

Spring 2024

PY 391: Junior Seminars

-001: Child & Adolescent Psychopathy / Antisocial Behavior (Randy Salekin)

- T/TR 9:30 - 10:45 AM
- The past two decades have witnessed a remarkable increase in the scientific interest and research on child and adolescent psychopathy (antisocial behavior). This course reviews cutting-edge research on the early manifestation of the psychopathy in children. We ask questions, like how early can this personality disorder start? What causes the disorder? And, can it be treated? Thus, the course delves into the nature of child and adolescent psychopathy, its causes, correlates, and course, at the same time addressing the critical issue of whether the disorder can be prevented, treated, or curtailed. The course will be grounded in the latest scientific evidence and will cover important theoretical and methodological advances that are continuing to influence our understanding of the causes of psychopathy across development. In the class, we will also discuss core issues such as relations to antisocial behavior and personality theory, examine brain imaging data, and weigh in on key controversies such as the models for development of psychopathy and we will talk about compelling directions for future research.

-002: Cognition with Aging (Allison Davis)

- MWF 10:00 - 10:50 AM
- Topics include what is aging, how to define aging, what is normal cognitive decline, and how can cognitive decline be improved or mediated. Students will write a paper detailing how to mediate cognitive decline in aging adults and additionally present on this topic.

-003: Parenting (Gayle Faught)

- MWF 11:00 - 11:50 AM
- This course focuses on parenting practices across the lifespan. It will cover topics from pregnancy and postpartum to positive parenting strategies to adults caring for their aging parents. It will also consider diversity of parenting practices across culture, children's abilities, and varied family structures. This course will facilitate discussion of the most influential and current research on parenting. You will read peer-reviewed journal articles, discuss implications of the research in class, and synthesize this research in a series of reaction papers.

-004: Bringing Art to Life (Daniel Potts)

- Class Time: Tuesdays 5:30 PM - 8:00 PM (will only meet for 1.5 hour of class time)
- REQUIRED Service Component: Fridays 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM
- INSTRUCTOR PERMISSION REQUIRED: Email Dr. Daniel Potts (dcpotts@alan.ua.edu)
- Bringing Art to Life (BATL) is an experiential seminar course offered in collaboration with Cognitive Dynamics Foundation. The purpose and goals of BATL are to improve quality of life for persons living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias and their families and care partners through art therapy and life story preservation, to teach students about Alzheimer's/dementia and person-centered care and the development of empathy for those living with cognitive impairment, to enhance students' understanding of the art of storytelling

and life story preservation, and to promote intergenerational relationships through this novel service learning model. A trained art therapist will conduct a series of therapy sessions with clients at an adult day center and students over a period of eight to ten weeks. Students will document the sessions, interview family and friends of the participants, and collect memorabilia for the creation of life story projects that will be presented at a celebratory event at the end of the semester. In class, students will learn the neuroscience and impact of dementia, person-centered caregiving and communication techniques, the theory and practice of art therapy, and other topics, with learning supplemented by reading and media materials. Weekly writing assignments will enable students to process and reflect, promoting self-knowledge and growth.

-005: Motor Development in Infancy & Childhood (Kelsey West)

- T/TR 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM
- In this course, we will discuss theory and research on motor development from infancy through childhood, focusing on three themes: (1) Infants' motor development is shaped by their everyday experiences and environment—which can include everything from the time of year they were born, to the number of rooms in their home. (2) Motor skills develop within (and are influenced by) a broader cultural landscape. Cross-national trends in childrearing, geography, and societal expectations about when infants “should” master motor skills all influence motor learning; 3). New motor skills—like learning to hold objects, sit up right, or walk—create new opportunities for infants and children to interact with and learn about the world around them.

-006: Applied Industrial-Organizational Psychology (Eric Hernandez)

- M/W 2:00 - 3:15 PM
- Unlock the intricate world of human behavior in the workplace and equip yourself with the tools to improve organizational effectiveness in our course on Applied Industrial-Organizational Psychology. This course delves into contemporary issues, challenges, and best practices in the field. Topics will include research methods, work group dynamics, attitudes in the workplace, employee burnout, job analysis and design, employee selection and assessment, worksite wellness, and diversity in the workplace. Whether you're an HR professional, manager, or aspiring psychologist, this course equips you with the knowledge and skills to apply Industrial-Organizational Psychology principles for enhanced workplace success.

-007: Positive Psychology & the Science of Happiness (Jennifer Crowder)

- MWF 2:00 - 2:50 PM
- This course provides an introduction to the study of topics related to happiness and the positive aspects of human experience. The first part of the course will focus on the basic areas of research in positive psychology and the methods that researchers use to study happiness, while the second half will broaden the focus to include big-picture issues and real-world application.

