

PSY-434 Forensic Psychology

Prerequisite: None

Credit Hours: 3

Course Description:

This course offers a comprehensive introduction to forensic psychology, focusing on the application of psychological principles and scientific methods within legal and criminal justice systems. Students will examine psychological theories and empirical research related to criminal behavior, legal decision-making, and the roles psychologists play in investigative, correctional, and judicial contexts. Emphasis is placed on ethical considerations, professional practice standards, and the growing impact of psychological science on public policy and legal reform.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Critically analyze landmark case law relevant to the practice and development of forensic psychology, both internationally and within **Pakistan's** legal system.
2. Examine the diverse roles and responsibilities of forensic mental health professionals within correctional, clinical, investigative, and judicial settings.
3. Define and evaluate core psychological constructs central to forensic psychology, including criminal responsibility, competency, risk assessment, and psychopathy.
4. Reflect on the cultural and societal dimensions of forensic psychology, particularly in relation to Pakistan's legal, correctional, and mental health systems.

Course Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze and interpret landmark legal cases relevant to forensic psychology, with attention to both international precedent and the **Pakistani** context.
2. Articulate the roles and ethical responsibilities of forensic psychologists across diverse settings, including correctional facilities, courtrooms, and clinical environments.
3. Apply psychological theories and constructs, such as competency, criminal responsibility, risk assessment, and psychopathy, to case-based forensic scenarios.
4. Evaluate psychological processes that influence legal decision-making, including eyewitness memory, jury behavior, interrogation practices, and offender rehabilitation.
5. Integrate understanding of culturally informed perspectives into the analysis of forensic psychological practice within Pakistan's legal and mental health systems.

Course Content

1. Introduction to Forensic Psychology: Scope, History, and Practice
2. Roles and Settings for Forensic Psychologists in Criminal and Civil Systems
3. Psychology of Criminal Behavior and Typologies of Offenders
4. Competency and Criminal Responsibility in Legal Contexts
5. Mental Illness, Insanity, and the Assessment of Legal Defenses
6. Introduction to Psychological Assessment in Legal Settings
7. Eyewitness Testimony, Memory, and Jury Decision-Making
8. Juvenile Forensic Psychology and Developmental Considerations (Pakistan)
9. Correctional Psychology and Rehabilitation Practices
10. **Victimology and Trauma in Forensic Contexts (Pakistan)**
11. Professional and Ethical Issues in Forensic Psychology (APA, BPS, and Local Considerations)
12. Landmark Legal Cases: Global Precedents and Local Applications (Pakistan)
13. Using Research to Inform Legal Practice in Forensic Psychology
14. Psychological Challenges in Investigative Settings: Interrogation, False Confessions, and Malingering
15. Careers and Emerging Pathways in Forensic Psychology
16. Final Case-Based Project and Course Wrap-Up

Reference Books:

1. Costanzo, M., & Krauss, D. A. (2021). *Forensic and Legal Psychology: Psychological Science Applied to Law* (4th ed.). Worth Publishers.
2. Melton, G. B., et al. (2017). *Psychological Evaluations for the Courts* (4th ed.). Guilford Press.
3. Huss, M. T. (2014). *Forensic Psychology: Research, Clinical Practice, and Applications* (2nd ed.). Wiley.
4. Novotney, A. (2017). "Helping Courts and Juries Make Educated Decisions." *APA Monitor*, 70–72.
5. Hansen, A. V., et al. (2022). *Social Entrepreneurs as Change Makers. Public Management Review*, 24(10), 1632–1651.

Additional Recommendations

1. American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (8th ed.). APA.