



# Course Outline

PSYC1027

Forensic Psychology: Crime, Courts and  
Corrections

School of Psychology

Faculty of Science

T1, 2019

## 1. Staff

Position	Name	Email	Consultation times and locations	Contact Details
Course Convenor	Dr Alice Towler	<a href="mailto:PSYC1027@unsw.edu.au">PSYC1027@unsw.edu.au</a>	By appointment	Email
Lecturer				

## 2. Course information

<b>Units of credit:</b>	6
<b>Pre-requisite(s):</b>	None
<b>Teaching times and locations:</b>	Online via Moodle

### 2.1 Course summary

This course provides an introduction to forensic psychology – the application of psychological knowledge to issues related to the legal system. The course will follow an offender through the criminal justice system, from the offence and pre-trial right through to court, conviction, punishment, sentencing, and finally to treatment and release. Some of the topics covered include: theories of offending, punishment, eyewitness memory, mental health assessments, expert evidence, jury decision making, the effectiveness of treatment programs for offenders, mental illness and offending, and the rehabilitation of offenders. Students will attend court, where they will get first-hand experience of the criminal justice system in action. On completion of the course students will have an appreciation of some of the ways psychologists interact with and can contribute to the criminal justice system. This is an online course. All course content is delivered through Moodle. However, the court observation assignment requires students to attend court IN PERSON and the final exam will be held IN PERSON and ON CAMPUS (i.e., not on Moodle).

### 2.2 Course aims

This course aims to provide an introduction to forensic psychology. You will learn how psychologists play a critical role in the criminal justice system, and how psychological research can inform many aspects of the legal process.

### 2.3 Course learning outcomes (CLO)

At the successful completion of this course the student should be able to:

1. Show familiarity with, and comprehension of various topics in Forensic Psychology and demonstrate an ability to locate and critically evaluate psychological research relevant to these topics.
2. Understand the ethical framework particular to practice within forensic psychology.

3. Critically engage with relevant psychological literature in order to: understand how evidence-based psychology can be applied to the field of law, form an evidence-based argument, and critically evaluate psycho-legal issues.
4. Engage in evidence-based, constructive and respectful communication on psycho-legal topics.

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## 2.4 Relationship between course and program learning outcomes and assessments

Program Learning Outcomes							
CLO	1. Knowledge	2. Research Methods	3. Critical Thinking Skills	4. Values and Ethics	5. Communication, Interpersonal and Teamwork	6. Application	Assessment
1.	Lectures, forums, online modules, readings, weekly quizzes.	Lectures, forums, online modules, readings, weekly quizzes.	Lectures, forums, online modules, readings, weekly quizzes.			Lectures, forums, online modules, readings, weekly quizzes.	Quizzes, exam, forums, report
2.	Lectures, forums, online modules, readings, weekly quizzes.			Lectures, forums, online modules, readings, weekly quizzes.			Quizzes, exam, forums, report
3.	Lectures, forums, online modules, readings, weekly quizzes.		Lectures, forums, online modules, readings, weekly quizzes.				Forums, exam, court report
4.					Lectures, forums, online modules, readings, weekly quizzes.		Forums, exam, court report

## 3. Strategies and approaches to learning

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### 3.1 Learning and teaching activities

The design of the structure, content and assessment of this course has been informed by the policy document “Guidelines on learning that inform teaching at UNSW” (see <https://teaching.unsw.edu.au/guidelines>). In particular, lectures and discussions are designed to encourage active, challenging and enjoyable learning. The teaching employs a variety of different methods and encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning.

The lectures released on Moodle each week will provide students with the core course content. The lectures will follow an offender through the criminal justice system, from the original offence and pre-trial, through to court, conviction, punishment, sentencing, treatment and then release. These lectures will contain a mixture of slide-based content, videos, demonstrations and practical activities. Students will be directed to additional readings and materials to supplement the lecture material. Keeping up-to-date with lectures is highly recommended.

The weekly online small group discussions will provide students with an opportunity for in-depth and active learning. In these discussions, students will debate issues, engage with and think critically about the course content and discuss case studies.

Weekly quizzes provide an opportunity to evaluate understanding of course material on a weekly basis. Timely completion of the weekly quizzes will assist students in gaining a proper understanding of each topic so that this knowledge can be built on in future content.

### 3.2 Expectations of students

We require students to have read the UNSW Assessment policy and understand how to apply for special consideration if they are unable to complete an assignment/exam due to illness and/or misadventure.

We require students to read through the School of Psychology Student Guide.

