

**CATALOG YEAR 2008-2009**

(Please use separate form for each add/change)

COLLEGE/SCHOOL : Arts and Sciences

Current Catalog Page(s) Affected p.360

**Course:** Add: X Delete: \_\_\_\_\_  
(check all that apply) Change: Number \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_ SCH \_\_\_\_\_  
Description \_\_\_\_\_ Prerequisite \_\_\_\_\_

If new, provide Course Prefix, Number, Title, SCH Value, Description, prerequisite, and lecture/lab hours if applicable. If in current catalog, copy and paste the text from the online catalog and indicate changes in red.

**PYSC 5344 Forensic Psychology.** Three semester hours.

Examines the behavior, motivations, testing and rehabilitation of criminal offenders from a psychological perspective. Presents an overview of the field of forensic psychology, addressing clinical issues as well as leading research in forensic psychology. The psychology of various offender groups ranging from domestic violence perpetrators to rapists to serial murderers will be covered.

Justification: To cover an area of psychology that is not currently offered in coursework and for which there is extensive student demand.

**Program:** Add: \_\_\_\_\_ Change: \_\_\_\_\_ Attach new/changed Program of Study description and 4-year plan. If in current catalog, copy and paste the text from the and indicate changes in red.

**Minor:** Add: \_\_\_\_\_ Delete: \_\_\_\_\_ Change: \_\_\_\_\_ Attach new/changed minor. If in current catalog, copy and paste the text from the and indicate changes in red.

**Faculty:** Add: \_\_\_\_\_ Delete: \_\_\_\_\_ Change: \_\_\_\_\_ Attach new/changed faculty entry. If in current catalog, copy and paste the text from the and indicate changes in red.

**College Introductory Pages:** Add information: \_\_\_\_\_ Change information: \_\_\_\_\_ Attach new/changed information. If in current catalog, copy and paste the text from the and indicate changes in red.

Approvals:

Signature

Date

Chair  
Department Curriculum Committee

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Chair  
Department

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College Curriculum Committee

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**PSYC 5335 Forensic Psychology**

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Welcome to Forensic Psychology. It is the purpose of this class to examine the nature and personality of individuals who engage in criminal activities in an attempt to ascertain why certain individuals choose a life of crime. Psychological, biological and societal causes of crime will be considered. Techniques that psychologists and psychiatrists use in evaluation of persons within the correctional system, as well as psychological profiling of offenders will also be covered.

Students in this course should be able to demonstrate the following learning objectives:

- 1.) Demonstrate a knowledge of etiological theories of criminal behavior
- 2.) Demonstrate knowledge of psychological tests used in evaluating defendants and inmates in the correctional system.
- 3.) Demonstrate written ability to discuss controversial theories and issues in forensic psychology in relation to several discussion questions.

***Required Texts:*** Robert Hare, *Without Conscience*

John Douglas and Mike Olshaker, *Mind Hunter: Inside the FBI's Elite Serial Crime Unit*  
Holmes & Holmes, *Murder in America*

These books were chosen for scholarly contribution, readability and price (together these three books cost less than the generally inadequate textbooks in the area).

***Course Requirements:*** Grades will be based upon performance on two within semester tests, a cumulative final, and responses to weekly discussion questions. Grading percentage will be as follows: Each within semester test: 20% (for a total of 40%)

Cumulative Final: 40%

Discussion postings: 15%

Trial Quiz: 5%

***Testing Format:*** All tests will be multiple-choice format. Tests will be open book, with a time-limit. You may use any source necessary to answer the questions adequately, however the tests will be "timed" so that you have limited time to go searching for

answers. Thus, you will perform better if you study in advance and know most of the answers ahead of time without looking them up. Test questions may come either from the texts or lectures.

**PowerPoint Slides:** Copies of PowerPoint slides will be made available for download at the beginning of each week.

**Attendance:** I am narcissistic enough to believe that what I say is rather important, thus material covered in lecture/powerpoints is important whether it is in the texts or not. I supplant material from the books with new material without mercy.

**Discussion Board:** Homework assignments will consist of weekly discussions designed to assess your critical thinking, and thoughtful examination of controversial material. For each of these discussions there is not necessarily a *correct* answer, but each question requires deeper philosophical understanding. Generally answers which are clear, thoughtful and insightful will be given full credit, regardless of conclusions reached. Late postings will not be accepted. Postings are due by the end of each week (i.e. Saturday at midnight) they are assigned. Your grade on the discussions is based on percent completion. Also note that important announcements will oftentimes be put on the discussion board, so be sure to check it regularly.

**Grading:** In general, all grading will be standard university grading: 90–100=A; 80-89=B; 70-79=C; 60-69=D; below 60=F. No curving, or scaling will be offered under any circumstances. Do not expect it or rely upon it.

