**Professor:** Brian Cahill, PhD  
**Department:** Psychology  
**Office:** 257 Psy  
**Office Hours:** Wednesdays 1-4 or by appointment Virtual office hours only by appointment  
**Office Phone:** 352-273-2175  
**Email:** brian.cahill@ufl.edu  

**Graduate Teaching Assistants:**  
**Teaching Assistants:** Joy Losee and Jackie Avila  
**Office Hours:** Losee Tuesday 9:30-10:30am or by appoint.; Avila Thursday 12-1pm or by appoint.  
**Email:** Losee: jl01745@ufl.edu and Avila: jackelynavig@gmail.com  

Please allow 48 hours for a response. Questions posted over the weekend may not receive a response until the beginning of the following week.

"The struggle for justice doesn't end with me. This struggle is for all the Troy Davis’s who came before me and all the ones who will come after me. I'm in good spirits and I'm prayerful and at peace." Troy Davis most likely an innocent man who was executed by the State of Georgia on Sept 21, 2011 at 11:00 PM.

**Course Description:**

Legal Psychology is the study of the interaction between the individual and the legal system. This course will cover the major topics in the field, including eyewitness identification, investigative interviewing, interrogations, jury selection, the insanity defense, and punishment. Throughout the course, we will examine psychological research that investigates issues related to law and the legal process. At the end of the course, you will have a better understanding of how the legal system can be informed by psychological research, and how psychological research can be reactive to legal issues. Students should be prepared to think critically about each topic and to actively participate in class discussions; I enjoy discussions, so expect them in most of the modules! Successful completion of this course requires participation in class activities, completion of all assignments, and timely reading of assigned materials.

**Course Goals:**

Upon completion of this course, students will:

1. Have a better understanding of a variety of contemporary issues in the legal system.  
2. Have a basic understanding of research methods in the study of psychology and law.  
3. Understand how psychological research can inform legal policies and procedures.
Recommended Text, Canvas, and Materials:


**Canvas:** If you aren’t already comfortable with the Canvas platform (http://elearning.ufl.edu/; click “Log in to e-Learning”), I highly suggest that you spend some time exploring its various components. It’s our everything portal; the repository for all of the resources you’ll need to make your way through the course. Announcements will be made periodically about class issues (such as when grades are posted). These will be visible on Canvas. Students are responsible for all announcements made there. Thus you must check Canvas on a daily basis so you don’t miss any course announcement.

**Multimedia:** Netflix: You will need to obtain a Netflix account or have reliable access to one as you will be required to watch the first season of the documentary series titled “Making a Murderer” during the first week of the course. The series consists of 20, one-hour episodes and covers the exoneration of Steven Avery and the subsequent prosecution of him for a murder he is accused of committing shortly after being exonerated. This documentary is shocking to say the least and provides a sad but needed look into what we consider to be a fair and impartial justice system. We will reference this series throughout class as it provides an invaluable look into the current issues facing our legal system. Also, you will have several discussion posts related to various episodes in season one and thus successful completion of these posts is dependent upon you watching this series.

**Additional Resources:**

- **The Innocent Man: Murder and Injustice in a Small Town** by John Grisham
- **The Wrong Guys: Murder, False Confessions, and the Norfolk Four** by Tom Wells and Richard Leo
- **Witness for the Defense: The Accused, the Eyewitness and the Expert Who Puts Memory on Trial** by Elizabeth Loftus and Katherine Ketcham
- **Serial Podcast, Season 1:** This podcast series investigated the 1999 murder of Hae Min Lee and is wickedly addicting!
- **Murder on a Sunday Morning:** Is an Oscar winning documentary that covers the murder trial of a young black man in Florida. If you love this class you will love this movie!

I have so many more recommendations so if you get through all of these and want more just let me know!

