PSYCHOLOGY 141: THE CRIMINAL MIND

Summer 2016

Instructor
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Class Meetings
Online

Teaching Fellow
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I. Goals of the Course
Criminal behavior is a complex, extremely common, and costly problem for society. Not all offenders are the same in terms of etiological pathways, versatility, continuity, and type of offending, and amenability to treatment. There is little agreement about the causal origins of criminal behavior. However, research identifies a range of factors that are involved in the development of criminal behavior, including constitutional (e.g. psychopathy), social (e.g. neighborhood disadvantage) and neurobiological factors (e.g. emotion, attention, and executive functions). This course will cover a range of theoretical and empirical material so as to begin to understand the development of the “criminal mind.” Four main topics will be covered: a) personality and psychopathological factors associated with criminal behavior; b) theoretical and psychobiological explanations of crime; (c) the biological x environment interaction, and d) the impact of psychobiological models for intervention.

II. Course Requirements
1. Exams (2):
   • There will be two in-class examinations that cover all lectures, readings, and any assigned web-based materials on our website. Each exam will take the full class period. The midterm covers all lectures and readings up to the date of that exam (7/26/16). The final covers all materials after the midterm (8/4/16).
   • Make-up Exams. A make up exam will be permitted only in the event of extraordinary circumstances. Students are required to obtain approval from a residential college dean and the professor before a make-up will be permitted. All make-up exams will be scheduled and completed with the professor. The make-up exams will cover the scope of the material for the exam that was missed, but will not be the same exam as given in class. Make-up exams must be scheduled within one week of the missed exam.

2. Response Essay (1):
   • There will be one short response essay. For the essay, students are expected to use material presented in class and from their own search in order to provide a response that demonstrates integrative and critical thinking. The essay should be 3-5 pages, Times New Roman, 12-pt font, single-spaced, 1-inch margins (not including references). The essay should be submitted online. All references should be in APA format.

Essay 1 (Understanding the etiology of offender subtypes, due 8/5 by 9am): The goal of this essay is give you practice describing the key etiological mechanisms for psychopathy and using this knowledge to explain complex criminal behavior. I am primarily interested in (a) your understanding of key etiological models (Low Fear and Response Modulation) and (b) your ability to translate these ideas into explanations for the harmful illegal behavior manifested by Robert Durst (HBO “The Jinx, Episode 1”). Your essay should include the following components: 1) Identify and describe the central ideas associated with two models that you feel may explain Durst’s behavior; 2) Comment on each model's limitations, with regard to understanding Durst’s behavior. The following
media links provide descriptions of Durst. Feel free to use your own links and other media coverage to understand Durst's behavior:

http://www.hbogo.com/?camp=GoG829#series/video&assetID=GOROSTGP45187?videoMode=embeddedVideo?showSpecialFeatures=false/

or

See video on the course site

**Grading Rubric:** 40 points: Identify and describe ideas associated with etiological models of psychopathy (low fear and response modulation); 40 points: Limitations of each model; 20 points: Provide specific examples of these models and comment on their limitations using Durst’s behavior.

### III. Required Readings *(course readings should be done BEFORE the class that day)*

Readings (see below) and online materials are to be placed on the class Website. It is expected that students come to class prepared—having read all articles and related materials.