PY 491: Senior Seminars

-001: Mental Health & The Law (Karen Salekin)

- Wednesdays 9:00 - 11:30 AM
- The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the topics relevant to the interplay between mental health issues and the criminal justice system. The course will focus on issues related to criminal justice, but will also cover two topics that are outside of this realm: (1) civil commitment and (2) physician assisted suicide. Psychologists who work within the legal system can assume a number of roles that include, but are not limited to, social scientists, consultants, and expert witnesses. The information in this class pertains mostly to clinical forensic psychology, but other topics are included. Information provided via lecture and reading will provide the student with a broad understanding of the interplay between mental health issues and the legal system, as well as an understanding of the evolving nature of laws that result from this interplay.

-002: Exploring & Exposing the DSM-5 (Steve Groff)

- T/TR 9:30 - 10:45 AM
- An in-depth examination of the DSM-5 and the DSM-5-TR. A strong emphasis on its scientific basis, potential culturally biased perspective of normality, alternatives to the current model, and clusters of symptoms versus shared human experience.

-003: Psychology of Adulthood & Aging (Sheila Black)

- Mondays 5:30 - 7:30 PM
- This course will focus on adult development from an interdisciplinary perspective and will cover issues such as caregiving, age-related changes in cognitive processes, and institutionalization. Because this class is a seminar, there will be considerable class discussion of major issues related to adult development. Because this course has a "W" designation, students must demonstrate proficiency in writing in order to receive a passing grade in this course.

-004: Intellectual Disabilities (Gayle Faught)

- MWF 10:00 - 10:50 AM
- This course focuses on intellectual disabilities (ID). Topics include causes of ID (from genetic syndromes to environmental causes), assessment of ID, family life of individuals with ID, and aging with ID. Special attention will be paid to discussing the stigmatization of ID in our culture. This course will facilitate intelligent discussion of the most influential and current research on ID. You will read peer-reviewed journal articles, discuss implications of the research, and propose your own study on ID. You will advance your writing, communication, and critical thinking skills by writing and presenting a research proposal to further explore ID.

-005: Communicating About Mindful Behavior Change (Lynn Snow)

- Wednesdays 5:00 - 7:30 PM
- If you are looking for a high engagement seminar and care deeply about improving your communication skills, both written and oral, then this seminar is for you! At the beginning of the semester you will select a topic in behavior change (chosen from the very large treatment development/outcome/implementation research literature in empirically validated behavioral change approaches) in consultation with the instructor, then use this topic as the basis for your oral and written assignments.
 - What makes some ideas “sticky” and easy to remember whereas others are quickly forgotten? We will review the research on “sticky” communication and study how to leverage these best practices for effective communication with scientific and lay audiences. The emphasis will be on regular practice of written and oral communication skills using a mindful learning/mindful behavior change framework.
 - This highly interactive and practical class will help you develop confidence in your communication and behavior change skills. The class is delivered in a workshop format that dedicates time in each class period to oral presentation short practices and to writing exercises that move forward your writing projects. Deliverables include journal article scientific critiques, a semester-long project on your chosen topic with oral and written components, and multiple short written assignments and individual and team presentations that build the necessary elements for your final project.
 - You will receive frequent feedback from each other and the instructor, including taking and reviewing videos of your presentations.
 - We will use a variety of mindfulness exercises to support concentration and creativity and work with writing/speaking anxiety.
 - Please note that due to the high engagement and workshop-based nature of this class, regular in-person attendance is required and critical to class success.

-006: Flag on the Play! Unconscious Stereotyping in Sports & Athletics (Allison Scrivner)

- T/TR 12:30 - 1:45 PM
- In this course we will cover a wide range of topics involving unconscious bias and the stereotyping of both different groups of individuals as well as sports, athletics, and physical activity in general. Topics include: the portrayal of the African American quarterback in the NFL, the bias both within and outside the sport for female bodybuilders, and the contradicting stereotypes of older adults and physical fitness. How is the Black quarterback described differently than the White quarterback? Why are female athletes viewed differently in 'masculine' sports? Why are certain sports and pieces of gym equipment for 'men only'? Why are some sports less diverse than others?

-007: Psychology & Sleep Health (Heather Gunn)

- Mondays 10:00 AM - 12:30 PM
- We will study typical sleep and atypical sleep from a psychological and behavioral medicine perspective. Students will learn how various components of sleep relate to health and about internal circadian rhythms (e.g., night owl versus morning lark). We will study sleep across the lifespan, including a special focus on sleep in college students and how it relates to performance and health. As a designated "W" course, we will also focus on written and verbal communication skills. Writing proficiency within this discipline is required for a passing grade in this course.

-008: Child Psychopathology (Robert Lyman)

- T/TR 9:30 - 10:45 AM
- This course is designed to provide an introduction to the study of psychological problems experienced during childhood and adolescence. We will focus on the conceptualization, cause, diagnosis, and treatment of a variety of disorders. As a designated "W" course, we will also focus on written and verbal communication skills. Writing proficiency is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.