I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Psychology of Criminal Behavior is an upper division elective undergraduate course. The major aim of this course is to explore criminal behavior from a psychological perspective. In this course, crime will be examined as the result of psychiatric disorders. Different psychopathological etiologies (biological, psychosocial, cultural) will be considered in order to comprehend the psychological development of criminal behavior the different ways in which it manifests. Through real-life case studies, traditional and contemporary theories (behavioral, psychodynamic, cognitive, personality trait, etc.) will be used in order to understand how criminal acting-out is a response to an internal, subjective, sometimes intimate motives of the perpetrator.

II. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Student learning objectives are the following:

1. To understand crime as the product of specific biological, environmental, cultural settings.

2. To study the major aspects of the methods used in criminal psychological investigations in order to reconstitute the past (the acting-out) in the present time by writing psycho-historical case studies of criminal offenders.

3. To explore crime as an “identity maker” (crime as an affirmation of masculinity, crime for the search of notoriety, crime as a strategy of self-alienation).

4. To analyze real life forensic case studies through different theories of personality (psychodynamics, behavioral, cognitive, personality trait, etc.).

5. To considerate the different components of criminal behavior by studying the impact of internal psychological motivation, psychopathology, personality traits in terms of “criminal proneness”, psychiatric history of the perpetrator and the major criminal motive.
III. REQUIRED TEXTS & READINGS


IV. MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Three multiple choice exams with two short essays graded 100 points each will count for 90% of the final grade.

Attendance will count for 10% of the final grade.

V. GRADING

1. Values of the grades

The grading of written work will be done according to the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59-0</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Giving, assigning and receiving grades

As a professor, I do not “give” grades; rather I assign them according to a very precise rubric. Thus whatever personal difficulties students may encounter can play no role whatsoever in the grade they receive. Whether your work is assessed by me or by a grader, in all cases a precise rubric is employed to assess students’ performance in the most objective way possible.

- If you do not understand why you received a particular grade, you should meet me during my office hours. I will be happy to show you what you did wrong and offer advice on how to improve your performance in the future.

- If after meeting with me you still don’t agree with the grade you received, you are free to initiate a grade appeal.

3. Grade appeals

**Grade Appeal Process.** Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, cla.tamu.edu/students/studentinio.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean.

VI. ATTENDANCE

Regular class attendance is essential for success in this course and represents 10% of the final grade. Absences may be excused due to medical reasons, participation in athletic activities,
and/or religious holidays. All absences must be supported by proper documentation in order to be excused.

VII. EXAMS (90%)

There will be three examinations worth 100 points each and 90% of the overall grade for the course. Exams will be given on the date announced unless you are notified of a change. When the exam calendar changes, the syllabus will be updated and posted on Blackboard. You will receive a notice by email to your Islander account if the exam schedule is modified.

The exams content will be based on both the textbook and the readings.

1. Multiple choice exam will count for 25% of the final grade.
2. Multiple choice exam will count for 25% of the final grade.
3. Final multiple choice exam will count for 40% of the final grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential rules about exams…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A study guide will be posted on Blackboard before each exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Absence on the exam day without a previous written notice will result in a zero.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Make-up exams may only be arranged when the request is supported by acceptable and well-documented reasons (e.g., absences due to medical, athletic, and religious holidays). Undocumented absences will be counted as unexcused.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Exams submitted without the student’s name will not be graded and will receive a zero.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VIII. ABOUT CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR AND ETIQUETTE

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

In my class, the atmosphere tends to be friendly and relaxed. Discussions are engaging and shared laughter is very common. In order to preserve this inspiring ambience, you must observe some basic rules of etiquette.

1. Use of electronic devices
The use of electronic devices (computers, tablets, cell phones, recorders, etc.) is forbidden in my class. If you have any of these items with you, please switch them off and leave them inside your bag during class. **There will be no exceptions to this rule; those who violate it will be asked to leave class and will be marked as absent (unexcused) for that class meeting.**

2. **Punctuality**

All students are expected to arrive to class at the designated time. If for professional or personal reasons you feel you are unable to be on time you must inform me at the beginning of the semester. Otherwise students who regularly arrive in class more than fifteen minutes late may be marked as absent (unexcused) and asked to leave.