### IV. Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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2. Guerra et al., 2003 “Community Violence Exposure, Social Cognition, and Aggression Among Urban Elementary School Children”  
3. Anderson, 1994 “The code of the streets”  
| M          | The impact of environment on crime                                   |                                                                                                                             |            |
2. Skeem et al., 2011 “Psychopathic Personality: Bridging the Gap Between Scientific Evidence and Public Policy”  
3. Hicks et al., 2004 “Identifying Psychopathy Subtypes on the Basis of Personality Structure” |            |
| Th         |                                                                      |                                                                                                                             |            |
2. Birbaumer et al., 2005 “Deficient Fear Conditioning in Psychopathy”  
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
2. Zeier et al, 2009 “Attention Moderates the Processing of Inhibitory Information in Primary Psychopathy”  
3. Lorenz & Newman, 2002 “Deficient response modulation and emotion processing in low-anxious Caucasian psychopathic offenders: Results from a lexical decision task” |
2. Larson et al., 2013 “The Interplay of Attention and Emotion: Top-down Attention Modulates Amygdala Activation in Psychopathy”  
| W              | Assessment of Externalizing Disorders            | 1. Iacono et al., 2008 “Behavioral Disinhibition and the Development of Early-Onset Addiction: Common and Specific Influences”  
2. Iacono et al., 2003 “Substance use disorders, externalizing psychopathology, and P300 event-related potential amplitude”  
3. De Brito et al., 2013 “Cool and Hot Executive Function Impairments in Violent Offenders with Antisocial Personality Disorder with and without Psychopathy” |
| Week 3         | Psychobiological Factors in Externalizing: Affective cognitive control | 1. Baskin-Sommers et al., 2012 “Characterizing the Anomalous Cognition–Emotion Interactions in Externalizing”  
2. Buckholtz et al. 2010 “Dopaminergic Network Differences in Human Impulsivity”  
3. Hyde et al., 2014 “Amygdala Reactivity and Negative Emotionality: Divergent Correlates of Antisocial Personality and Psychopathy Traits in a Community Sample” |
| M              | Psychobiological Factors in Psychopathy and Externalizing: | 1. Koenigs et al., 2010 “Economic decision-making in psychopathy: A comparison with ventromedial prefrontal lesion patients” |
| W | Empathy and moral decision making | 2. Glenn et al., 2009 “The neural correlates of moral decision-making in psychopathy”  
3. Decety et al., 2013 “An fMRI study of affective perspective taking in individuals with psychopathy: imagining another in pain does not evoke empathy”  
4. Bobova et al., 2009 “Disinhibitory Psychopathology and Delay Discounting in Alcohol Dependence: Personality and Cognitive Correlates” |
| Th | Assessment of Disinhibitory Psychopathology in Women, Minorities, and Non-incarcerated individuals | 1. Javdani et al, 2011 “Expanding our lens: Female pathways to antisocial behavior in adolescence and adulthood”  
2. Baskin-Sommers et al., 2013. “The intersectionality of race, sex, and psychopathology in predicting violent crimes”  
3. Vachon et al., 2012 “Generalizing the nomological network of psychopathy across populations differing on race and conviction status”  
4. Sprauge et al., 2012 “Borderline Personality Disorder as a Female Phenotypic Expression of Psychopathy?” |
| **Week 4 (July 25-29)** | Psychobiology of Disinhibitory Psychopathology in Women, Minorities, and Non-incarcerated individuals | 1. Anton et al., 2012 “Differential effects of psychopathy and antisocial personality disorder symptoms on cognitive and fear processing in female offenders”  
2. Buckholtz et al., 2010 “Mesolimbic dopamine reward system hypersensitivity in individuals with psychopathic traits”  
3. Choe et al., 2014 “Interactions between MAOA and punitive discipline in African American and Caucasian men’s antisocial behavior” |
| **M** | **Midterm** | |
| **Tuesday 7/26/16** | | |
3. Odgers et al., 2007 “A Latent Variable Modeling Approach to Identifying Subtypes of Serious and Violent Female Juvenile Offenders”  
4. Loeber et al., 2009 “Development and Etiology of Disruptive and Delinquent Behavior” |
2. Caspi et al., 2008 “A Replicated Molecular Genetic Basis for Subtyping Antisocial Behavior in Children With Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder” |
Week 5 (August 1-5)

M

- Disinhibitory Psychopathology in Children: Callous-Unemotional Traits
  1. Frick & White, 2008 “Research review: the importance of callous-unemotional traits for developmental models of aggressive and antisocial behavior”
  2. Viding et al., 2007 “Aetiology of the relationship between callous–unemotional traits and conduct problems in childhood”

T

- Psychobiological Factors of Callous-Unemotional Traits in Children
  1. Dadds et al., 2006 “Attention to the eyes and fear-recognition deficits in child psychopathy”
  2. Viding et al., 2012 “Amygdala response to pre-attentive masked fear is associated with callous-unemotional traits in children with conduct problems.”
  3. Sebastain et al., 2012 “Neural responses to affective and cognitive Theory of Mind in children with conduct problems and varying levels of callous-unemotional traits.”
  4. Sadeh et al., 2010 “Serotonin Transporter Gene Associations with Psychopathic Traits in Youth Vary as a Function of Socioeconomic Resources”

W

- Treatment: psychosocial and psychobiological interventions in children and adults
  2. Curtis et al., 2004 “Multisystemic Treatment: A Meta-Analysis of Outcome Studies”
  4. Dadds et al., 2012 “Outcomes, moderators, and mediators of empathic-emotion recognition training for complex conduct problems in childhood”