**Course Structure:**

**Modules:** To make the class easier for you I have standardized the opening and due dates of all modules and assignments throughout the course. Most modules will be 1 week long (see class
schedule for exceptions). Also most modules will begin on Monday at 12am and will end the following Sunday at 11:59pm. Most Quizzes and Activities will be due on Sunday at 11:59pm (see class schedule for exceptions), while discussion posts will have 2 due dates. Your initial discussion post will be due on 3 days prior to the final post at 11:59pm (usually on a Thursday) and your response to a fellow student’s discussion post will be due on Sunday at 11:59pm. There may be exceptions to this pattern so please make sure you examine the class schedule carefully. Make sure you read the class schedule very carefully and mark all due dates in your calendar. **I tried to keep everything standardized as much as possible but because of Spring Break and Reading Days I was unable to keep it perfect so please keep this in mind.**

**Exams:** Each exam will consist of 45 multiple-choice questions and 1 open ended question. Each multiple-choice will be worth 2 points and the open ended question will be worth 10 points for a total of 100 points for each exam. There will be 4 exams in all and each exam will be non-cumulative. Exam 1 will cover chapters 1, 2, and 3; Exam 2 will cover chapters 4 and 5; Exam 3 will cover chapters 6, 7, and 10; and Exam 4 will cover chapters 12 and 17. Each exam will be taken using ProctorU and remember you will NOT be allowed to use your book or notes. To make sure you have ample time to watch all of the lectures and prepare for the exams your exams will be given the week after the final module is covered for each exam. For example, Exam 1 covers modules 2 – 4 so the exam will be on the Monday of Module 5. This will be the same for all exams except for Exam 4 which will be on the Monday of examination week. You will be given 1 hour to complete each exam. Your lowest exam score will be dropped, so 3 exams x 100 = 300 points total.

**Quizzes:** Three days before the end of most modules (i.e., Sunday at 11:59pm) I’ll open up a 10-question multiple-choice quiz on Canvas. They’ll be timed, such that you won’t be able to look up answers quickly enough without knowing exactly where to look, so preparation’s important. These quizzes are non-cumulative, thus they will focus on the current material being covered that week/module. Also, the questions will be randomly selected from a large question pool so each person’s quiz will differ. Quizzes for each module will be due at the end of each module/week, which is usually a Sunday, at 11:59pm. There will be 10 quizzes in total, one for each of the modules 2 -11, each worth 5 points (1/2 point per question). Your lowest quiz score will be dropped, so 9 quizzes x (10 questions x 1/2 points each) = 45 points total.

**Discussion Posts:** Starting with module 1 we will have a discussion post about every other module with the total number of posts being 5. Your posts will consist of an initial post which will entail you addressing the topic posed by me as well as a follow up response to one of your fellow students’ posts. The purpose of these posts is for you to think critically about a topic and share your thoughts with your fellow students. The posts will likely change format from one to the next, but I will provide you with a detailed rubric for each post so you will have a clear understanding of what I am looking for in that particular post. I will open the post at the beginning of each module as well as post the rubric. Remember I will open the discussion post at the beginning of each module (i.e., Monday at 12am) and your initial discussion post will be due on 3 days prior to the end of the module at 11:59pm and your response to a fellow student’s discussion post will be due on Sunday (usually) at 11:59pm. The reason behind having 2 due dates for this assignment is to make sure that you give everyone ample time to read your post and create a thoughtful response. Hopefully this will allow for some really great discussions!!! To earn your full points, make sure you fully answer/address each component in the initial post and provide a thoughtful response to a fellow student’s post. As for length your initial post should be no less than 200 and no more than 500 words, with your follow up being no less than 100 words.
Each post will be worth a maximum of 20 points, so with 4 posts x 20 points = 80 points total. Your lowest discussion grade will be dropped.

**Activities:** Another part of your grade is comprised of completing 2 activities. These activities are designed to be fun, interactive, and will help reinforce material we cover in that particular module. The first activity will be in Module 1 and will be a True/False quiz that will assess your knowledge of current legal issues. After you take the Legal Knowledge quiz you will discuss your reaction to your performance in a discussion post and it is this discussion post that is graded. The second activity will be in Module 6 and will consist of you categorizing killers into the different types based on their criminal acts and motivations. More details about each of these will be provided at the beginning of their respective modules. Activities will be available at the beginning of the module and will be due at the end of that module (i.e., Sunday at 11:59 pm). The legal knowledge activity will be worth 9 points and serial killer activity will be worth 16 points.