3. **Classroom behavior**

3.1 **Discretion about Personal Issues**

As my classes tend to be very interactive, I encourage students to share their thoughts about ideas or clinical situations discussed in class. However I will not accept any discussion of family, personal and/or intimate problems, even if I understand that the content of psychology lectures may encourage such personal reflection. In my opinion, learning to adopt emotional distance and discretion about one’s private life is part of psychological training. A class in psychology is thus not a group psychotherapy session and should not be understood as such.

3.2 **Clinical Perspectives About Students’ Personal Issues**

As a professor of psychology my role is to teach rather than to act as a clinician, and according to the code of conduct in psychology it is unethical for me to treat students as patients. Thus I will **not** give you any professional advice about any personal issue. In concrete terms this means that I will not comment on diagnoses or treatments that you, your family members or friends may have received. Nor will I conduct any clinical analysis of your personal situations.

3.3 **Silence versus Participation**

Discussions will be very encouraged when comments and discussions are expressed in front of the class, allowing other students and myself the opportunity to be part of them. When conversations are not shared, students will be asked to keep quiet. **Students having private conversations during lectures will be politely asked to leave the class.**

3.4 **Respect for other Students’ Opinions**

Respecting other people’s points of view is the required emotional position in a class where academic demonstration is privileged to the detriment of emotional and affective expression or value judgment. **Students showing disrespectful behavior towards others will be politely requested to leave the class.**

4
IX. ABOUT ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Definitions of academic misconduct according to TAMUCC policies

Academic Misconduct is engaging in an act that violates the standards of the academic integrity policy as described in the Student Code of Conduct and Procedure for Academic Misconduct Cases.

1. **Cheating**: Cheating is intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices or materials in any academic exercise.

2. **Plagiarism**: Intentionally and knowingly presenting the work of another as one’s own with the exception of information that is generally accepted common knowledge. The current University Catalog and Student Handbook discuss plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Any student violation of these codes will be held responsible. For more information, go to: [http://falcon.tamucc.edu/~students/handbook.html](http://falcon.tamucc.edu/~students/handbook.html)

3. **Multiple Submissions**: The submission of substantial portions of the same work (including oral reports) for credit more than once without authorization from instructors of the class for which the student submits the work.

4. **Collusion**: Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another individual in progressing forward on academic assignments.

5. **Fabrication, Falsification, or Misrepresentation**: The intentional altering or inventing of any information or citation that is used in assessing academic work.

Any of these acts of academic misconduct will result in a zero for this class.

X. LECTURES, CLASS MATERIALS AND READINGS

1. **Availability of lectures**

PowerPoint slides of all my lectures will be posted on Blackboard and you will always be informed by email of any updates. These slides are a summarization of the most important aspects of the textbook. In any case they do not replace the textbook.

All PowerPoint lectures will be posted on Blackboard and you will always be informed by email of any update.

Other class materials like methodological orientations for Take Home Exams, key recommendations to write the research paper, theoretical/conceptual schemes, recorded lectures, syllabus updates will be posted on Blackboard.

2. **Content of the lectures**

My lectures deal with mental illness, cultural and gender stereotypes, discrimination and crime. Some of them may contain violent, sexual and/or criminal scenarios that will be presented within the framework of the class.
My clinical experience has been conducted in different countries. For this reason, this class will contain ethnographic and clinical information about representations of gender, psychiatric diagnoses or treatments, criminal behavior methods of investigations and case studies from other continents (Asia, Africa, Europe). The very fact that I describe and analyze some of these social representations and/or clinical practices does not mean that I agree with them or that I recommend their implementation in the U.S.

XI. CONTACTING ME

1. Questions or requests from students

When you have a question, need an explanation or want to meet with me for any reason, you are very welcome to send me an email or come to one of my scheduled office hours.

When sending me an email, please write the topic of your message in the subject line of your email.

Please check the syllabus or Blackboard to see if your question has already been answered.