All news updates and announcements will be made on the ‘Announcements’ forum on the Moodle page, in the weekly Moodle message and/or by email. It is the student’s responsibility to check Moodle and their official UNSW email account regularly to keep up to date.

Although this is an online course, it is expected that students dedicate the same amount of time each week to studying for this course as they would for an ‘on-campus’ course.

Given that the course content and some assessable components are delivered online, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they have access to a computer with a stable internet connection and a browser capable of handling the features of the Moodle eLearning website and any of its content. There will be no special consideration granted due to internet connection or computer issues arising from the use of a non-UNSW computer.

The [PSYC1027@unsw.edu.au](mailto:PSYC1027@unsw.edu.au) email address should be the first line of contact with the Course Co-ordinator.

The final exam for this course will take place on campus during the UNSW examinations period. Students should not arrange travel during the UNSW exam period until the date of the final exam has been released. Students who arrange travel prior to the release of the final exam date will not be granted consideration in the event they are scheduled to be out of country when the final exam is to occur. This is especially important for study abroad students – do not arrange travel home until the final exam date has been released.

Students registered with Disability Support Services must contact the course co-ordinator immediately if they intend to request any special arrangements for later in the course, or if any special arrangements need to be made regarding access to the course material. Letters of support must be emailed to the course coordinator as soon as they are made available.

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## 4. Course schedule and structure

Each week this course typically involves 2 hours of online lecture material and 2 hours of face to face tutorials. Students are expected to take an additional 8 hours of self-determined study to complete assessments, readings, and exam preparation.

Week	Lecture topic	Online modules	Self-determined activities
<b>Week 1</b> 18/02/2019	Introduction (RK)	Weekly Quiz Discussion Forum	Reading: Brigham (1999)
<b>Week 2</b> 25/02/2019	Offence (KM)	Weekly Quiz Discussion Forum Introduction to offender Bob Videos: Perceptions of Crime & Don Weatherburn lecture	Readings: Davis (2010) & Casey (2005)
<b>Week 3</b> 4/03/2019	Court (RK)	Weekly Quiz Discussion Forum Radio segments: Are docks fair on the accused? & Inside the jury room	
<b>Week 4</b> 11/03/2019	Pre-trial (RK)	Weekly Quiz Discussion Forum Radio segments: Intellectual disabilities and the law & Acquired brain injuries in prison & NSW Drug Court series	
<b>Week 5</b> 18/03/2019	Conviction (KM)	Weekly Quiz Discussion Forum Videos: Forensic science & The fiction of memory & Ronald Cotton	Reading: Wells (2003) & McClellan (2011) & Bornstein (2011)

<b>Week 6</b> 25/03/2019	Sentencing (KM)	Weekly Quiz Discussion Forum Radio segments: Mandatory sentencing & You be the judge virtual sentencing	
<b>Week 7</b> 1/04/2019	Punishment (RK)	Weekly Quiz Discussion Forum Website: We are all criminals Videos: Prison & Death penalty	Readings: BOCSAR Report
<b>Week 8</b> 8/04/2019	Assessment (AM)	Weekly Quiz Discussion Forum Ethics module Offender Bob supporting documentation	Reading: Haag (2006)
<b>Week 9</b> 15/04/2019	Treatment (AM)	Weekly Quiz Discussion Forum	Reading: APS (2006)
<b>Week 10</b> 22/04/2019	Desistance (KO)	Weekly Quiz Discussion Forum Video: Ex-prisoners	Readings: O'Sullivan (2015) & Maruna (2010) & McNeill (2009) & Rocque (2015)

## 5. Assessment

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### 5.1 Assessment tasks

All assessments in this course have been designed and implemented in accordance with UNSW Assessment Policy.

Assessment task	Length	Weight	Mark	Due date
<b>Assessment 1:</b> Weekly quizzes	Varied	10%	/10	Weekly by Sunday 11:59pm
<b>Assessment 2:</b> Discussion forum log	10 entries	10%	/10	05/05/2019 11:59pm
<b>Assessment 3:</b> Court observation assignment	N/A	40%	/40	Part 1: Week 3 Sunday 11:59pm  Part 2: Week 6 Sunday 11:59pm  Part 3: Week 9 Sunday 11:59pm
<b>Assessment 4:</b> Final exam	~80 MCQ	40%	/80	Exam period

**Assessment 1:** There will be a short multiple choice quiz on Moodle each week. Each quiz includes a few easy questions – these provide immediate feedback so you can assess how well you’ve understood the lecture material. Each quiz will also include a practice exam question so you can see what an exam question for that week’s material might look like. Once you have completed a quiz, you will be told which questions you got correct and incorrect. You can take each quiz as many times as you like within the week. Each quiz is worth 1% so if you complete each week’s quiz within the week there is no reason why you cannot achieve the full 10% for this assessment. The quizzes will be open until 11.59pm Sunday of each week.