**Reflection Assignment Papers:** The goals of every class you take should be at least twofold: 1) Leave a more critical thinker and 2) Leave with more knowledge than you entered. In recent years I have realized that students often leave classes not realizing how much their thinking has changed over the course of the semester. Thus, I want you to do an assignment that I hope will help you actualize how much you learn in this class. For this assignment I want you to write an initial reflection paper (no more than 250 words) in which you will answer the following questions: What is your current view of our criminal justice system? What can psychology contribute to the criminal justice system? How confident are you with your knowledge of the legal system? You will answer these questions in an essay format and upload it to canvas (see the schedule for the due date). Initial reflection paper is worth 5 points (a detailed rubric is on canvas).

For this assignment you will read your initial reflection paper and then submit, your final reflection paper (no more than 500 words) in which you will address the following question: How have your answers to the previous questions changed? That is, I want you to read your answers to the initial questions and then discuss in this paper how, if any, your answers have changed. You will answer this question in an essay format and upload your paper to canvas (see the schedule for the due date). The final reflection paper is worth 10 points (a detailed rubric is on canvas).
Grading Procedure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Posts</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial and Final Reflection Papers</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your final grade will include 3 exams, 9 quizzes, 4 discussion posts, 2 activities, and 2 reflection papers. The following scale will be used to determine final grades, I will not round up final grades under any circumstances, so for example, 89.99 will be a B+ NOT an A-:

- **A** = 93 – 100%
- **A-** = 90 – 92%
- **B+** = 87 – 89%
- **B** = 83 - 86 %
- **B-** = 80 - 82 %
- **C+** = 77 - 79 %
- **C** = 73 – 76%
- **C-** = 70 – 72%
- **D+** = 67 – 69%
- **D** = 63- 66%
- **D-** = 60 – 62%
- **E** = 0 – 59%

At any time, you may calculate your grade by adding up the number of points earned, dividing that sum by the number of points attempted, and multiplying the result by 100. Information about UF’s current grading policies may be found at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

Our Class Policies

**Late Work and Make ups:**

An example: You have been very busy all week so you keep putting off taking that online quiz for your favorite class Legal Psychology. It is finally time for you to take the quiz so you put on your most comfortable Snuggie, crawl into your memory foam bed and turn on your notebook to take the quiz and then you say, “Son of a &^%*&!” because your internet goes out so you have no way of accessing the quiz now. You look at the clock and now there is only 20 minutes before the deadline so you don’t even have time go to a local Starbucks to access the internet. So you email me panicked, telling me about this horrible situation and plead for me to allow you to take the quiz late. Well unfortunately, unlike Lloyd Christmas who famously said “So you're telling me there's a chance. YEAH!”, you have NO chance of earning points for late work so please make sure you turn your assignments in on time. So please, please, please, please be responsible and make sure you do not wait until the last minute to do any of your graded assignments. Make-ups are not allowed under any circumstances, as I already allow you to drop your lowest quiz and discussion grades in case of any emergencies. Of note, if the Canvas website experiences course wide technical difficulties deadlines will be adjusted to allow for completion of assignments.
Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx.

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

U Matter, We Care: Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

Grade Disputes: For all graded assignments, you will have 1 week from the day your grades are released to dispute your grade, after which your grade will become final and can no longer be disputed. Obviously, just because you dispute your grade DOES NOT mean your grade will be changed in your favor. Also, this should not be a default reaction to any low grade you receive, please only pursue this route when you are confident that you can make a case that an error occurred. If you wish to dispute a grade you must email me to inform me that you wish to dispute your grade. Then you must attend office hours and be ready to provide a sound argument based on empirical evidence. Any changes to grades will be made solely at the discretion of your professor.