2. Sending and/or receiving emails

To ensure that your email has been received and read I strongly recommend that you enable the delivery and/or read receipt options in your email program.

I tend to respond quite quickly to my emails, but if you have not received a response after one week please contact me via my office phone number during office hours or come directly to my office.

We are connected by a professional relationship. Please respect a certain level of courtesy when you write me. I will do the same with you.

For any communication with me or for the updates that I will send through Blackboard, I will contact you on your Islander email account. Please be sure that you have activated your Islander account before starting my class and that you check it regularly. I will not be responsible if you do not received essential information because your islander account is not activated.

3. Student’s Privacy

To protect your privacy I will not respond to any email that does not include your name as part of the address.

In accordance with FERPA policies, I do not display or comment grades by phone or by email.

XII. DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATIONS

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you
believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

XIII. ACADEMIC ADVISING

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.
## XIV. SEMESTER SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture/Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>07/06/2015</td>
<td>Lecture # 1: Chapter 1 of Gavin’s book “Defining criminological and Forensic Psychology”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/07/2015</td>
<td>Lecture # 2: Chapter 2 of Gavin’s book “Research methods in Forensic Psychology”&lt;br&gt;Reading # 1: Chapter 2 of Schug and Fradella’s book “Abnormal Psychology Premier”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/08/2015</td>
<td>Lecture # 3: Chapter 3 of Gavin’s book “Theoretical explanations of crime”</td>
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<tr>
<td>07/09/2015</td>
<td>Lecture # 4: Chapter 4 of Gavin’s book “Who commits crime? The criminal mind”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/13/2015</td>
<td>Lecture # 5: Chapter 5 of Gavin’s book “Juvenile criminals”&lt;br&gt;Reading # 2: Chapter 3 of Schug and Fradella’s book “Disorders of Infancy, Childhood or Adolescence”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/14/2015</td>
<td>Multiple choice test # 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/15/2015</td>
<td>Lecture # 6: Chapter 6 of Gavin’s book “The psychology of homicide” (I)&lt;br&gt;Reading # 3: Chapter 4 of Schug and Fradella’s book “Substance Related Disorders”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/16/2015</td>
<td>Lecture # 7: Chapter 6 of Gavin’s book “The psychology of homicide” (II)&lt;br&gt;Reading # 4: Chapter 10 of Schug and Fradella’s book “Personality Disorders”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/20/2015</td>
<td>Lecture # 8: Chapter 7 of Gavin’s book “The psychology of terrorism”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/21/2015</td>
<td>Lecture # 9: Chapter 8 of Gavin’s book “Crimes of a sexual nature” (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/22/2015</td>
<td>Lecture # 10: Chapter 8 of Gavin’s book “Crimes of a sexual nature” (II)&lt;br&gt;Reading # 5: Chapter 8 of Schug and Fradella’s book “Sexual Disorders”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/23/2015</td>
<td>Lecture # 11: Chapter 9 of Gavin’s book “The psychology of firesetting”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/27/2015</td>
<td>Lecture # 12: Chapter 10 of Gavin’s book “The psychology of theft robbery and burglary”</td>
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<tr>
<td>07/28/2015</td>
<td>Multiple choice test # 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/29/2015</td>
<td>Lecture # 13: Chapter 11 of Gavin’s book “The psychology of economic crime”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/30/2015</td>
<td>Lecture # 14: Chapter 12 of Gavin’s book “Psychology in the investigation of crime” (I)&lt;br&gt;Reading# 6: Chapter 11 of Schug and Fradella’s book “Mental Illness and Criminal Law”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/03/2015</td>
<td>Lecture # 15: Chapter 12 of Gavin’s book “Psychology in the investigation of crime” (II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/04/2015</td>
<td>Lecture # 16: Chapter 13 of Gavin’s book “Psychology in the police station 1: victims and witnesses”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/05/2015</td>
<td>Lecture # 17: Chapter 14 of Gavin’s book “Psychology in the police station 2: investigative interviews and the psychology of false confession”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/06/2015</td>
<td>Multiple choice test # 3 FINAL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** – Summer II Semester schedule may be subject to changes.