**Assessment 2:** At the beginning of semester you will be allocated to a small discussion forum group on Moodle. Each week’s lecture has a discussion question that you will discuss with your group on the discussion forum. The discussion forums are designed to help you think more deeply about the lecture content, engage with the material, and think critically about how the principles discussed in the lecture apply to cases in the real world. Although each discussion forum will remain open until the end of semester, only posts from the given week (i.e., from Monday 12pm until Sunday 11.59pm of each week) will count towards your mark for this assessment. You should therefore start your discussions as soon as possible after the lecture’s release to ensure you have enough time for detailed discussion with your group members. At the end of the semester, you are required to submit a log of your discussion forum activity as a record of your participation. This log should contain 10 entries where you posted something thoughtful, insightful or analytical aimed at generating discussion. In your log, you should include your post and any relevant posts from other students. The discussion forum log template is available on Moodle. You should fill in and submit this template via Turnitin on Moodle by 11.59pm 05/05/2019 (refer to the course schedule). A penalty of 2% per day (including weekends) will apply for late submissions. Submissions received after results for this assessment have been

released will receive a mark of zero. Information about the marking criteria is provided on the template.

**Assessment 3:** For this assignment, you are required to attend court and observe several cases. You will need to familiarise yourself with court etiquette and organise your own court visit. You will then provide a summary of your experience and prepare a report based on one of the cases you observed. The court observation assignment will be completed in three parts and all three parts must be completed to satisfy assignment requirements. A penalty of 2% per day (including weekends) will apply for late submissions of any of the parts. Refer to the assignment sheet on Moodle for more information about this assignment.

Part 1: Court Etiquette Test (5%):

Before you attend court, it is very important that you are familiar with court etiquette. You are required to familiarise yourself with the Court Etiquette Guidelines available on Moodle. You will then need to complete the Court Etiquette Test on Moodle by 11.59pm Sunday of Week 3 (refer to the course schedule). You must achieve 100% on this test to pass, but you may attempt the test as many times as necessary to achieve 100%. **Parts 2 and 3 of this assignment will only be made available once you have achieved 100% on the Court Etiquette Test.** This means that if you don't score 100% by the end of Week 3, you will not be able to complete Parts 2 and 3 and will receive a mark of zero for all three parts of the Court Observation assignment. This would make it extremely difficult for you to pass the course.

Part 2: Observation & Summary (15%):

You will organise to visit court and observe cases. For this part of the assignment, you will choose one of the cases you observed and answer a series of questions about your experience. You are required to provide details about what the case was about (e.g., the charges, who was present), what happened while you were there (e.g., what evidence was presented, whether a jury was present), and your thoughts on the court process (e.g., how the experience compared to your expectations). You will not be able to digitally record the proceedings during your observation and you may not be able to take notes, so it is recommended that you complete the summary as soon as possible after your court observation. The summary template is available on Moodle. You should fill in and submit this template via Turnitin on Moodle by 11.59pm Sunday of Week 5 (refer to the course schedule). Information about the marking criteria is provided on the template. Submissions received after results for this assessment have been released will receive a mark of zero.

Part 3: Report (20%):

Once you have completed Part 2: Summary, you are required to prepare a 1500 word report addressing a psychological question relevant to the case you described. You will then identify three *empirical* psychology journal articles which you will use to answer the psychological question you have chosen. The assignment sheet with the list of psychological questions, report template, resources to help you find and identify empirical journal articles, and a tutorial on writing in science are available on Moodle. You should fill in and submit the template via Turnitin on Moodle by 11.59pm Sunday of Week 10 (refer to the course schedule). Information about the marking criteria is provided on the template. Submissions received after results for this assessment have been released will receive a mark of zero.

**Assessment 4:** The final exam will be held in the university examination period **IN PERSON** and **ON CAMPUS** (i.e., not on Moodle). You will have 2 hours to complete the exam, which will consist of multiple choice questions covering all course material (lectures and assessable extra resources). The exact time and date of the exam will be published by the University when available. All students must attend this exam. No online alternative or alternative dates (earlier or later) are available.

