COURSE TITLE: Forensic Psychology

COURSE NUMBER: PSY 375

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Forensic Psychology is a growing interdisciplinary approach to providing a range of services to clinical forensic and legal populations. A student desiring to become a forensic psychologist is required to achieve competencies in clinical psychology, forensic, and legal education. Clinical psychology competencies include diagnosis, treatment, psychological testing, risk assessment, intervention measurements, epidemiology of mental disorders, and clinical ethics. Forensic competencies include the ability to assess response style, knowledge of tools and techniques for assessing symptoms and capacities relevant to legal questions, and forensic ethics. Legal education competencies include knowledge of law, the legal system, and knowledge of where and how to obtain relevant legal information. This course will examine the theoretical and scientific principles underlying forensic psychology, analyze how forensic psychology is applied in professional settings, and explore the academic requirements and preparation of students aspiring to become forensic psychologists.

As Psychology professionals, we recognize that reactions to trauma come in many forms. The content of this course, and discussions about trauma from different perspectives, may bring about unexpected and unsettling reactions. Responses to trauma are often strategies that survivors have developed to keep themselves safe, and therefore really reflect strength and resiliency. Recognizing how trauma impacts anyone is an important part of skill building for creating trauma-informed services and systems. Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor at any time during the course if you would like to discuss, privately, your reactions to the content we are reviewing and/or the discussions we are having.

II. MAJOR INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS:

GOAL A:
Examine the theoretical and scientific principles underlying forensic psychology.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

A-1 Articulate a definition of forensic psychology consistent with the definition espoused by the American Psychological Association.
A-2 Explain and analyze the theoretical and scientific principles underlying forensic psychology.
A-3 Describe and explain the interdisciplinary attributes of forensic psychology.
psychology.

A-4 Identify, analyze, and critique scholarly research relevant to forensic psychology.

GOAL B:
Investigate the application of forensic psychology.

Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to:

B-1 Describe and evaluate the various roles of the forensic psychologist.
B-2 Differentiate and explain the types of problems and questions forensic psychologists address.
B-3 Differentiate between populations receiving psychological professional services and forensic psychologists.
B-4 Describe forensic psychologists’ procedures and techniques for evaluation and treatment of clinical disorders in a legal context.
B-5 Evaluate forensic psychologists’ procedures for providing reports, expert testimony, and consultations on relevant findings and procedures in a legal context.

GOAL C:
Investigate and know the qualifications to practice as a forensic psychologist.

Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to:

C-1 Explain and analyze the interdisciplinary focus on the forensic psychology degree.
C-2 Explain the educational requirements to become a forensic psychologist.
C-3 Evaluate the importance of graduate degrees in forensic psychology.

GOAL D:
Students will use appropriate written and oral communication skills.

Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to:

D-1: Write with clarity and precision using correct English grammar mechanics (punctuation) and usage (sentence structure and vocabulary).
D-2: Exhibit competence in writing for specific purposes, diverse audiences, and genres.
D-3: Correctly and ethically present scholarly writings utilizing the selected citation and writing style deemed appropriate for the student’s program of study.
D-4: Appraise the needs of the audience and then speak in a clear and succinct manner.
D-5: Research, construct, and deliver professional presentations using a variety of communication tools and techniques.