

PSYCHOLOGY OF VIOLENCE

PSYC 333 – 01 (3 Credit Hours)

Fall 2021

9:30 – 10:45 a.m., Tuesdays & Thursdays

Location: Wabash Bldg., Room 612



Instructor: [Elijah Ricks, Ph.D.](#)

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. (and by appointment). You may call my office number for a phone chat. For a video call, give me 5 minutes notice through email or phone to get set up, and then use [this link](#) (Zoom ID: 353 727 9615).

Contact: Email is the fastest way to get into contact with me. If you leave a voicemail on my office phone, I receive it in an email. Because email is my primary means of contact with you, please be sure to check your email at least once every day, and access the Blackboard course module at least every other day. When emailing me, please include information about the course to which you refer.

Should you have some emergency that would affect your ability to meet deadlines or otherwise complete the course, it is imperative that you contact me immediately, or at least before the relevant assignments are due so that we can make arrangements, if appropriate. Expect no retroactive extensions.

Course Format: This course is listed as face-to-face, which means that all of our meetings will be held in our assigned classroom, barring university or governmental policy changes. You are expected to be in the classroom the entire time that we are scheduled to meet, each time we are scheduled to meet. Class starts promptly, so please show respect to the professor and your classmates by being ready to begin at the time to which you committed.

Face masks are required in all classrooms, during all face to face classes. Anyone refusing to wear a face mask will be asked to leave the classroom. Please comply with all pandemic-related regulations and guidelines regarding screenings and access to the university.

Text: There is no required textbook for this course. For a general text that covers some of the related topics, see Hollin, C. R. (2016). *The psychology of interpersonal violence*. Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Required readings are found on [Blackboard](#), and are subject to change with notice. They are:

Borum, R. (2010). Understanding terrorist psychology. *Mental Health Law & Policy Faculty Publications*, 576. Available [here](#).

Bovenkerk, F. (2000). "Wanted: Mafia boss"—Essay on the personology of organized crime. *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 33, 225-242. doi:10.1023/A:1008381201279. Available [here](#).

Bruneau, E., & Kteily, N. (2017). The enemy as animal: Symmetric dehumanization during asymmetric warfare. *PLoS One*, 12. Doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0181422. Available [here](#).

Cheng, W., Ickes, W., & Kenworthy, J. B. (2013). The phenomenon of hate crimes in the United States. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 43, 761-794. doi:10.1111/jasp.12004. Available [here](#).

Elisha, E., Idisis, Y., Timor, U., & Addad, M. (2010). Typology of intimate partner homicide: Personal, interpersonal, and environmental characteristics of men who murdered their female intimate partner. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 54, 494-516. doi:10.1177/0306624X09338379. Available [here](#).

Emery, R. E., & Laumann-Billings, L. (1998). An overview of the nature, causes, and consequences of abusive family relationships: Toward differentiating maltreatment and violence. *American Psychologist*, 53, 121-135. Available [here](#).

- Holmes, R. M., & Holmes, S. T. (1992). Understanding Mass Murder: A starting point. *Federal Probation, 56*, 53-61. Available [here](#).
- Kaplan, S. (2013). Child survivors of the 1994 Rwandan genocide and trauma-related affect. *Journal of Social Issues, 69*, 92-110. Available [here](#).
- Madeira, J. L. (2007). Chapter Four: Memory set free: The execution as the end of the victim-offender relationship. Indiana University School of Law, Research Paper Number 95. Available [here](#).
- Malizia, N. (2017). Serial killer: The mechanism from imagination to the murder phases. *Sociology Mind, 7*, 44-59. Doi:10.4236/sm.2017.72004. Available [here](#).
- O'Connor, R. C., Nock, M. K. (2014). The psychology of suicidal behaviour. *Lancet Psychiatry, 1*, 73-85. doi:10.1016/S2215-0366(14)70222-6. Available [here](#).
- Pardue, A., & Arrigo, B. A. (2008). Power, anger, and sadistic rapists: Toward a differentiated model of offender personality. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology, 52*, 378-400. doi:10.1177/0306624X07303915. Available [here](#).
- Twersky-Glasner, A. (2005). Police personality: What is it and why are they like that? *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology, 20*, 56-67. Available [here](#).

