

**Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology**  
**CRIJ 6330**  
**Neurobiology of Trauma**  
**Spring 2018**

Professor: Dr. Stephanie Bluth  
Office Location: TEC 275C  
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Email: [sjb024@shsu.edu](mailto:sjb024@shsu.edu)  
Class Hours: Arranged  
Classroom: Online  
Office Hours: M & W 12:00 AM-1:00 PM or By appointment  
Online Course Information: Blackboard (BB); Please check this regularly

**Textbooks & Required Reading:**

Because this class is structured around a lecture/discussion format, keeping up-to-date with weekly reading assignments (see the "Course Schedule" for specific assignment due dates and the Modules for reading assignments), as well as class participation in discussions, is especially important. Any questions you may have about reading materials should be emailed to me directly.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

Van der Kolk, B. (2014). *The body keeps the score: Brain, mind, and body in the healing of trauma*. NY: Viking.

Gordon, N. J., & Fleisher, W. L. (2011). *Effective Interviewing and Interrogation Techniques*. Burlington, MA: Academic Press. (**This is an ebook that students do not have to purchase**)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course provides students with an advanced understanding of the role of the brain, brain systems, and hormone/chemical responses in explaining reactions to experiencing and witnessing a variety of traumatic events. Information is contrasted to traditional, responses from criminal justice practitioners (e.g., law enforcement, courtroom actors), medical staff, and social service personnel when presented with victims of trauma. Evidence based practices for effective forensic interview techniques and victim advocacy are synthesized in light of recent advances in neuroscience of trauma.

**At times, the issues raised in this course may be controversial and/or highly emotionally charged for some students. I ask and expect that every member of this class respect each person's position, regardless of your agreement or disagreement with a particular view.** Students who become uncomfortable with particular topics are encouraged to talk with the professor or other professionals, such as the SHSU Counseling Center 936-294-1720 (<http://www.shsu.edu/~counsel/>); the SAAFE House (for sexual assault and intimate partner violence) 24-hour crisis line 936-291-3369 or 936-327-2513; the 24-hour national crisis hotline 1-800- 659-6994; or the 24-hour national suicide hotline 1-800-273-8255. Students may contact the campus Psychological Services Center 936-294-1210 (<http://www.shsu.edu/~clinpsy/psc/>).

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a solid understanding of the neurobiology behind victimization and trauma and the criminal justice/social service response to victims
2. Develop an ability to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and research in investigating victim treatment
3. Demonstrate critical thinking by applying the principles of best practices and principles from course material to trauma and crisis intervention

### **A Note from Dr. Bluth about the Subject Matter of Upcoming Lectures**

Over the course of the semester we are going to cover various topics that may be considered controversial and/or emotionally charged. While these are very important topics (both academically and socially), you may find that some of the material presented in class, or that is assigned for you to read, is disturbing because of the very nature of the subject matter it addresses. In addition, I understand that some students may find course material difficult, either because of violence that they themselves have experienced or that persons they know and love may have experienced. In short, it has been my experience that very few students who take this course experience the material as purely academic. If you find yourself overwhelmed with feelings, or are in abusive relationship, I urge you to take one or more of the following actions:

- Call a trusted family member. Call a trusted friend.
- Talk with a trusted mentor or professor (*see X/11-H. above*) on campus.
- Seek support, help, or assistance from any of the following local resources:
  - o **SHSU Counseling Center** 936.294.1720 (<http://www.shsu.edu/'counsel>)
  - o the **SAAFE House** (for sexual assault and intimate partner violence) 24-hour crisis line 936.291.3369 or 936.327.2513
  - o **National Domestic Violence Hotline** 800.799.SAFE
  - o **24-hour national suicide hotline** 1.800.273.8255
  - o Students may also schedule counseling with the campus **Psychological Services Center** 936.294.1210 (<http://www.shsu.edu/'clinpsy/psc/>).

## **Course Requirements:**

**Reaction Paper/Voicethread.** (50%) A reflection is a 1000 words minimum double-spaced written comment that refers to the topic (covered in a lecture or video) and expresses your thoughts about past experiences or insights that have new meaning based on what you are learning. Reflections are designed to help you make better discussions or improve relationships when working with people, in particular, victims.

