



Date: Sept – December 2019

Course Title: PSYO 480M Forensic Psychology (Advanced Topics): NCRMD

Course Schedule: Monday – 2:30 – 5:30

Location: FIP 239

Instructor: Michael Woodworth, Ph.D., R.Psych.

TAs: Ian Wellspring, iwellspr@mail.ubc.ca + Katherine Rose, Katherine.rose@ubc.ca

Office location: ASC, 205

Office phone: 250-807-8731

Office hours: drop-in or by appointment

E-mail address: Michael.Woodworth@ubc.ca

Course Description and Goals:

The concept of NCRMD (Not Criminally Responsible by Reason of Mental Disorder) is one of the most intriguing and controversial aspects of the Canadian legal system. The current course will explore the topic of mental illness and culpability from both historical and current perspectives. While the Canadian legal system will be the primary focus, the insanity defence (terminology in the United States) will also be reviewed. Further, other cultural conceptualizations of the relationship between mental illness and accountability will be investigated. Finally, the course will also consider mental disorder and other aspects of the legal system (including forensic psychiatric institutions, incarceration, and personality disorders). By the end of the course students will have a detailed and comprehensive knowledge of both NCMRD and the equivalent defence in both the United States and other countries. In addition, it is expected that they will have critically thought about a variety of topics pertaining to mental disorder and culpability (highlighted in the schedule below) and be able to demonstrate this through class discussion, a presentation (in the form of a debate), and a written assignment.

Format of the Course:

Weekly meetings

Required Texts:

There are no required texts per se. However, both the students and professor will be collecting a number of sources throughout the semester to further illuminate and examine the various topics outlined below. These sources should consist of primarily peer-reviewed empirical and non-empirical published journal articles, but can also include media articles, book chapters, and documentaries. Further, a recent publication: *Criminal Trials and Mental Disorders*, by Thomas L. Hafemeister (2019) is a fairly well done overview of mental disorders within a legal context. However, it is both heavily focused on the USA and spends nearly half of the book considering fitness to stand trial (which is only a minor consideration in this course). With that being said, it

is one of the better books on the topics that I have seen.

Course Grading:

Debate Presentation and Cross Challenge (30%)

Each student can choose to either argue for or against an NCRMD plea in a complex case involving mental disorder and issues of culpability. Approximately four students will be randomly assigned to review four of case and then put the student on the “hot seat” and cross-examine the student in order to challenge his/her thinking. Time permitting other students in the class will have the opportunity to ask questions as well.

A master debater will be crowned based on student votes. **5% of this grade will be participation marks and directly linked to the “cross examination” and questioning you do of your assigned cases.**

Written Opinion Document (25%)

Each student will be required to hand in a document providing their expert opinion on why an individual should be found NCRMD or alternatively why that defence is not appropriate. This SHORT (no more than **6 pages** double-spaced, **EXCLUDING** references) document will consider both the individual as well as the incident before the courts. The information contained within this document will serve as an overview for the reasoning and ultimate opinion that the student will present to the class. An example will be provided to the students.

Final Exam (45%)

The final exam will be two hours in length and will consist of one question that should serve to enable the student to demonstrate the breadth of knowledge they have obtained in the class.

As this is a small (ish) seminar, active participation from each student is critical to developing a productive learning environment. Please come prepared to participate. ***Demonstrating intellectual curiosity by asking questions, challenging your own and others’ opinions, and generally showing interest in the learning process and class content is strongly encouraged!*** A few times during the semester students will also be required to find articles relevant to a particular topic area and to provide them to the instructor.

Regular attendance is required. Students who are unavoidably absent because of illness or personal emergency should report to the instructor as soon as possible. Other conflicts such as academic engagements (e.g., conferences, professional presentations) should be cleared with the instructor in advance and arrangements should be made to gather material that was missed.

COURSE OUTLINE

SEPTEMBER 09 – INTRODUCTION TO TOPIC/HOUSE-KEEPING

SEPT 16 – CASE STUDY + HISTORY: MENTAL DISORDER AND CULPABILITY & DELEGATING

SEPT 23 – HISTORICAL AND CURRENT CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF NCRMD IN CANADA

SEPT 30 – NCRMD IN CANADA CONTINUED; PLUS A CONSIDERATION OF THE USA + MEDIA DAY

OCTOBER 7 – LEGAL OUTCOMES + TREATMENT + CONSIDERATION OF PERSONALITY DISORDER

OCTOBER 14 – THANKSGIVING

OCTOBER 21 – MENTAL DISORDER AND CULPABILITY IN OTHER CULTURES

OCTOBER 28 – !!!VERY SPECIAL GUEST S/SGT GREG YANICKI!!!

NOVEMBER 04 – MENTAL HEALTH & PRISON + A FOCUS ON RISK AND MALINGERING

NOVEMBER 11 – REMEMBRANCE DAY

NOVEMBER 18 – THE GRAND DEBATES REVEAL/INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION

NOVEMBER 25 – THE GRAND DEBATES PT. 2 – “CROSS-EXAMINATION” AND CHALLENGES

DECEMBER 02-17- FINAL EXAM

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the presentation of another person’s work or ideas without proper or complete acknowledgement. Plagiarism can be intentional or unintentional, and includes self-plagiarism where a student submits work that is the same or substantially the same as work prepared or performed for credit in another course. Both are serious forms of academic misconduct subject to disciplinary action. In the context of this course, plagiarism and self-plagiarism are most likely to occur in the term paper assignment, take-home exam, and presentations of reading summaries in class. In order to help you avoid plagiarism, there are a number of other resources that you can refer to including the American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual (6th ed., 2009), or the following website:

http://www.psychologicalscience.org/teaching/tips/tips_0403.html, which has a number of recommended readings and references on the topic.

A more detailed description of academic integrity, including the policies and procedures, can also be found at: <http://web.ubc.ca/okanagan/faculties/resources/academicintegrity.html>

<http://okanagan.students.ubc.ca/calendar/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,0>

Special Accommodations:

If you require disability related accommodations to meet the course objectives please contact the Coordinator of Disability Resources located in the Student development and Advising area of the student services building. For more information about Disability Resources or about academic accommodations please visit the following website:

<http://okanagan.students.ubc.ca/current/disres.cfm>