Roosevelt University's Learning Goals: (a) Effective communication, (b) knowledge of discipline-focused content, and (c) awareness of social justice and engagement in civic life.

CORE Competencies: This course covers primarily the integrated learning CORE competency, with some emphasis also on personal and social awareness. Students will examine human violence from sociological, cultural, biological, and psychological (among others) perspectives, and will also gain deeper understanding of their roles in many relational, social, cultural, and political contexts. Learn more about these CORE competencies [here](#).

Departmental Goals for the Undergraduate Psychology Major: The Department of Psychology at Roosevelt University approved the following four learning goals for undergraduates enrolled in our courses: (a) Knowledge Base of Psychology—Students will demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology; (b) Research Methods in Psychology—Students will understand and apply basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretation; (c) Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology—Students will respect and use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and, when possible, the scientific approach to solve problems related to behavior and mental processes; and (d) Application of Psychology—Students will understand and apply psychological principles to personal, social, and organizational issues with concern.

This course focuses primarily on the third and fourth goals, as we will examine several approaches to solving real-world violence, and we will apply psychological theory to personal, social, and organizational violence.

Course Objectives: Violence among humans takes many forms, and has many causes. This course takes a primarily psychosocial perspective of the precursors and motives of multiple forms of violence, as well as their impact on survivors. Students will learn about explanations for violence based on multiple psychological subfields, such as biological, personality, developmental, and social psychology. Theories will be clearly applied to multiple categories of violent acts.

Please be warned that at the nature of this course are details of many disturbing crimes and violent incidents that were sanctioned by governing powers. You will read about and openly discuss cases involving infanticide, sexual assaults, murder, racially motivated hate crimes, and genocide, among others. If this notion causes you abnormal discomfort, please consider taking an alternative course.

Should you wish to speak with someone about your feelings about these things, please contact the [RU Counseling Center](#) in AUD 470, (312)341-3548. If you have any reports of sexual misconduct, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, whose contact information is in the document “Policies and Resources” in the same place you found this syllabus.

Mini-Exams (10 points each): For each chapter covered in this course, there is a brief exam to complete on Blackboard. These mini-exams are closed-book, and closed-notes. You may not consult or collaborate with anyone once you have started a mini-exam. You will have 20 minutes to complete the mini-exam once you have started it, and you must finish it in one sitting. Exams may include (but are not limited to) multiple choice, matching, true/false statements, fill-in-the-blank, and short answers. Questions will be drawn from the textbook and PowerPoint slides. Your two lowest mini-exam scores will be automatically dropped. All of them are due on or before the end of the day Sunday following the week the topics are scheduled (see schedule below). Late mini-exams will be eligible for no more than half credit, and must be completed within 1 week of their original due date.

Analysis Papers (10 points each; Only 4 required): Following each course topic that we complete in class, a brief essay assignment will be available through Blackboard. These assignments are designed to challenge you to apply theory to real cases of violence. Your grade will depend primarily on your ability to accurately and thoroughly apply theory to reality. You may also note weaknesses or gaps in theory. Submit your responses without your name, or any other information that could identify you. You will receive feedback on your submissions before the next analysis paper is due. Back up your essays to at least two devices as you work, and also save your work to a “cloud.” Do not put your response in the “comments” section, and do not upload a file. Copy and paste your text into the “write submission” section. Although you may complete as many of these analysis papers as you wish, only your highest 4 scores will count towards your course grade. No late analysis papers will be considered.

Final Exam (50 points): The final exam will be administered through Blackboard in the same format as mini-exams. You must complete it between 9:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 16th. Absolutely no late final exams will be accepted. The exam will include 50 questions taken from previously covered course material. A study aid will also be available on Blackboard. You will have 60 minutes to complete the exam, unless you have communicated academic accommodations with me. The final exam is closed-notes and closed-book. Feedback will be available immediately upon completion.

Grades: Your course grade is computed by dividing the points you earn by the points that are possible. Points are not weighted differently; 1 essay point = 1 written analysis point = 1 extra credit point. Your final grade will be based on the following scale:

90.0% to 100%	= A	70.0% to 79.9%	= C	0% to 59.9%	= F
80.0% to 89.9%	= B	60.0% to 69.9%	= D		

Your grades will be available for review through the Blackboard system. You are responsible for checking your grades. If you see a discrepancy or have a concern, please contact me as early as possible to get it resolved.

