



DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PX1160 Legal and Investigative Psychology, 30 credits

Rättspsykologi, 30 högskolepoäng

First Cycle

Confirmation

This course syllabus was confirmed by Department of Psychology on 2014-09-24 and was last revised on 2021-05-17 to be valid from 2021-08-30, autumn semester of 2021.

Field of education: Social Sciences 100%

Department: Department of Psychology

Other participating department

Department of Psychology

Position in the educational system

Main field of studies

Psychology

Specialization

G1N, First cycle, has only upper-secondary level entry requirements

Entry requirements

General entrance requirements

Learning outcomes

On successful completion of the course the student will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

- define forensic psychology as field of knowledge
- describe in detail psychological theories of crime, crime victims and perpetrators
- define witness psychology and independently be able to explain and put together the basic psychological factors that influence witnesses

- describe in detail and identify psychological sources of errors in diagnostic work
- describe in detail and contrast methods for reliability assessments
- describe models for legal decision-making

Competence and skills

- orally and in writing explain and discuss forensic psychology
- compare and relate various theories and explanations for crime and exposure
- apply a few of central forensic psychology techniques
- analyse and compare various relevant interrogation techniques
- analyse psychological and legal principles of reliability assessments

Judgement and approach

- be able to make insightful theoretical, methodological and research ethical reasoning regarding research in forensic psychology
- based on a scientific approach, discuss knowledge and application of forensic psychology in concrete legal cases
- evaluate a few of central forensic psychological technologies
- critically address crime reporting in the media

Course content

The course consists of three modules:

Sub-courses

1. **Crime victims and perpetrators from a psychological perspective** (*Brottsutsatta och förövare ur ett psykologiskt perspektiv*), 10 credits
Grading scale: Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) and Fail (U)
Module 1 gives an introduction to the field of forensic psychology and related fields e.g. forensic psychiatry and a basic description of how the litigation is done from application to sentence. The course presents victimology and psychological aspects of how victims are perceived and treated. Furthermore, the course provides basic knowledge of perpetrators psychology and highlights relevant gender and sexuality issues. The module also handles psychological aspects of crime reporting in the media.
2. **Investigative psychology** (*Utredningspsykologi*), 10 credits
Grading scale: Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) and Fail (U)
Module 2 presents central knowledge for police investigations, such as investigation methodology, memory psychology, witness psychology and witness confrontations. Furthermore, the module provides knowledge and practical application exercises in interview and interrogation methodology, including interrogation with children and young people.

3. **Legal psychology** (*Domstolspsykologi*), 10 credits

Grading scale: Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) and Fail (U)

Module 3 focuses on the importance of forensic psychology in court proceedings such as legal decision-making, reliability and credibility assessments. The module also provides relevant knowledge about legal actors, psychological experts, and influence factors of psychological nature in courts. Finally, the students review cases using the knowledge in forensic psychology that they have acquired during the course.

Form of teaching

The teaching methods include lectures, exercises, seminars and group assignment with or without support of information and communication technique.

Language of instruction: Swedish

Literature in English may occur during the course.

Assessment

All teaching as well as course literature and other course material provided during the course can form basis for examination. The modules are assessed through individual written examination assignments, written group assignments, exercises, seminars and oral presentations. All exercises, seminars, presentations and group assignments require active participation. Absence from compulsory components should be compensated according to the instructions of the teacher.

A student who has failed the same examination twice by the same examiner has the right to change the examiner. The student shall submit a written request to the Department. The request shall be granted unless there are special reasons to the contrary (Chapter 6, Section 22 of Higher Education Ordinance).

A student with a recommendation for special educational support from the University of Gothenburg may receive an adapted examination or alternative examination form provided that the examiner decides it is compatible with the course objectives and it does not require unreasonable resources.

In the event where a course has been discontinued or has undergone major changes, the student is guaranteed at least three examinations (including the ordinary examination) during a period of at least one year up to two years after the course has been discontinued/changed. The same applies for internships and on-the-job trainings, but with a restriction to only one additional examination session.

Grades

The grading scale comprises: Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) and Fail (U).

To receive a Pass (G) as a final grade, students must:

- receive a Pass on all three modules
- actively participate in exercises, seminars, group assignments and presentations

To receive a Pass with Distinction (VG), students must:

- receive a Pass with Distinction on at least two of three modules and the grade Pass on the third one
- actively participate in exercises, seminars, group assignments and presentations

Course evaluation

The course coordinator is responsible for ensuring that students are given the opportunity to provide an anonymous, written course evaluation at the end of the course. On completion of the course, the course coordinator writes a course report, which includes a summary of students' feedback about the course. The course report is discussed in a relevant course evaluation group and is communicated both to the students who completed the course evaluation as well as to the students who are starting the course. The reports are available to students.

Additional information

It is the student's responsibility to make sure they have access to a computer, internet or other digital tools if required.