

**Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology**

**Sam Houston State University**

**Course Syllabus**

**CRIJ 3363 04**

**Violent Offenders (online)**

**Fall 2017**

**Instructor:** Darla R. King, M.S.

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Office:** Online

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**Class Hours:** Online

**Classroom:** Online

**Office Hours:** Via Email

**Course Description**

This course examines the psychological and behavioral characteristics of the most violent criminal types. The course will cover many topics of criminality, violence, and their causes and will provide an introduction to behavioral and psychological issues relevant for understanding, assessing and managing abnormal criminal behavior. It begins with an overview of genetic and environmental influences of violent crimes and the relationship between mental disorder, criminality, and violence. The second section includes the principles from psychological and behavioral science for understanding specific types of violent offenders.

**Learning Objectives**

1. To understand the role of genetics, evolution, biology, and the psychological factors that influence criminal and violent behavior.
2. To have a basic understanding of mental disorders and how they relate to criminal and violent behavior.
3. To have a basic understanding of the developmental pathways that may lead to criminal and violent behavior.
4. To introduce the psychodynamic theories of personality and personality disorders.
5. To introduce the construct and current research findings on psychopathy.
6. To have a basic understanding of the research related to learning and the effects of violent media
7. To have a basic understanding of social cognition
8. To have a basic understanding of mental disorders and the criminalization of mental disorders

9. To have a basic understanding of substance abuse and its relationship to criminal and violent behavior.
10. To have a basic understanding of homicides and their theoretical models
11. To have basic understanding of the research related to stalking offenders, domestic violence offenders and sexual violence.
12. To have a basic understanding of the assessment and treatment of violent offenders.

### **Required Text**

Lyon, David R. and Welsh, Andrew (2017). *The Psychology of Criminal and Violent Behaviour*. Oxford University Press

ISBN: 978-0-19-901008-0 (Not available as an E-Text)

Additional research articles may be required – but you will be provided the electronic reference or it will be placed online for downloading.

### **Course Requirements and Student Responsibilities**

Students are required to view all lectures (video and/or voice with power point), to read all assignments before they are due to be discussed in class, and to be prepared to discuss the reading assignments in your discussion groups. Requirements for this course include taking all of the scheduled exams and participating in assigned discussions.

### **Exams**

There will be four exams in this course. They will consist of multiple-choice items and will cover lectures, readings, discussion, and video clips. Each exam will be worth 50 points. Examinations will not be comprehensive. **No make-up exams will be given. You will have 60 minutes to complete the exam.** Exams will be open book and notes, but you are not allowed to work with someone else.

### **Discussion**

Since we will not be in a traditional classroom, I want us to be very active in discussion and discourse about the topics, which is quite easy because these offenders are very interesting!

Thus, a large portion of your grade will be your discussion involvement. Please be thorough in your discussions. A one or two line sentence will not be sufficient and will be graded accordingly. For each module you can obtain 30 discussion points. The points and expectations are broken down like this:

**-20 pts** for a thoughtful response to the topic question/s. This may include needing to post an example (case study) and why you think that case study or example fits into the discussion. (All examples or case studies will need to be cited with the location obtained. Please do not use personal examples.)

**-10 pts** for responding to and fully interacting with **at least two** other members in your group.

Please remember to be respectful in your discussions, whether you are talking to each other or talking about a case study. It is easier to be less respectful when we are not face to face – however, I expect the same courteous discourse as if we were all together in a classroom! Additionally, make sure you check out the syllabus to see when modules are discussed – you will need to get in there while that module discussion is open. Once the module session is over you will not be able to go back and add! So keep up!

## **Grading**

Your final course grade will be based on a point system (breakdown below). Letter grades will be assigned to your appropriate percentage:

A 90-100%  
B 80-89%  
C 70-79%  
D 60-69%  
F 59% and below

Exams are worth 50 points each X 4 = 200 points

Discussion involvement 30 points per module X 4 = 120 points

Total = 320 points

## **Lectures**

Lectures will serve to elaborate upon and explain some of the more significant and/or difficult topics in the readings. Lectures will also supplement the readings by covering additional topics and by providing more in-depth extensions of topics. The lectures will often contain information that is not found in the readings, but you will be responsible for knowing on the exams. The lectures will be voice lecture with power point slides.