UNSW grading system: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/grades>

UNSW assessment policy: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/assessment>

## 5.2 Assessment criteria and standards

Further details and marking criteria for each assessment are available in the 'Course Assessment' section on Moodle (see 4.1: UNSW Assessment Design Procedure).

## 5.3 Submission of assessment tasks

**Assessments 2 & 3 (excluding etiquette test):** In accordance with UNSW Assessment Policy the court observation summary, court observation report and discussion forum log must be submitted online via Turnitin. No paper or emailed copies will be accepted.

**Late penalties:** deduction of marks for late submissions will be in accordance with School policy (see: [Psychology Student Guide](#)).

**Special Consideration:** Students who are unable to complete an assessment task by the assigned due date can apply for special consideration. Special consideration applications must be submitted to Student Central within 3 working days of the assessment due date along with a physical copy of the supporting documentation. Students who have experienced significant illness or misadventure during the assessment period may be eligible. Only circumstances deemed to be outside of the student's control are eligible for special consideration (see - <https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration>). In the case of take-home assessment tasks, misadventure must occur for at least 3 consecutive days during the assessment period. If approved, students may be given an extended due date to complete take-home assessments, or an alternative assessment may be set.

**Alternative assessments:** will be subject to approval and implemented in accordance with UNSW Assessment Implementation Procedure.

**Supplementary examinations:** will be made available for students with approved special consideration application and implemented in accordance with UNSW Assessment Policy.

## 5.4. Feedback on assessment

Feedback on all pieces of assessment in this course will be provided in accordance with UNSW Assessment Policy.

Assessment	When	Who	Where	How
Weekly quizzes	Immediate	Automatic	Online	Moodle
Discussion forum log	10 working days from due date	Towler	Online	Moodle
Court observation assignment	10 working days from due date	Towler	Online	Moodle
Final exam	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

## 6. Academic integrity, referencing and plagiarism

The APA (6<sup>th</sup> edition) referencing style is to be adopted in this course. Students should consult the publication manual itself (rather than third party interpretations of it) in order to properly adhere to

APA style conventions. Students do not need to purchase a copy of the manual, it is available in the library or online. This resource is used by assessment markers and should be the only resource used by students to ensure they adopt this style appropriately:

**APA 6th edition.**

**Referencing** is a way of acknowledging the sources of information that you use to research your assignments. You need to provide a reference whenever you draw on someone else's words, ideas or research. Not referencing other people's work can constitute plagiarism.

Further information about referencing styles can be located at <https://student.unsw.edu.au/referencing>

**Academic integrity** is fundamental to success at university. Academic integrity can be defined as a commitment to six fundamental values in academic pursuits: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage.<sup>1</sup> At UNSW, this means that your work must be your own, and others' ideas should be appropriately acknowledged. If you don't follow these rules, plagiarism may be detected in your work.

Further information about academic integrity and **plagiarism** can be located at:

The *Current Students* site <https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism>, and

The *ELISE* training site <http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/presenting>

The *Conduct and Integrity Unit* provides further resources to assist you to understand your conduct obligations as a student: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/conduct>.

## 7. Readings and resources

<b>Textbook</b>	Nil
<b>Course information</b>	Available on Moodle
<b>Required readings</b>	<a href="#">School of Psychology Student Guide.</a>
<b>Recommended internet sites</b>	<a href="#">UNSW Library</a> <a href="#">UNSW Learning Centre</a> <a href="#">ELISE</a> <a href="#">Turnitin</a> <a href="#">Student Code of Conduct</a> <a href="#">Policy concerning academic honesty</a> <a href="#">Email policy</a> <a href="#">UNSW Anti-racism policy statement</a> <a href="#">UNSW Equity and Diversity policy statement</a> <a href="#">UNSW Equal opportunity in education policy statement</a>

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<sup>1</sup> International Center for Academic Integrity, 'The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity', T. Fishman (ed), Clemson University, 2013.

## 8. Administrative matters

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The [School of Psychology Student Guide](#) contains School policies and procedures relevant for all students enrolled in undergraduate or Masters psychology courses, such as:

- Attendance requirements
- Assignment submissions and returns
- Assessments
- Special consideration
- Student code of conduct
- Student complaints and grievances
- Disability support services
- Health and safety

It is expected that students familiarise themselves with the information contained in this guide.

## 9. Additional support for students

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- The Current Students Gateway: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/>
- Academic Skills and Support: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/academic-skills>
- Student Wellbeing, Health and Safety: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/wellbeing>
- Disability Support Services: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/disability-services>
- UNSW IT Service Centre: <https://www.it.unsw.edu.au/students/index.html>