age, uniformed services, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, or physical or mental disability in admission to career and technical education programs and/or activities, or employment practices in accordance with Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Revised 1992, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Information regarding WKU's Title IX compliance, policies, and procedures may be found on the following websites: <https://www.wku.edu/eoo/titleix/> and <https://www.wku.edu/studentconduct/titlenine.php>.

Health and Safety: Out of respect for the health and safety of the WKU community and in adherence with the [CDC guidelines](#), the University requires that a cloth face covering (reusable or disposable) that covers both the nose and mouth must be worn at all times when in public areas within all buildings. Students must properly wear face coverings while in class regardless of the room size or the nature of the classroom activities. Students who fail to wear a face covering as required will be in violation of the WKU Student Code of Conduct and will be asked to comply or will face disciplinary action, including possible dismissal from the University. Accommodations to face coverings must be determined by the Student Accessibility Resource Center and documented before a student may attend class.

Course Outline:

**Schedule is subject to change with notice

Week	Dates	Topic/Readings	Assignment/Due
1	5/10 – 5/15	Chapter 1: Psychology and Law Chapter 2: Interrogations and Confessions	
2	5/17 – 5/22	Chapter 3: Lie Detection Chapter 5: Criminal Profiling	Exam 1 is due by 5:00PM Friday, 5/22
3	5/24 – 5/29	Chapter 6: Recovered Memories Chapter 7: Eyewitness Memory Chapter 9: Jury Selection Chapter 12: Legal Decision-Making	Exam 2 is due by 5:00PM Friday, 5/29
4	5/31 – 6/4	Chapters 8: Competency to Stand Trial Chapter 10: The Insanity Defense	Paper is due by 5:00PM Friday, 6/4
5	6/7 – 6/11	Chapter 11: Syndromes and Disorders in Court Chapter 13: Child Custody	Exam 3 is due by 5:00PM Friday, 6/11
6	6/14 – 6/18	Chapter 16: Corrections Chapter 15: Risk Assessment Chapter 17: The Death Penalty	Exam 4 is due by 5:00PM Friday, 6/18