8/4

Final Exam

8/5

Th

Essay Due by 9am

F

V. Grading

For all assignments, 300 possible points can be obtained toward the final grade. Each exam will be worth 100 points (200 points total) and the essay will be worth 100 points each (100 points total). For any late assignments to be excused, students are required to obtain approval from a residential college dean and the professor. Any assignments submitted past the stated due date, without contacting the professor for approval, will have 5 points deducted from the grade for each day the assignment is late. Final course grades will be allocated as follows:

A= greater than or equal to 94%
A-= 90%-93.99%
B+= 87%-89.99%
B= 84%-86.99%
B-= 80%-83.99%
C+= 77%-79.99%
C= 74%-76.99%
C-= 70%-73.99%
D= 60%-69.99%
F = less than or equal to 59.80% or below

The class is about critical and analytic thinking, mastery of the course content, and fluid application of key concepts and insofar as any of these enter into an assignment you complete, your grade is likely to be enhanced. You are likely to succeed in this course if you attend class, read material in accord with the syllabus, submit all assignments on time, and demonstrate a thoughtful integration of material in assignments. In principle and practice, there is no percentage of As, Bs, etc. that is preset or planned in advance. That means that many students could all receive a given grade in any combinations and percentages. There is no "curve" grading in this course.

If you believe your TF made an error in grading your exam or essay, first, contact your TF to discuss the issue. If you and your TF cannot come to a resolution, the TF will submit your exam or essay to the professor for re-grading.

VI. Use of Internet and Mobile Device Policy for this Course
Laptops and tablets may be used for class notes only. Please do not use laptops or tablets for any non-class related activity (e.g., checking email, Facebook, etc.) while you are in the classroom. If you wish to partake in non-class related activities on these devices, feel free to leave the classroom early and/or arrive late to class. Attendance will not be taken, but breaches of this device policy will be noted and count as active nonparticipation. Cell phones, tablets, and related devices are not to be used during class time for any reason (e.g., texting, social networking, etc.) as a courtesy to the person lecturing. Again, if you need to leave the class to handle personal matters using these devices, feel free to do so. As each class session begins, please turn off all cell phones and keep them stowed for the duration of the period. Cell phones, tablets, and related devices are not to be used for recording any lecture or part of the class. Penalties for recording course material will be implemented, including but not limited to, course grade reduction and consultation with your dean.

VII. Academic Dishonesty
Yale College encourages faculty to remind all students of the critical nature preparing materials. The following comments apply to all materials submitted for this course, and in addition, are the guidelines for all your present and future writing, well beyond this course. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Yale College Executive Committee.

- All exams and quizzes are closed book, which means the use of any written material or any form of collaboration is forbidden.
- Plagiarism is a serious form of academic dishonesty and violates the letter and spirit of ethical codes governing writing, communicating, and journalistic practices. Plagiarism and its definitions and actions can be accessed through the Yale Writing Center (http://writing.yalecollege.yale.edu/advice-students/using-sources/understanding-and-avoiding-plagiarism) and two useful Web pages: http://writing.yalecollege.yale.edu/what-plagiarism; http://writing.yalecollege.yale.edu/using-sources. When you prepare any material for the course:
  - Cite all sources used for papers, including drafts of papers, and repeat the reference each time you use the source in your written work;
  - Place quotation marks around any cited or cut-and-pasted materials and after the quote note the exact source and page number or if no page number precisely where that quote came from (e.g., Web page);
  - If you do not quote directly – that is, if you paraphrase – you still need to mark your source each time you use borrowed material. Otherwise you have plagiarized;
• At the end of the paper, include a Reference section in which all sources used for the paper are included. For this course, use the format of citing publications of the American Psychological Association (Publication Manual 6th edition). This format is available on the Web but also is illustrated at the end of articles published in journals of the American Psychological Association (as well as the primary text for this course);

• You may not submit the same paper, or substantially the same paper, in more than one course. If topics for two courses coincide, you need written permission from both instructors before either combining work on two papers or revising an earlier paper for submission to a new course; and

• Oversights of any of these points are not usually considered as casual omissions or mere carelessness. Plagiarism is an enormous problem and ethical violation. If you have any doubts about whether a source ought to be cited in a given place, err on the side of presenting the source. Also, of course the instructor, and in all likelihood others (your advisor, academic Dean of your college) are available to assist on these matters.