Students will submit a voicethread video for each of the course modules. In this video, students will need to address what they have learned, what they have found salient, major points of importance, and/or things they don't agree with. This video should simulate and stimulate classroom discussion. You have a time limit of 10 minutes but videos should be no shorter than 3-5 minutes. Students will be awarded points based on their ability to fully engage in the platform and basic (across the board generic answers) will not receive full credit.

All students will be required to watch and respond to at least 2 of their classmates Voicethread videos. Your responses should be 2-3 minutes long. Do not attempt to stop a discussion, but rather move it forward. Be respectful of others who disagree with you.

It is very important to fully read the articles and/or watch the videos, so that you are fully prepared to make salient responses and fully participate in discussions. Students will be awarded points based on their ability to fully engage in the platform and basic (across the board generic answers) will not receive full credit. Do not attempt to stop a discussion, but rather move it forward. Be respectful of others who disagree with you.

**Annotated Outline of Topics to be Covered for Each Class: See Blackboard Course Schedule**

**Writing Assignments: (100 Points Each = 200 Total Points):**

Each student is required to complete 2 short writing assignments worth 100 points each (30%). All writing assignment instructions are located in the **Writing Assignment** folder on the left hand side of the course on Blackboard under **Course Information**. These assignments can be completed at your discretion, but **MUST** be completed by the due date specified in the **Course Schedule**. These assignments will require students to read supplemental texts(articles) or watch training webinars, and submit a 5-7 page paper describing their response to the readings(s) in context of the course material. Each assignment should be well-developed, show a strong understanding of the assigned reading material, and demonstrate correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure. Assignments should be a **minimum of FIVE FULL pages, double-spaced with Times New Roman, 12 pt. font.** Each Writing Assignment will be graded according to the grading rubric.

Additionally:

- 1) Have a cover page with your name, course number, title of paper, and date. This DOES NOT count toward the 5-7 page limit.
- 2) Each paper should use 3 reference sources and they can be: the text book, supplementary articles, and 1 other source.
- 3) Each paper will have a reference page which DOES NOT count toward the page minimum.
- 4) Properly cite your work. If you have questions, make sure to ask in a timely manner.

To submit your writing assignment via Blackboard, navigate to the **Writing Assignment** link. Click on the "Writing Assignment" folder (or current assignment folder), and use the TURNITIN link provided to submit your assignment. Your assignments must be typed in

Microsoft Word and uploaded to the TURNITIN link by attaching it and submitting it. Should you have issues submitting your assignment, please contact the SHSU Online Helpdesk at (936) 294-2780.

### **Grading:**

**Exams. There will be NO exams for this class! The FINAL Paper is due on the last class day.** The final paper will be based on the course material (worth 20% of your grade) and will be 10-12 pages (excluding cover page and reference pages (s)). This assignment includes two major sections: (a) Literature review and (b) applying trauma theory and trauma-based interventions to a clinical trauma case example. Students will choose their clinical trauma (i.e. stranger sexual assault, child physical abuse, prison rape).

1. Topic Selection will be due in Module 1
2. The annotated bibliography will be due in Module 2 (Writing Assignment #2)
3. The Final Paper will due on the last official day of class.

**Grades** - Your grade will not be curved or bartered. It is recommended that you monitor your own progress. To protect your privacy, grades will not be discussed via phone, email, or anywhere other than in the professor's office.

**A:** 100-90%

**B:** 89-80%

**C:** 79-70%

**F:** <69

### **EMAIL/COMMUNICATION POLICIES**

All emails to the professor must be written in a formal style to receive a response. This means you must include a greeting and sign the email.

- ❖ Any email received after 5 p.m. will be responded the next business day after 8 a.m.
- ❖ Please give me 24 hours to reply before sending another email.

I will not discuss your grade via e-mail. You **MUST** come to my office or schedule a video conference. **I do not round any grades up.**

### **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-students.html> .**

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

The Faculty of the College of Criminal Justice expects students to conduct their academic work with 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 an exam, plagiarism, collusion –the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing work offered for credit, the abuse of resource materials, etc. You can find more information at: <http://www.shsu.edu/-vaf> [www.aps/documents/810213.pdf](http://www.aps/documents/810213.pdf) .

Any violation of these regulations will be dealt with in accordance to the severity of the

misconduct. If there are ANY doubts concerning what constitutes a violation, please ask me.

### **Academic Honesty:**

Academic dishonesty of any kind will NOT be tolerated.