Extra Credit: A few opportunities will arise in the course for you to earn extra credit. One standing opportunity is to participate in psychological research through the SONA system, or to summarize scientific journal articles related to the course topic. More detail is in separate handouts, available in the “Extra Credit” link on Blackboard. Each research summary is worth 2 points of credit, and each SONA credit is worth 1 point of course credit, for up to 10 total extra credit points. Extra credit research summaries are due no later than December 12th, by the end of the day. They must be turned in through the links to the assignments that are given on Blackboard.

Course Schedule (Due to the ongoing pandemic, these dates and topics are subject to change. Announcements will come through your email):

Date(s)	Topic(s)	Reading	Mini-Exam & Analysis Paper Due
Intrapersonal Violence			
8/31-9/2	Overview of Course; Self-harm	Syllabus	9/6
9/7-9	Suicide	O'Connor & Nock	9/13
Interpersonal Violence			
9/14-16	Family Violence	Emery et al.	9/20
9/21-23	Sexual Violence	Pardue & Arrigo	9/27
9/28-30	Murder	Elisha et al.	10/4
10/5-7	Serial Murder	Malizia	10/11
10/12-14	Mass and Spree Killers	Holmes & Holmes	10/18
10/19-21	Police Brutality	Twersky-Glasner	10/25
10/26-28	Hate Crimes	Cheng et al.	11/1
Organized Violence			
11/2-4	Gangs, Mobs, Mafias, Cartels	Bovenkerk	11/8
11/9-11	Organized Terrorism	Borum	11/15
State-sanctioned Violence			
11/16-18	Torture and Executions	Madeira	11/22
11/23-25	[Thanksgiving Break – No Class]		
11/30-12/2	Genocide	Kaplan	12/6
12/7-9	War	Bruneau & Kteily	12/13
12/16	Final Exam: 9:30 – 12:00	Entire Course	

Studying: Grades are a reflection of your ability to competently work with the concepts we discuss. To master the material, pay close attention during each lecture, attend each course meeting, and complete each of the readings. Consolidate notes from text readings and lectures. If you do not feel confident in your ability to explain any part of the material to a stranger, ask questions in class, ask classmates, attend office hours, hold study groups, work with a friend, find trustworthy sources on the internet, or read additional books. Find ways to apply these concepts to current events, practice by discussing material to friends or relatives, and think of alternative explanations. Do not expect to spontaneously grasp material as you are completing an assignment!

Withdrawals: The last day to withdraw and receive a 'W' grade for this course is 11/4/21. Prior to and including the first week of the fall or spring semester sessions, students may drop one or more courses with no record of the class appearing on the transcript. In weeks 2 through 10 of the fall or spring semester, students may complete a Change in Registration form in person or by fax, found [here](#). After week 10 of the fall or spring semester students may not withdraw from courses without completing a Petition for Late Withdrawal form found [here](#). The petition form requires the student's signature and the approval of the instructor, department chair, dean or dean's designee. It also requires a statement of the non-academic reason for your late withdrawal, including reason student was unable to withdraw by deadline, and documentation. Withdrawing from courses may have serious consequences for academic progress towards the degree, for financial aid eligibility, for repayment of refunds, visa requirements (for international students), and eligibility for competition (for student athletes). Students should consult carefully with their instructors and academic advisors and must meet with a financial aid advisor before withdrawing from classes after the semester has begun. Tuition Refund Schedule and Withdrawal deadlines are published for each semester and for the summer session on the Important Dates page of the website [here](#).

Incomplete Grades: I follow the Registrar's policy for assigning Incomplete grades for this course. A grade of 'I' will be assigned only when 25% or less of the total semester's work has to be completed and the student has a documented reason why the work cannot be completed within the regular timeframe. For more information, contact the Registrar on the Mezzanine floor of the Wabash Building, at (312)341-3535, or by emailing registrar@roosevelt.edu.

Roosevelt's Scholastic Policies: It is your responsibility to be familiar with and follow all of the University's policies. These are available [here](#).