**Extra Credit:** Students are encouraged to engage as participants in the various research projects available through the department of psychology. 1 point on final grade will be offered for each research hour. Some announcements for extra-credit assignments will be made in class. Only research projects sanctioned by the Department of Psychology are acceptable. A maximum of five points may be earned this way.

**Cheating:** Morality is a subject we will return to several times over the semester. As such, cheating will be generally viewed as a very bad thing. If you are caught cheating on tests, or plagiarizing material you will receive a failing grade in the class, be remanded for disciplinary action as per University guidelines, and quite possibly thrown to the lions.

**Queasy Stomachs:** Students are forewarned that subject matter of this course may include graphic descriptions of violence, sex and general carnage. Furthermore, viewing of graphic crime scene photography will be part of some lectures.

**Course Outline:** Due to the fickle hand of fate, the following course outline should be considered to be tentative in nature. This course follows two tracks, 1.) concerning the various types of crimes 2.) Concerning the personality of criminals. As such you will note readings from the Hare (H) book do not always match the specific offense topic. Books are noted as follows (H=Hare). The Douglas and Holmes books have no particular chapter deadlines, but both should be completed by the time we begin discussing murder.

DATE	SUBJECT	READING
Week 1	Mental Illness and Crime	H 1, 2
June 7	Trial Quiz (to make sure WebCT works for everyone)	
Week 2	Forensic Assessment	
Week 3	Forensic Assessment of Juveniles	H 3, 4, 5
June 28	<b>TEST 1</b>	
Week 4	Domestic Violence	H 6, 7
Week 5	Child Abuse	H 8
Week 6	Child/School Violence & Prevention Profiling Sexual Offenders against Children	
July 16	<b>TEST 2</b>	
Week 7	Profiling Rapists	H 11, 12
Week 8	Murder and Psychology	D(wholebook)
Week 9	Mass Murder and Spree-Killing Profiling Female Serial Killers Profiling Male Serial Killers	H 13, 14
Aug 9	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	

## **Classroom Behavior**

The College of Arts and Sciences encourages classroom discussion and academic debate as an essential intellectual activity. It is essential that students learn to express and defend their beliefs, but it is also essential that they learn to listen and respond respectfully to others whose beliefs they may not share. The College will always tolerate diverse, unorthodox, and unpopular points of view, but it will not tolerate condescending or insulting remarks. When students verbally abuse or ridicule and intimidate others whose views they do not agree with, they subvert the free exchange of ideas that should characterize a university classroom. If their actions are deemed by the professor to be disruptive, they will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include being involuntarily withdrawn from the class.

## **Copyright Restrictions**

The Copyright Act of 1976 grants to copyright owners the exclusive right to reproduce their works and distribute copies of their work. Works that receive copyright protection include published works such as a textbook. Copying a textbook without permission from the owner of the copyright may constitute copyright infringement. Civil and criminal penalties may be assessed for copyright infringement. Civil penalties include damages up to \$100,000; criminal penalties include a fine up to \$250,000 and imprisonment.

*Copyright laws do allow students and professors to make photocopies of copyrighted materials under strict conditions. You may not copy most, much less all, of a work, but you may copy a limited portion of a work, such as an article from a journal or a chapter from a book. These copies must be for your own personal academic use or, in the case of a professor, for personal, limited classroom use. In general, the extent of your copying should not suggest that the purpose or the effect of your copying is to avoid paying for the materials. And, of course, you may not sell these copies for a profit. Thus, students who copy textbooks to avoid buying them or professors who provide photocopies of textbooks to enable students to save money are both violating the law.*

## **Plagiarism and Cheating**

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as one's own. Recently, the Internet has complicated the picture. Getting something from the Internet and presenting it as one's own

is still plagiarism. Copying another student's paper or a portion of the paper - is usually called "copying". Neither plagiarism nor copying will be tolerated. Should a faculty member discover that a student has committed plagiarism, the students will receive a grade of 'F' in that course and the matter will be referred to the Executive Director of Student Life for possible disciplinary action.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Texas A&M International University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal education opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to register with the Director of Student Counseling and to contact the faculty member in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodations.

### **Incomplete Grade Assignments**

Incompletes are discouraged and are assigned only under extenuating circumstances. In fairness to those students who complete the course as scheduled, under no circumstances will an Incomplete ("I") be changed to an "A" unless the student has experienced a death in the immediate family or has a written medical excuse from a physician.

### **Independent Study Courses**

Independent Study (IS) courses are offered only under exceptional circumstances. Required courses intended to build academic skills may not be taken as IS (e.g., clinical supervision and internships). No student will take more than one IS course per semester. Moreover, IS courses are limited to seniors and graduate students. Summer IS course must continue through both summer sessions.

### **Student Responsibility For Dropping a Course**

"It is the responsibility of the STUDENT to drop the course before the drop date. Faculty are not responsible for dropping students who suspend class attendance".

**Final Examination**

Final Examinations must be comprehensive and must be given on the day specified.

**Student E-mail Address**

All students must obtain a TAMIU e-mail address