

## PSYCHOLOGY AND LAW

(PSY 8900-001; CRN 24951)

FALL 2003

**Class:** Thursday, 6:10 – 8:10 pm  
**Location:** Tolentine Hall 216  
**Instructor:** David DeMatteo, JD, PhD  
**Office:** Tolentine Hall 337 (by appointment)  
**Phone:** 609-658-2395  
**E-mail:** ddematteo@tresearch.org

---

**Required Text:** Wrightsman, L. S., Greene, E., Nietzel, M. T., & Fortune, W. H. (2002). *Psychology and the legal system* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

**Objectives:** This course will examine the broad intersection between psychology and law. Students will gain an understanding of the judicial system, the role of mental health practitioners within the judicial system, and the judicial system's use of social science research. Emphasis will be placed on empirical law-psychology research, statutory law, case law, and ethical guidelines that are relevant for mental health practitioners and researchers who work within the judicial system (civil and criminal).

**Procedures for Evaluation and Grading:** Final course grades will be based on the following –

1. Attendance and class participation: 20%
2. Two brief reaction statements: 20%
3. Research paper: 30%
4. Class presentation (based on the paper): 30%

**Attendance:** Attendance at a seminar course is particularly important, and students are expected to attend all classes on time. Absence from more than two classes will require a meeting with the instructor and may result in a lowered grade. Students are responsible for material covered during absences. Students must give advance notice if an absence will occur when an assignment is due or when their presentation is scheduled. If advance notice of an absence is not possible, students must promptly contact the instructor immediately after the missed class.

**Academic Integrity:** Villanova University is deeply committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity. When drafting your paper, please refer to Villanova's policy against plagiarism (i.e., do not rely on someone else's words, ideas, data, or arguments without clearly acknowledging the source and extent of the reliance or use). All students should become familiar with Villanova's Academic Integrity Code.

**Disabilities Policy:** Villanova University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Accordingly, it is Villanova's policy to make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities. If you are a person with a disability, please inform me and make arrangements to register with the Learning Support Office (610-519-5636; nancy.mott@villanova.edu) as soon as possible. Registration is required to receive accommodations.

COURSE SCHEDULE & ASSIGNMENTS\*

| <b>Date</b>  | <b>Topic</b>  | <b>Chapters</b> |
|--------------|---|-----------------|
| August 28    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of course</li> </ul>  | None            |
| September 4  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psychology &amp; law overview</li> <li>• Legality, morality, ethics, &amp; justice</li> </ul>                  | Chapters 1 & 3  |
| September 11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role of mental health professionals in the legal system</li> <li>• Introduction to the legal system</li> </ul> | Chapters 2 & 4  |
| September 18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theories of crime</li> </ul>   | Chapter 5       |
| September 25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eyewitness issues (mistakes, lineups, hypnosis, children, recovered memories)</li> </ul>                       | Chapter 7       |
| October 2    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspect issues (profiling, polygraphs, false confessions)</li> <li>• <b>Reaction statement due</b></li> </ul>  | Chapter 8       |
| October 9    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rights of victims and the accused (case law, statutory law, &amp; constitutional law)</li> </ul>               | Chapter 9       |
| October 16   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No class (mid-semester recess)</li> </ul>  | None            |
| October 23   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criminal forensic assessment</li> </ul>  | Chapter 11      |
| October 30   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil forensic assessment</li> </ul>   | Chapter 12      |
| November 6   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The trial process</li> <li>• Jury issues</li> </ul>  | Chapters 13-15  |
| November 13  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Punishment &amp; sentencing</li> <li>• <b>Reaction statement due</b></li> </ul>                                | Chapter 17      |
| November 20  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student presentations</li> </ul>   | None            |
| November 27  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No class (Thanksgiving recess)</li> </ul>  | None            |
| December 4   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student presentations</li> </ul>   | None            |
| December 11  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student presentations</li> <li>• <b>Papers due</b></li> </ul>  | None            |

\* Course schedule and assignments are subject to adjustment as necessary. Supplemental readings may occasionally be assigned.