

Psychology, Crime, and Punishment

Summer Session I: June 9 - July 8, 2025

Harlaxton College

Instructor: Dr. Holly Skillman

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Course Meeting Days/Times: Monday & Wednesday 1pm to 4pm

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Mode: In-person with field experiences

Course Information

Catalog Description:

This interdisciplinary course explores the intricate relationship between psychology, criminal behavior, and the justice system in both the United Kingdom and the United States. Through a dynamic combination of lectures, case studies, and field trips, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of the psychological factors influencing criminal conduct, the legal processes involved in addressing crime, and the various approaches to punishment and rehabilitation across different cultural and historical contexts.

Credit Hour Policy Statement:

"This class meets the federal credit hour policy through a combination of lecture + field experiences for a total of 45-75 hours of supervised learning activities for each credit."

Course Learning Outcomes:

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

1. Analyze the psychological theories that explain criminal behavior
2. Compare and contrast the UK and US criminal justice systems

3. Evaluate different approaches to punishment and rehabilitation
4. Apply psychological concepts to real-world criminal cases
5. Critically assess the role of psychology in legal proceedings
6. Synthesize insights from field experiences with theoretical knowledge

Required Materials:

- Selected articles, book chapters, videos, and case studies (provided digitally)

Methods of Instruction:

This course utilizes multiple instructional approaches including classroom lectures, discussions, case studies, and guided field experiences. The unique setting in England provides students with immersive learning opportunities at historical and contemporary sites related to criminal justice. Students will engage in both independent and collaborative learning activities designed to deepen understanding of course concepts.

Withdrawal and Attendance policies:

Due to the intensive and experiential nature of this study abroad program, attendance at all class sessions and field experiences is mandatory. Absences may significantly impact learning outcomes and course grades. In case of illness or emergency, contact the instructor immediately.

Given the compressed format of this summer program, standard university withdrawal policies may not apply. Students should consult with the Harlaxton College administration regarding any withdrawal considerations before the program begins.

Grading Criteria:**Grading Breakdown:**

- Field Experience Reflections (4 x 10% each): 40%
- Midterm Comparative Case Analysis: 20%
- Final Project and Presentation: 30%
- Participation and Engagement: 10%

Field Experience Reflections (40%):

For each field experience, write a 3-4 page reflection that connects your observations with course concepts and readings. Analyze how the site visit enhanced your understanding of criminal psychology and justice systems, comparing UK approaches with US perspectives when relevant.

In Class Work (20%):

For each class period, students will engage in discussions, debates, case studies, and other activities that accompany lectures.

Final Project and Presentation (30%):

Details forthcoming.

Participation and Engagement (10%):

Active participation in class discussions, field experiences, and group activities is essential for this course. Thoughtful contributions that demonstrate engagement with course materials and concepts will be highly valued.

Honor Code:

All students agree to the University honor code: *I will neither give nor receive unauthorized aid, nor will I tolerate an environment that condones the use of unauthorized aid.*

For this course, unauthorized aid includes but is not limited to: plagiarism of written work, misrepresentation of field experience reflections, and submission of work completed by others.

Course AI Policy:

In this course, submission of any work that is not entirely your own is considered academic dishonesty unless otherwise specified. The use of generative AI tools is prohibited for field experience reflections, which must be based on your personal observations and analysis. For the comparative case analysis and final project, limited use of AI tools for research organization is permitted with explicit attribution and instructor approval. Submitting AI-generated work as your own constitutes a violation of academic integrity as an example of unauthorized aid.

Course Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction to Criminal Psychology and Justice Systems

Monday, June 9 - Arrive in UK

Tuesday, June 10 - Orientation & Convocation

Wednesday, June 11 (PM Class)

Topic: Introduction to Criminal Psychology

Thursday, June 12 (PM Class)

Topic: Comparative Overview of UK and US Justice Systems

Friday-Saturday, June 13-14

FIELD EXPERIENCE: LONDON

- Sites TBD

Week 2: Theories of Criminal Behavior

Monday, June 16 (PM Class)

Topic: Psychological Theories of Crime I: Biological and Cognitive Approaches

Tuesday, June 17

FIELD EXPERIENCE: NOTTINGHAM

- Sites TBD
- Reflection assignment due by Thursday evening

Wednesday, June 18 (PM Class)

Topic: Psychological Theories of Crime II: Social and Environmental Factors

Week 3: Crime Investigation and Legal Proceedings

Monday, June 23 (PM Class)

Topic: Criminal Profiling and Forensic Psychology

Wednesday, June 25 (PM Class)

Topic: Psychology in the Courtroom: Eyewitness Testimony and Jury Decision-Making

Thursday, June 26

FIELD EXPERIENCE: LINCOLN

- Sites TBD
- Reflection assignment due by Sunday evening

Week 4: Punishment, Rehabilitation, and Reform

Monday, June 30 (PM Class)

Topic: Theories of Punishment and Rehabilitation

Tuesday, July 1

FIELD EXPERIENCE: YORK

- Sites TBD
- Reflection assignment due by Thursday evening

Wednesday, July 2 (PM Class)

Topic: Modern Approaches to Rehabilitation and Reform

Final Week

Monday, July 7 (PM Class)

Final Project Presentations

Course Review and Synthesis

Tuesday, July 8

Packing and Departure

University Policy Statements

Disability Policy:

The University of Evansville is committed to providing an accessible and supportive environment for students with disabilities. It is the policy and practice of the University of Evansville to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. Students should contact Disability Services at 812-488-2663 to seek services or accommodations for disabilities. Written notification to faculty from Disability Services is required for academic accommodations.

Institutional Equity and Title IX

UE is committed to fostering an atmosphere free from harassment and creating an inclusive campus for all members of the University community regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, religion, ethnicity, country of origin, ability, or veteran status. All Faculty members are considered Responsible Employees and required to report instances of discrimination, harassment, or sexual violence to the Office of Institutional Equity.

If you or someone you know has been harassed, assaulted, or discriminated against you can find the appropriate resources by contacting the Assistant Director of Institutional Equity and Title IX Coordinator: email titleix@evansville.edu; phone (812) 488-5261.

Special Considerations for Study Abroad

Students participating in this course should be aware that they are guests in the United Kingdom and should conduct themselves accordingly. Cultural differences regarding law enforcement, criminal justice systems, and societal norms should be observed and respected. All program participants are subject to both local laws and University of Evansville policies throughout the duration of the program.

Health and safety are priorities during international study. Students should maintain awareness of their surroundings, especially during field experiences, and follow all instructions from program leaders and local guides. Emergency contact information will be provided upon arrival at Harlaxton College.

Student Resources at Harlaxton

During your time at Harlaxton College, the following resources are available:

- Harlaxton College Library: Contains reference materials related to course content
- Wi-Fi access throughout Harlaxton Manor for research and communication
- On-site staff for health, wellness, and administrative support
- Access to digital resources through University of Evansville Libraries