



PSYCHOLOGY 2031A (570)
Psychology and Law
Fall/Winter 2025-2026

Instructor: Dr. Laura Melnyk Gribble
Email: laura@uwo.ca

Course Information

Calendar Description:

This course provides an overview of theory and research in the field of psychology and law. Basic and applied research in cognitive, developmental, clinical, and social psychology is related to legal issues, such as eyewitness memory, face identification, polygraph testing, child witnesses, and jury decision-making.

Prerequisite(s):

Antirequisite(s): [Psychology 2032A/B](#), [Psychology 3313A/B](#).

Extra Information: 3 lecture hours.

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: Category A

Subject Code: PSYCHOL

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

King's University College
at The University of Western Ontario

PSYCHOLOGY AND LAW
Psychology 2031A
Section 570
Fall 2025



1. COURSE INFORMATION

Instructor: **Dr. Laura Melnyk Gribble** (she/her)

Email: **laura@uwo.ca** – please indicate Psych 2031 in the subject line

Office: Contact for details

Office hours: By appointment. For Zoom appointments, my Zoom room is
<https://westernuniversity.zoom.us/j/6014345611>.

Course website: Accessible through OWL Brightspace, <http://owl.uwo.ca>

Time and location of lectures: **Please see OWL**

Mode of instruction: **in-person**

2. COURSE OBJECTIVES & LEARNING OUTCOMES

The goals of Psychology & Law are to provide students with:

1. **Knowledge** of the basic vocabulary, major research findings, and key concepts in the field of psychology and law;
2. Knowledge of the **basic structure and core concepts** in Canadian criminal procedure;
3. The ability to **examine issues** relating to psychology and law from an empirical, scholarly perspective, rather than from intuition or speculation;
4. The ability to **apply** course content to novel situations and cases;
5. **Awareness of the applications** of psychological science in shaping public policy;
6. The ability to **think and write critically and independently** about issues relating to psychology and law.

The lectures, tests, and assignment are designed to support these learning outcomes.

3. READINGS (required)

(1) Textbook:

Pozzulo, J., Bennell, C., & Forth, A. (2022). *Forensic psychology, 6th ed.* Pearson.

The textbook is available from the Western bookstore as an e-book:

https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=KC&term=W2025A&courses%5B0%5D=570_KC/PSY2031A

The e-book costs \$68 for 180-day access.

Students will need the most recent (6th) edition. Some of the content in older editions is different from the most recent edition, so older editions are not considered sufficient. Hard copies are available on 2-hour reserve at the Cardinal Carter Library.

(2) Online chapter: *The Canadian Legal System: An Overview*

This reading is assigned for Lecture 2.

This chapter is from Roesch, R., Zapf, P.A., Hart, S.D., & Connolly, D.A. (2014). *Forensic psychology and the law: A Canadian perspective.* Wiley.

This reading available as a PDF via our OWL site in the Weekly Schedule entry for Lecture 2, and publicly available online via Pressbooks: <https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/psyc268/chapter/chapter-2/>

There is no cost for this chapter.

Additional costs: This course includes an assignment that requires students to attend court for about 3 hours. This may entail a fee for bus fare or parking.

4. EXPECTATIONS

I am delighted to be introducing you to the fascinating field of psychology and law. Your success in this course is important to me. Here are some recommendations that will help you to do your best. I've also provided study tips on our OWL site.

- **Attend each class.** The course unfolds in a linear manner, with each lecture building on the previous classes. Attendance is very important to doing your best in this course.

- **Contribute** to a professional, respectful environment. Please be considerate of your classmates and the professor (and indeed, yourself!) in your behaviours and interactions:
 - ✓ Engage and participate. Your ideas and questions are encouraged and appreciated.
 - ✓ Be “present.” Consider turning off your WiFi during lecture time: Disconnecting during class will help you to do your best in this course.
- **Take notes.** Links to PDFs of the lecture slides on OWL will be activated by the Friday before each Monday class. The slides are, intentionally, rather skeletal. This is to facilitate your learning: There is an abundance of scientific evidence demonstrating that learning is optimized when we **actively distil and process** information.
- **Stay on track.** We cover a lot of material: Keep up by reviewing your notes regularly and reading the assigned chapters as scheduled. Most universities recommend that students spend about twice the amount of lecture hours reviewing notes and reading; that works out to about 6 per week per course (seriously!).
- **Read the assigned chapters.** The lectures and the readings are complementary; a considerable proportion of material covered in class is not covered in the readings, and some material covered in the readings is not covered in class. **I will provide a “readings review” for each assigned reading** to indicate what you expected to learn from the readings. Students are responsible for understanding all content presented in class and in the assigned readings.
- **Reach out** if you are struggling or need assistance. I’m happy to help with course content and can direct you towards more specialized services as needed.

