

COURSE NAME AND CODE

Course	PSYC 3400 – Honours Seminar in Forensic Psychology
Instructor	Dr. Craig Bennell
Term	Fall 2020, Winter 2021
Email Address	craig.bennell@carleton.ca
Office Location	Loeb A505
Office Hours	Online by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION/INSTRUCTOR'S STATEMENT

This course is designed primarily to prepare students to complete an honours thesis in forensic psychology. The main focus is on developing skills and knowledge in research methods, statistical analysis, and scientific writing. Students will complete a “mini-thesis” on some aspect of forensic psychology (topics to be decided once the course begins). This will include reviewing literature; evaluating measures; collecting and analyzing data; and completing assignments that correspond to key sections of a thesis: literature review, hypotheses, method, results, and discussion. The course will include brief lectures from your instructor, presentations from a range of forensic professionals, a lot of class discussions and interactive activities, and a lab component (run by your TA) that will focus primarily on writing (e.g., APA formatting) and statistical issues (e.g., analyzing data in SPSS).

A secondary aim of the course will be to prepare students for a potential career in the field of forensic psychology. Given this, time will also be spent on educational and career issues (e.g., learning about forensic graduate programs and academic and non-academic career options in the field of forensic psychology). This part of the course will involve you conducting research on forensic graduate programs, presentations from current graduate students and relevant organizations on campus (e.g., Career Services), and an employment panel (i.e., folks in different careers within the field of forensic psychology presenting to us about their jobs and what they did to secure those jobs).

Given the COVID-19 situation, the Fall term will be held entirely online. In the Fall, the course will consist of a blend of synchronous (real-time) and asynchronous (recorded) instruction. Zoom will likely be used for the synchronous portion, and recordings will be uploaded to cuLearn. The plan for the Winter term will be decided once more information is made available from the university.

EVALUATION

Class participation: 20%

Presentations: 20%

Mini-thesis: 60% (distributed across: ethics application, literature review, methods, results, discussion, and final submission)

TEXT

To save on student costs, and to ensure the readings are useful and directly relevant to course content, there will be no required textbooks for this course. Instead, readings will consist of journal articles, which can be accessed through Carleton's electronic library, and specially designed handouts for the lab portion of this course.

If you would like to learn more about APA formatting, writing a thesis, or SPSS, I recommend the following optional textbooks:

American Psychological Association (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Cone, J. D., & Foster, S. L. (2006). *Dissertations and theses from start to finish: Psychology and related fields* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Pallant, J. (2016). *SPSS survival manual* (6th ed.). Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.