

Cedar Crest College
Spring 2009

PSY 311 Criminal Behavior and Profiling

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Office Hours: M,W,F 8:30 - 10
T 9:00 - 12:00, or
by appointment

Texts: Turvey, B.E. (2008) *Criminal profiling: An introduction to behavioral evidence analysis*. San Diego: Academic Press.

Hare, R.D. (1993) *Without conscience; The disturbing world of the psychopaths among us*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Ramsland, K. (2006) *Inside the minds of serial killers; why they kill*. Westport, CT: Praeger

Recommended but not required:

Palermo, G.B., & Kocsis, R.N. (2005) *Offender profiling: An introduction to The sociopsychological analysis of violent crime*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

Course Description:

In its early history, criminal profiling was the purview of a few charismatic investigators with law enforcement experience, and was relatively subjective. Profiling as a career was popularized by movies such as "The Silence of the Lambs," "Manhunter," "Copy Cat," and "The Red Dragon." More recently profiling is emerging as a quasi-legitimate adjunct to crime investigation. Psychologists have been increasingly interested and involved in profiling because it relies on understanding human behavior. Since a profiler is usually brought into criminal investigations when there is no known perpetrator, she/he must use extensive knowledge of human behavior (in understanding both the perpetrator and the victim), knowledge of the nature and meaning of physical evidence, and the ability to reconstruct the crime scene. At least three methodologies have emerged as investigative guides: the FBI's Crime Scene Investigation model, the Investigative Psychology model in Great Britain, and Brent Turvey's Behavior Evidence Analysis model. All three models will be presented (as well as an introduction to two others), but the emphasis will be on Turvey's BEA model.

This course will also examine behavior as it relates to profiling. We will focus primarily on violent behavior as it is manifested in violent crimes.

The course will attempt to understand criminal profiling as a structured, logical discipline. As Dr. Richard Saferstein wrote in his introduction to the Turvey text, "...the legitimization of criminal profiling as a profession demands that it has strong and acceptable academic underpinnings."

This course is an upper-level psychology course designed and intended for motivated self-learners. I will be your guide and facilitate learning, but you must put your own effort into learning the material. Please be aware that this course involves a significant amount of reading, and this requires your attention and diligence. If you are not prepared to provide the required effort, please do not continue with the course because you will only be disappointed.

WARNING: The subject matter of this course includes information, photographs, language, and videos which is graphic, sexual, and violent, and which some people may find offensive. If you are offended by such material, you are advised not to take this course. You will be asked to sign an informed consent waiver to the effect that you are aware of the contents of this course, and that you are voluntarily taking the course.

Goals of the Course:

By the end of the course, you will:

1. Gain an understanding of criminal profiling as a multidisciplinary forensic practice. (assessment: investigative project, observation project)
2. Gain an understanding of criminal behavior as it relates to developing criminal profiles (assessment: criminal profile, psychological autopsy)
3. Become more proficient as a psychological investigator, using evidence to link behavior and personality. (assessment: investigation, observation, garbology projects)
4. Articulate an understanding of criminal behavior and profiling. (assessment: class participation)
5. Develop their critical thinking skills, and be able to develop their ideas logically (both verbally and in writing). (assessment: video reaction paper; investigative project, observation project, in-class reports, class participation)

Outcomes of the Course:

1. Students will understand aspects of building criminal profiles, including, but not limited to, case assessment, crime reconstruction, victimology, and crime scene characteristics.
2. Students will gain an introductory understanding of criminal behavior and its relationship to criminal profiling, including, but not limited to, psychopathic behavior, sadistic behavior, stalking behavior.
3. Students will be able to apply his/her knowledge of criminal behavior and profiling to develop a criminal profile.
4. Students will understand the nature of critical investigative thinking in the area of forensic psychology.

Grading Policy:

There are five equally-weighted, graded activities for the course:

1. Investigative
2. Garbology
3. Ripley video reaction paper
4. Observation project
5. Final Project

Grading Scale:

A	93.9 – 100	C	73.0 – 76.6
A-	90.0 – 92.9	C-	70.0 – 72.9
B+	86.7 – 89.9	D+	67.0 – 69.9
B	83.4 – 86.6	D	60.0 – 66.9
B-	80.0 – 83.3	F	below 60
C+	76.7 – 79.9		

Academic Policies:

We will all adhere to the Cedar Crest College Honor Philosophy. Specifically, you are to do your own work on examinations and papers. You will sign your name to the honor pledge on all work. Please see the College Honor Philosophy as it relates to academic settings for specific information about reporting any violations.

