

# Psychology in Criminal Justice Leadership

CJ 663

Summer 2008

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## **TEXTBOOKS:**

- Myers, David G. (2008). *Social Psychology* (9th Ed.), McGraw-Hill. ISBN 978-0-07-353189-2
- Other materials, as directed by the instructor.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:**

**DESCRIPTION:** Utilizing unique examples in the areas of criminal justice, and law enforcement, to explore the impact of our social and cognitive processing on our leadership and management decisions and thinking. Understanding the importance of key psychological influences in our understanding of human interaction in complex criminal justice settings is inextricably related to success as effective leaders. This course will combine the formats of lecture, classroom presentations, and group discussion.

**OBJECTIVES:** (a) Using examples from criminal justice practice the acquaintance will be drawn to the basic principles of social psychology and its relevance to understanding behavior in the context of criminal justice leadership settings; (b) Examine some of the basic social beliefs and the associations between attitude formation and behavior and how that impacts everyday interactions; (c) Introduce the relevance of issues such as social influence, conformity, persuasion, and group influence on successful criminal justice leadership. Examine how these influences can play a major role in social interactions; (d) Cover the major topics on matters of prejudice, aggression, and altruism from a social psychological perspective and how a better understanding of these issues can improve ones understanding of leadership and management concerns; (e) Examine ways in which an understanding of social psychology can be beneficial in real-world, applied criminal justice settings. Throughout a particular focus will be placed on the impact of social psychological principles as they relate to the criminal justice and leadership environments. Specifically, the way in which these social influences impact our understanding of others, our “world”, and ourselves will be discussed. Significant implications for the way we “manage” ourselves and others---and the impact this has in our roles as leaders will be addressed.

**E-MAIL COMMUNICATION:** All correspondence sent to the instructor via e-mail must include the following format in the Subject line: CJ 663\_Last Name, First Initial \_Topic / Assignment

## **REQUIREMENTS AND KNOWLEDGE EVALUATION:**

**GRADING:** Grades will be based on the instructor’s evaluation of student performance. Students have complete responsibility for their effort and attention to the class and, thus, their ultimate grade in the course. Students have some latitude in their final course grade depending on their individual needs by selecting one of two options. General grading standards apply to each assignment with a score A = 100-90; B = 89-80; C = 79-70; and 69 or less is an F (there are no D’s in graduate school).

**READINGS:** Most classes have assigned chapter(s) / readings. It is expected that each participant will be able to adequately explain the major thrust of these readings and their relevance to the scheduled topic.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY:**

The Faculty of the College of Criminal Justice expects students to conduct their academic work with integrity and honesty. Acts of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and can result in the failure of a course and dismissal from the University. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, collusion – the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing work offered for credit, the abuse of resource materials, and misrepresentations of credentials or accomplishments as a member of the college. The University’s policy on academic honesty and appeal procedures can be found in the manual entitled Student Guidelines, distributed by the Division of Student Services. Also see: <http://www.shsu.edu/administrative/faculty/sectionb.html#dishonesty>

Criminal Justice is a field in which high standards and expectations must exist. Each student is to review the current edition of the *Guidelines* concerning general University policy on this matter. Any violation of the policy will result in failure of this course and the initiation of proceedings for expulsion from this institution.

### **DISABLED STUDENT POLICY:**

“Students with a disability which affects their academic performance are expected to arrange for a conference with the instructor in order that appropriate strategies can be considered to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.” The physically impaired should review the following policies for more information:

[http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf\\_www/aps/811006.html](http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/811006.html)

Information on services for disabled students can be found at:

<http://www.shsu.edu/~counsel/sswd.html>

### **STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS POLICY:**

University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. Please see detailed information at:

<http://www.shsu.edu/catalog/scholasticrequirements.html#holyday>

### **TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

\*Chapters refer to Myers text

- 5/10** Introduction to Course: Review Syllabus; Study Recommendations.  
Introduction to the entire topic of social psychology in criminal justice leadership; how interrelated the concepts of social thinking, social influence, and social relations relate to leadership. These are concepts studied by social psychologists.
- 5/ 10** **Social Thinking (Part I)**  
Chapter 2: The Self in the World: this section will examine the concept of the self in how we present, bias, and “manage” our self-view.  
Chapter 3: Social Beliefs and Judgments: this discussion will review the ways in which we form beliefs and social judgments. Particular emphasis will be placed on the biases and errors we all tend to make in viewing the social world and making judgments about others.  
Chapter 4: Behavior and Attitudes: Examines the relationship between the formation of attitudes and their consistency with our behavior.
- 5/11** **Social Influence (Part II)**  
Chapter 5: Culture and Gender: Looks at the role of biology and culture in our social process. How these factors impact our own leadership style. (Leadership Style Survey).  
Chapter 6: Conformity and Obedience: The pressure to conform and follow the rules as set forth socially and organizationally.  
Chapter 7: Persuasion: Studies of how a particular point of view can influence behavior.

**Exercise due 5/17:** Using current events describe three ways in which Social thinking and Social influence, interact and impact on social relations. This will be class discussion due 5/17.

**5/17**

**Social Relations Part III**

Chapter 12: Helping:

Chapter 13: Conflict and Peacemaking: discussing the role of communication and cooperation

**5/18**

**The Future;**

Chapter 16: The Future: Leadership implications on future roles, authority, expectations and responsibilities, held by each of us in leadership roles in criminal justice.

Assignment Review expectations (handout)

**6/27**

**Final Assignment due: e-mail to Dr. Watkins**

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By sticking with the program, shortly the honor of your gradation will fulfill a goal of attaining a Master of Science in Criminal Justice. I wish you all the best. Having a life long learning philosophy keeps a person healthy, wealthy, and wise. Best Regards, Dr. Rita J. Watkins