And here’s what you can expect from me:

- Classes that are engaging, clear, responsive, intellectually stimulating, and interesting.
- A **respectful learning** environment that **welcomes and supports a diversity** of thoughts, perspectives, and experiences, and honours your identities – including but not limited to race, gender, socioeconomic status, sexuality, and religion.
- I **encourage and value** your engagement, discussion, and questions.
- A **well-organized** OWL site with helpful and supportive information, as well as links to cases, news, videos, etc. for students who wish to delve further into the topics we’ll cover.

- **Approachability.** I'm happy to meet in-person or via Zoom during office hours and you are welcome to make an appointment should my office hours conflict with your class schedule. You're welcome to email me; emails are usually answered within 24 hours on weekdays.
- Assessments that are **fair and objective.** Test questions will directly reflect the course objectives and learning outcomes; see Section 2) and I'll vet the fairness of each question.

5. LECTURE SCHEDULE

Date	Lecture	Topic	Reading
Sept 8	1	Welcome & introduction Psychology and the legal system Psychologists' roles in the legal system	Chapter 1
Sept 15	2	Overview of the Canadian legal system Investigations: Suspects Lie detection	Online chapter ("The Canadian Legal System") Chapter 4
Sept 22	3	Interrogations and confessions	Ch. 3 (start of chapter to the heading "Criminal Profiling")
Sept 29		Test 1 (24%)	
Oct 6	4	Criminal profiling	Ch. 3 (section titled "Criminal Profiling" to chapter end)
Oct 13		<i>No class; Thanksgiving</i>	
Oct 20	5	Psychopathy Homicidal offenders Investigations: Witnesses Witnesses 1	Chapter 11 Chapter 15
Oct 27	6	Witnesses 2	Chapter 5
Nov 3		<i>No class; reading week</i>	
Nov 10		Test 2 (24%)	
Nov 17	7	Children as witnesses Court observation assignment due (20%)	Chapter 6
Nov 24	8	Trial Juries	Chapter 7
Dec 1	9	Mental illness and the legal system	Chapter 8
Dec 8	10	Sentencing and correctional psychology	Chapter 9
December 2025 exam period		Test 3 (32%) Date, time, & location TBA by the registrar's office	

Please note that the schedule may be adjusted slightly because of discussions and/or unexpected circumstances such as illness; any changes will be announced in class and on the OWL site.

6. EVALUATION FORMAT AND TEST SCHEDULE

Evaluation is based on three tests and one assignment.

Component	Weight*
Tests: 3 term tests	
Test 1, Monday September 29 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covers lectures & assigned readings from September 8 to 29 inclusive Written in class, 90 minutes 	24%*
Test 2, Monday November 10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covers lectures & assigned readings from October 6 to October 27 inclusive Written in class, 90 minutes 	24%*
Test 3, December 2025 exam period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covers lectures & assigned readings from November 17 to December 8 inclusive Date, time, & location to be announced by the registrar's office, 2 hours 	32%*
Court observation report, due Monday November 17 by 11.59 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are welcome to submit this assignment in advance of the due date. This assignment is designated as exempt from the undocumented absence policy; requests for academic consideration will require documentation provided to the Academic Advising office (please see Section 7). Late work is eligible for partial credit, with a deduction of 1 point (out of 20) per day late. 	20%

*** In calculating your final course grade, I will increase the weight of your best-scoring test by 5% and reciprocally decrease the weight of your lowest-scoring test by 5%.** For example, if your best test was Test 3 and your lowest test was Test 1, then your tests would be weighted at Test 1 = 19%, Test 2 = 24%, Test 3 = 37%.

Tests

- The tests are designed to address our course goals and learning outcomes outlined in Section 2, with fact-based, definition, conceptual, and applications questions.
- Further information about the tests, including study tips, test tips, and sample test questions, will be posted on OWL.

Court observation report: The goal of this assignment is to encourage you to take your course-related knowledge and relate this information to real-life contexts. You will observe criminal court

proceedings at the London-Middlesex Court House (or your hometown) and write a report in which you provide a thoughtful and comprehensive discussion relating your observation to material covered in lectures. Complete details will be provided in class.

Grading guidelines

The following grading guidelines are drawn from Senate Academic Policies set by the University of Western Ontario:

A+	90-100%	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89%	Superior work that is clearly above average
B	70-79%	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69%	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59%	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	< 50%	Fail

Please be aware that final grades in this course are based on exclusively on students' performance on the three tests and the court report. Tests may not be re-written, nor will the components be re-weighted in calculating final grades. Grades will not be adjusted on the basis of need or a subjective evaluation of effort, and students will not be able to improve their marks by completing additional assessments.

7. POLICY REGARDING MAKE-UP TESTS AND EXTENSIONS OF DEADLINES*

Academic consideration is available based on medical or compassionate grounds. If you need to miss a test or the deadline for the report, please follow these instructions:

- i. Students seeking academic consideration should **contact their Academic Advising with supporting **documentation**** for their absence; for medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation.
 - King's students: The Academic Advising Office is located on the ground floor of DLH in the Academic Dean's Office.
 - If your home faculty is Huron or Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- ii. Please email me via laura@uwo.ca from your Western email account with **Psych 2031** in the subject line, preferably prior to the date of the test or assignment due date, but certainly **within 48 hours of the test start-time or assignment deadline**, to let me know that you've contacted academic

advising for consideration. Pending the approval of your consideration request through academic counselling, I'll confirm the details about the makeup test or other consideration.