The College Classroom Protocol states that each student has the right to a positive learning environment free of extraneous interruptions and distractions, and inconsiderate or uncivil behavior. Some examples of inconsiderate behavior include talking when the instructor or other students are talking, leaving class early, coming into class late, and disrespectful behavior to another student in the class. Students who are consistently disrespectful and inconsiderate will be verbally warned, and this behavior will negatively affect your grade in the course. **Please use active listening in this course.**

A student with a documented disability on file with the Academic Advising Center should discuss any special accommodations with me within the first two weeks of the class. I am happy to make reasonable accommodations, or assist the Advising Center in making the best possible accommodations.

With regard to class participation, examinations, and papers, I make certain assumptions about your level of preparedness coming into this course, and your ability to communicate. This is a course for college juniors, seniors, and advanced sophomores, and **I assume you are capable of functioning at that level.** You should be able to go from description to application of concepts easily. PSY 100 is required; PSY 211-212 (Statistical Methods), PSY 309 (Abnormal), PSY 252 (Social) or PSY 301 (I/O) are recommended. However, students who are motivated, have excellent critical thinking skills, and excellent logical writing skills are welcome in the course.

I expect you to read all assignments before the assigned class. Students who are not prepared will lose points in participation. Class participation is required in this course. If you have difficulty participating in class, please see me.

Psychology Department Attendance Policy: The Psychology Department is committed to the principle that regular and punctual class attendance is essential to the students' optimum learning and successful academic achievement. Regular class attendance is a student obligation, and students are responsible for all work, tests and written assignments. Therefore, students are expected to be present for all class sessions. The Psychology Department's attendance policy recognizes that there will be times when attendance at class is not possible. You may think of the

policy as being similar to the type used in the corporate world where each employee is given a certain number of “personal/sick days.” Based on the number of regularly scheduled class meetings, you will be allowed a certain number of absences (see below) with no consequences, no questions asked. In other words, there is no distinction between excused and unexcused absences. You are of course responsible for anything covered during those missed classes, and for submitting assignments on time, regardless of whether or not you attend. Beyond the allowable number of absences, there are consequences that will adversely impact your grade, much as missing too many days of work can adversely impact your employment status. Above all else, you should carefully consider each decision to not attend class, as once your allotted absences have been used, they are gone. *It is important that students arrive for class on time. Late arrivals are very distracting, not only to the instructor, but also to fellow students. Repeated late arrivals are not acceptable and will be addressed on an individual basis.* It is each student’s responsibility to understand this policy and to keep track of absences throughout the semester.

Application to this Class: Formal attendance will be taken during all class sessions. This class meets twice per week (28 class meetings). You may miss 3 classes without penalty. If you miss 4 classes, your final grade (cumulative percentage of points) will be lowered by 5%. That means that if you have earned 84% of the available points in the class, which is a B grade, you would be lowered to 79%, which is a C+. Likewise, if you have earned 77% of the points available, the penalty would take you down to 72%, which is a C-. As a reminder, a C grade (73%) is required in all Psychology courses. If you miss 5 classes, you will be docked an additional 5% points off of your final grade (for a total of 10%). If you miss 6 classes, you will receive a failing grade for the course. If you miss six classes, you have missed approximately 25% of the class meetings.

SYLLABUS

Week 1: 1/20 & 1/22

Introduction to the course; what profiling is and is not
Video: Profilers

Handouts
Ch. 1 (T)

Week 2: 1/27 & 1/29

Psychopathy, psychology and crime

Hare book

Project 1 (investigation) due 1/29

Week 3: 2/03 & 2/05:

Criminal motivation & theories of criminality

Ch. 10 (T)
Ch. 2 & 3 (P & K)

Week 4: 2/10 & 2/12:

Video: The Talented Mr. Ripley

Week 5: 2/17 & 2/19:

Serial Killers

Ramsland book

Project 2 (video reaction paper) due 2/19Week 6: 2/24 & 2/26:

Behavioral Evidence Analysis: Ideo-Deductive Method of Criminal Profiling

Ch. 5 (T)

Week 7: 3/03 & 3/05:

Crime reconstruction & crime scene analysis

Ch. 6 & 7(T)

Week 8: 3/10 & 3/12:**SPRING BREAK**Week 9: 3/17 & 3/19:

Victimology

Ch. 12 (T)

Project 3 (Observation of 1 hour) due 3/19Week 10: 3/24 & 3/26:

Case linkage: MO & signature

Ch. 11
Project #4:
GarbologyWeek 11: 3/31 & 4/02

Psychological Autopsies

Ch. 14

Week 12: 4/07 & 4/09:

Final Reports

Project 4 (Garbology) due 3/16Week 13: 3/14 & 3/16:

Final Reports

Week 14: 3/21 & 3/23:

Final Reports

Week 15: 3/28 & 3/30

Final Reports

Final Observation Paper Due