- **Any instance of vagrant plagiarism will result in a "O" for the assignment**
- **If you are a habitual cheater** (i.e.,you cheat on 2 or more occasions over the course of the semester), **you will fail the course** (i.e.,receive a final letter grade of a "F")
- ALL instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean's Office•
- Further information concerning academic honesty is available at the following address: <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-students.html>

### **Disabled Students:**

<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/disability/>

### **Religious Holy Day Observances:**

<http://www.shsu.edu/Vaf/www/aps/documents/861001.pdf>

### **USE OF TELEPHONES AND TEXT MESSAGES IN ACADEMIC**

#### **CLASSROOMS AND FACILITIES:**

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

### **Course Schedule**

**Annotated Outline of Topics to be Covered for Each Class: Also See Blackboard Course Schedule**

<b>Module</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due date</b>
Module #1-The Brain	<b>Reaction Paper: Neuro-sex assault</b>	<b>1/21/18</b>
	<b>Reading Voice Thread Discussion</b>	<b>2/11/18</b>
	<b>Final Paper topic Selection</b>	<b>2/18/18</b>
	<b>Writing Assignment #1</b>	<b>2/25/18</b>
Module #- CJ Systems and Trauma	<b>Reaction Paper: Forensic Interview</b>	<b>3/4/18</b>
	<b>Reading Voice Thread Discussion</b>	<b>3/18/18</b>
	<b>Writing Assignment #2 Annotated Bibliography</b>	<b>4/1/18</b>
Module #3-Evidenced Based Practices	<b>Reaction paper #3</b>	<b>4/15/18</b>
	<b>Voice Thread Discussion</b>	<b>4/22/18</b>
	<b>Final paper</b>	<b>5/4/18</b>

**Final Exam: There is no final exam for this course.**

## **The Final Paper is due May 4<sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm.**

\*\*The following schedule may be modified with notice at the discretion of the professor. Students are responsible for ANY schedule changes even if they are not present when the changes are discussed.

Assignment	Points	A 90-100% B 80-89% C 70-79% D 60-69% F 59% or less
Reaction Papers 100X3	300	
Voice Thread Discussions 3X25	75	
Writing Assignments 1	100	
Writing Assignments 2(Annotated Bibliography)	100	
Final Paper- 12/04	125	
<b>Course Total</b>	<b>700</b>	

### **TRIGGER WARNING**

Please note that the required readings, topically-relevant documentaries, discussions, and exercises in this class involve extraordinarily sensitive material. In addition, it is likely that students in this classroom may have had experiences with or know someone who has experienced some form of victimization. Therefore, it is possible that students may experience discomfort and/or emotional responses. Please plan accordingly.

### **MANDATORY REPORTING**

As an instructor at SHSU, I am under federal obligation to relay information regarding victimization disclosure to our University's Title IX Coordinator for the purpose of ensuring appropriate services and accommodations are provided to anyone who has disclosed victimization. If you disclose ongoing or past victimization in your assignments, during class, or to me personally, I am legally obligated to relay this information to the Dean of Students Office in order to facilitate appropriate service provision. While I do not want this to deter you from seeking help or disclosing, it is important that you understand my federal legal obligations.

**Title IX Mandatory Reporting** – As a professor at SHSU, I am under federal obligation to relay information regarding victimization disclosure to our University's Title IX Coordinator for the purpose of ensuring that appropriate services and accommodations are provided to anyone who has disclosed victimization. It is important that you know, should you disclose ongoing or past victimization in writing assignments, during class, or to me personally, I am legally obliged to relay this information to the Dean of Students office in order to facilitate appropriate service provision. While I do not want this to deter you from seeking help, it is important that you understand my federal legal obligations.

### **TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES**

If technical difficulties occur with Blackboard, please contact the IT Center (contact information is provided below). Please email and notify the professor as soon as possible:

**SHSU Online Technical Team**

Email: [delta@shsu.edu](mailto:delta@shsu.edu) Phone: (936) 294-2780

Available: Monday-Saturday (Sam-7pm)

**Technical Assistance** - This course requires regular access to the Internet, Microsoft Word, and Adobe PDF files. If you do not know how to use Blackboard or if you encounter technical difficulties with the course website, contact SHSU Online at (936) 294-2780 or email [delta@shsu.edu](mailto:delta@shsu.edu). Hours for SHSU Online are Monday through Saturday from 7:00 a.m.– 12pm