Make-up tests are different from the regularly-scheduled tests. Please note that there is **one** make-up test offered for each test, held the following week on Friday at 2.30 pm in SA150. The make-up test for Test 1 will be Friday October 10 2025. The make-up test for Test 2 will be Friday November 21 2025. The special exam (make-up test) for Test 3 will be scheduled by the registrar's office in early January 2026.

8. COPYRIGHT AND PRIVACY INFORMATION

Course content is the professor's intellectual property. Course content includes the lectures, lecture slides, tests, and the assignment.

Any form of audio recording, video recording, or photography during the lectures or tests is **strictly prohibited** without the express written permission of the instructor.

You **may not distribute course content**. You are not permitted to upload course content to generative AI, use AI to transcribe lectures, share course content in any public domain, or sell course content to other students or to another third party.

Recording of lectures or in-class activities without explicit written consent of the professor is grounds for academic discipline.

9. STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

King's is committed to fostering a culture of professionalism, honesty, and academic integrity, and all members of our community – faculty, staff, and students – have a role to play in promoting an ethical learning environment. Furthermore, through the work they submit for academic evaluation, students develop important habits of critical thinking, independent inquiry, and creativity. Thus, it is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial).

The use of **artificial intelligence (AI) tools or translation tools is not permitted for written work submitted for evaluation**. Use of AI or translation tools (including, but not limited to, ChatGPT) for submitted written work **will constitute an academic offence**. Please review the Department of Psychology's policy on AI and translation tools (attached).

The court observation assignment is subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of

plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>). Please note that Turnitin analysis now includes AI detection.

Portions of this syllabus are drawn from the following sources: Academic Calendar, Academic Handbook of Senate Regulations, UWO Department of Psychology Procedures for Appealing Academic Evaluations, UWO Department of History Document of Plagiarism, the Associate Academic Dean's Course Outlines and Policies Memo 2025-26, the Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning at Brown University, and Six Principles of an Inclusive Syllabus Design by Kirsten Helmer.

Department of Psychology Policies Related to AI Tools

1. Policy on the Use of Generative AI Tools

The Department of Psychology expects that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial).

The use of generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT) is not permitted for any submitted coursework unless express permission has been granted by your instructor.

Students should not have AI tools write any part of their assignments or papers, either by copying and pasting or by paraphrasing the output. Unauthorized use of AI constitutes an academic offence and will be subject to academic discipline.

Additional information: Students can use AI tools to clarify questions they have about course content (e.g., you can ask ChatGPT about a course concept to help with your understanding), but students should be aware that the response may be inaccurate or inconsistent with the course content. Asking your instructor is a more effective strategy. Students should note that information provided by AI tools such as ChatGPT can include mistakes, inaccuracies, biases, and outdated information.

Whenever these tools are used, students should cross-verify the information provided to them. This means verifying that the sources used by AI exist and have been accurately summarized, consulting multiple original and reputable up-to-date sources to verify information, and being cautious of bias that could be present in the information provided.

2. Policy on Use of Translation Tools*

The Department of Psychology views the unapproved use of translation or language applications as an academic offence.

Any usage of translation applications or language generation by students to complete specific assigned work for this course **must be approved** by the instructor **prior** to submitting the work **and noted by the student in the submitted work** itself.

Writing text and then feeding it into a computer application to improve or translate your own words, changing a few words, and then submitting this text as if it was your own **constitutes plagiarism**. You must compose text, choose words, construct logic flow, structure sentences and paragraphs to organize, synthesize, interpret information with your own mind. When you borrow language or ideas from another person or from a machine this must be acknowledged with quotation marks and/or citations.

Why do we have this policy?

- Translation is intellectual work and produces intellectual property, thus any text which is translated must cite the translator.
- Psychology endeavors to advance students' linguistic, analytic, and reasoning competencies – this can not happen outside of specific language competencies.
- Earning a university degree signals that an individual has advanced literacy and communicative skill in the language of instruction at the university; this is English at King's University College at

Western University. If translation machines are used by students without regulation, we will have no way of certifying whether these competencies exist and fewer mechanism for encouraging students to do the hard work to develop them.

** Based on the policy developed by the Department of Child and Youth Studies*

**KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2025-2026**

1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences

Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses_enrollment/exams_and_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf.

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course.

Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course.

For further information, please see:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

Absences from Final Examinations

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under Special Examinations).

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

2. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King's University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University College:

<http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-support-services/personal-counselling/>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help:

https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/

Academic Support Services at King's University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/>

GBSV Support:

King's is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing Care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email or by calling 519-661-3568.

Further supports can be found on this website: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

See also https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-affairs/code-of-student-conduct1/>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic

devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

4. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with your instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality_Reports_-_TurnItIn.html.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

5. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

6. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

7. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.