University Policy on Academic Misconduct: Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. “Cheating is defined in the UF Handbook, and it is the student’s responsibility to be familiar with its many forms (including plagiarism). If a student is caught cheating, the first offense will result in a zero for that exam or assignment and a record of the event will be placed in a temporary file with the Office of Student Affairs. The second offense will result in an “E” for the course, and the student will go before the Honor Court. As a result of completing registration at UF, every student has agreed to the following statement: “I understand that UF expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University.” Please make sure you understand the UF Student Honor Code.

I Need Help!!!
Ok, so maybe you are not a very tech savvy person or Canvas is giving you some strange error message and when you google it you still can’t fix it. Don’t panic we are here to help 24/7! For technical issues like this you should contact the UF Computing Help Desk at:
- helpdesk@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
Submit a question via the Helpdesk website If they are still of no help (which from my experience they are very helpful) then you should contact me Dr. Brian Cahill: brian.cahill@ufl.edu or the teaching assistant you have been assigned to using your last name (see the top of the syllabus for their contact info). Aside from technical help my teaching assistants and myself are here to help you however we can with course related questions. We love our jobs and our students very much so please don’t be afraid to ask for help! We are good at what we do and will do whatever we can to help you succeed in this course. However, when you email us please keep in mind a couple of things and I know this will come off as condescending and I am sorry but you would put this in your syllabus if you received the kinds of inappropriate emails I receive from students on a regular basis: 1) Your emails should be formal when you write to us, we are not your brother/sister, bff, or bae so please address us properly using appropriate terms (e.g., Dr. Cahill, Professor Cahill), 2) We have hundreds of students in multiple classes so please give us your full name, what class you are in, and which section in every email you write to us, and 3) Please spell check your email and use proper grammar so we can understand your question/issue.

Course Evaluations:
Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

SOP 4842 Legal Psychology
Spring 2020
**Course Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module/Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignments (all Assignments Due at 11:59pm)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Start Here Page</td>
<td>General Course Information</td>
<td></td>
<td>Very Important: Must complete syllabus quiz (score 100% on it) and complete the initial reflection paper to open up the rest of the modules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (1/6 – 1/12)</td>
<td>Course Introduction Making a Murderer</td>
<td>Making a Murderer</td>
<td>Due: 1/12 Legal Knowledge Activity (must also complete this before other assignments open) and Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (1/13- 1/19)</td>
<td>Psychology and Law: A Cautious Alliance</td>
<td>Chapter 1 Making a Murderer</td>
<td>Due: Quiz 1/19 Due: Initial Discussion Post 1/16; Response Post 1/19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (1/21- 1/26)</td>
<td>Interrogations and Confessions</td>
<td>Chapter 2 Making a Murderer</td>
<td>Due: Initial Discussion Post 1/23; Response Post 1/26 Due: Quiz 1/26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (1/27-2/2)</td>
<td>Lie Detection</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>Due: Quiz 2/2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/3-2/9</td>
<td>Exam Review Week</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Exam Dates</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 (2/10-2/16)</td>
<td>The Psychology of Forensic Identification</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Exam 1: Chapters 1, 2, and 3. Take between 12am and 11:59pm on 2/10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (2/17-2/23)</td>
<td>Criminal Profiling and Psychological Autopsies</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Due: 2/23 Serial Killer Activity Due: Quiz 2/23</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/24-2/27</td>
<td>Exam Review</td>
<td></td>
<td>Exam 2: Chapters 4 and 5. Take between 12am and 11:59pm on 2/27.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/29-3/8</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 (3/9-3/15)</td>
<td>Eyewitness Identification and Testimony</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Due: Initial Discussion Post 3/12; Response Post 3/15 Due: Quiz 3/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (3/16-3/22)</td>
<td>The Insanity Defense</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Due: Quiz 3/22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/30-4/5</td>
<td>Exam Review</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 (4/6-4/12)</td>
<td>Juries and Judges as Decision Makers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Exam 3: Chapters 6, 7, and 10. Take between 12am and 11:59pm on 4/6. Due: Initial Discussion Post 4/9; Response Post 4/12 Due: Quiz 4/12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**This syllabus is tentative and subject to change**