**Student Academic Policies** concerning Attendance, Academic Honesty, Disabled Student and Services for Disabled Students, and Absences on Religious Holy days may be found at:  
<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-students.html>

## **Disabled Student Policy**

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that no otherwise qualified disabled individual shall, solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic or Student Life program or activity. Disabled students may request help with academically related problems stemming from individual disabilities from their instructors, school/department chair, or by contacting the Chair of the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students and Director of the Counseling Center, Lee Drain Annex, or by calling (936) 294-3512. **TDD: 936-294-3786**

**E-mail:** [disability@shsu.edu](mailto:disability@shsu.edu)

**Web Address:** [www.shsu.edu/disability](http://www.shsu.edu/disability)

### **Academic Honesty**

The Faculty of the College of Criminal Justice expects students to conduct their academic work with extra integrity and honesty. Acts of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and can result in the failure of a course and dismissal from the University. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, collusion – the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing work offered for credit, the abuse of resource materials, and misrepresentation of credentials or accomplishments as a member of the college.

The University's policy on academic honesty and appeal procedures can be found in the manual entitled *Student Guidelines*, distributed by Division of Student Services. (Reference Section 5.3 of the SHSU Student Guidelines) <http://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/>

In an online course there are different temptations, if you will, to engage in academic dishonesty. For example, having someone else post discussions or take exams for you. Additionally, simply copying someone else's comments and posting them as your own. Lastly, working on an exam with someone else may be tempting. All of these are considered academic dishonesty in this course and if you engage in any of them you will be given an F for the course and referred to the Dean of Students.

Students, take the academic honesty policy seriously in EVERY class. If you have academic dishonesty on your transcript you will find it very difficult to obtain employment! It is not worth the risk.

### **Use of Telephones and Text Messages in Academic Classrooms and Facilities:**

<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-curriculum.html>

## Schedule and Readings

Introduction Course Introduction and Discussion (Aug. 23<sup>rd</sup> – Aug. 27<sup>th</sup>)

**Module 1** Read Chapter 1 Introduction (Aug. 28<sup>th</sup> – Sept. 3<sup>rd</sup>)  
Read Chapter 2 Genetics and Evolution (Sept. 4<sup>th</sup> – Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>)  
Read Chapter 3 Biology (Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> – Sept. 17<sup>th</sup>)

Complete Discussion Board 1 (Initial Post/Response Aug. 28<sup>th</sup> – Sept. 13<sup>th</sup>; Peer Replies Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> – Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>)

**Test 1** (6:00 AM Thursday Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> – 11:59 PM Friday Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>)

**Module 2** Read Chapter 4 Developmental Pathways (Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> – Sept. 24<sup>th</sup>)  
Read Chapter 5 Personality (Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> – Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>)  
Read Chapter 6 Psychopathy (Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup> – Oct. 8<sup>th</sup>)  
-APD video clip  
- Aileen Wuornos video

Complete Discussion Board 2 (Initial Post/Response Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> – Oct. 4<sup>th</sup>; Peer Replies Oct. 5<sup>th</sup> – Oct. 11<sup>th</sup>)

**Test 2** (6:00 AM Thursday Oct. 12<sup>th</sup> – 11:59 PM Friday Oct. 13<sup>th</sup>)

**Module 3** Read Chapter 7 Learning (Oct. 9<sup>th</sup> – Oct. 15<sup>th</sup>)  
Read Chapter 8 Social Cognition (Oct. 16<sup>th</sup> – Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup>)  
Read Chapter 9 Mental Disorder (Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup> – Oct. 29<sup>th</sup>)  
-Bipolar video clip  
-Schizophrenia video clip  
-Milgram youtube video  
- Video of Richard Ramirez

Complete Discussion Board 3 (Initial Post/Response Oct. 9<sup>th</sup> – Oct. 25<sup>th</sup>; Peer Replies Oct. 25<sup>th</sup> – Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>)

**Test 3** (6:00 AM Thursday Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup> – 11:59 PM Friday Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup>)

**Module 4** Read Chapter 10 Substance Use (Oct. 30<sup>th</sup> – Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>)  
Read Chapter 11 Homicide (Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> – Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>)  
Read Chapter 12 Interpersonal Violence (Nov. 13<sup>th</sup> – Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>)  
Read Chapter 13 Assessment and Treatment (Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> – Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>)  
-Stalker video

Complete Discussion Board 4 (Initial Post/Response Oct. 30<sup>th</sup> – Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>; Peer Replies Nov. 24<sup>th</sup> – Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>)

**Test 4** (6:00 AM Tuesday Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> – 11:59 PM Wednesday Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>)