

WRONGFUL CONVICTIONS



Cassidy Haigh, M.A.



Online (Asynchronous)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The [National Registry of Exonerations](#) has documented over 3,300 cases in which an innocent individual was convicted, and later exonerated, of a crime that they did not commit. Much research has investigated why wrongful conviction occurs and how we can create policy and procedures for preventing it from occurring in future cases. This course offers an introduction to research on wrongful conviction from the fields of criminology, psychology, law, and sociology. The purpose of this course is to educate students on the factors that contribute to wrongful conviction, the consequences of wrongful conviction for individual exonerees and society as a whole, and the changes that can be made to policy and procedures to prevent the conviction of innocent persons in future cases.

MATERIALS

All of the required materials for this course are **free!**
Links are provided on Canvas.



CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR

Email: cassidyhaigh@ufl.edu

During the work week (M-F), you can expect a response from me within 48 hours. After 5 PM on Friday, this changes to 72 hours. This means that you should plan ahead for any questions that require an answer by a certain date/time.

Office Hours:

When? Tuesdays, 3-5pm EST; and by appointment

Where? Zoom (Click on 'Zoom Conferences' in Canvas to access office hours.)

Why? Office hours are really "student hours". During this time, I am available to answer your questions, discuss class material, and more! Here are just a few of the reasons to attend office hours:

- Ask questions about course content
- Get study tips and ideas
- Prepare for an upcoming assignment
- Talk about graduate school or potential careers

Learn more about how you can use office hours [here!](#)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, you should be able to...

Describe the contributing factors to wrongful conviction (e.g., eyewitness misidentification, faulty forensic science, false confessions, etc.).

Discuss the intersection between race and wrongful conviction.

Describe science-based policies and procedures that can be implemented to prevent wrongful convictions from occurring in the future.

Outline the ways in which wrongful convictions are detected and corrected.

Be familiar with current law and social science research on wrongful conviction.

Understand the consequences of wrongful conviction for exonerees, victims, and the general public.



HOW TO SUPPORT LEARNING

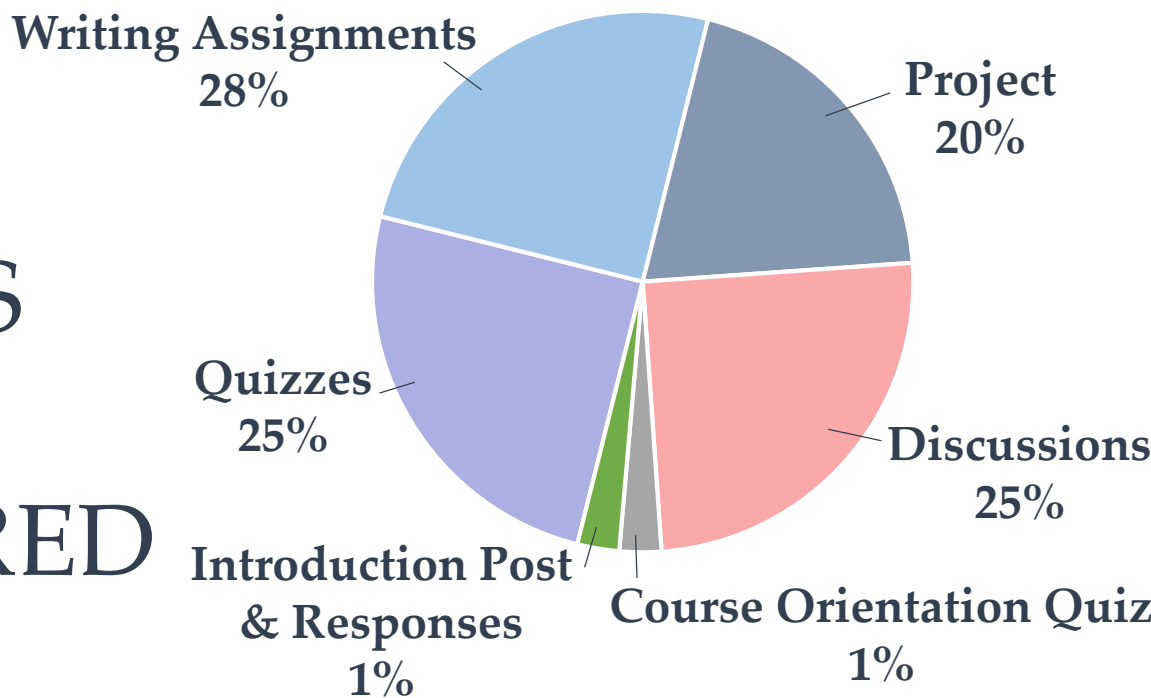
FOR YOU

FOR ME

- 1) Prepare for assignments by reading, watching, and/or listening to the assigned materials.
- 2) Be an active participant in the course. Send emails and attend office hours when questions arise.
- 3) Be respectful to both your classmates and me.
- 4) Do your own work. Do not plagiarize or cheat.

- 1) Be enthusiastic about course material and my role in helping you learn.
- 2) Create an inclusive learning environment by respecting my students and their views.
- 3) Have fun!

HOW SUCCESS IS MEASURED



Assessment	Description	% of Final Grade
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Writing Assignments	There will be thirteen writing assignments throughout the semester, and you must complete ten of your choosing. If you complete more than ten writing assignments, your ten highest assignment grades will count towards your final grade. All writing assignments are due on Sundays by 11:59pm. Rubrics and additional details are available on Canvas	28%
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Discussions	You will need to submit one discussion question for each module. After submitting your discussion question, you will need to respond to at least two questions submitted by your classmates. Discussion questions are due on Thursdays by 11:59pm. Response posts are due on Sundays by 11:59pm. Your lowest discussion grade will be dropped. Thus, 10 of the 11 discussions count toward your final grade.	25%
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Assessment	Description	% of Final Grade
Module Quizzes	<p>There will be four non-cumulative, closed-note quizzes. The quizzes consist of 20 multiple choice and true/false questions. You will have 20 minutes to complete each quiz. You will receive two attempts to take each quiz. The questions will be different each time. This provides you the opportunity to improve your grade by giving you time to go back and study the material. All quizzes are due on Sundays by 11:59pm. If you have any trouble with your quiz, you must contact the UF Computing Help Desk immediately at 352-392-4357. Once you have done so, email me immediately with the details of your problem along with your HelpDesk ticket number.</p>	25%
Project	<p>For this project, you will pick a concept, idea, or policy that you have learned about in class this semester. You are tasked with teaching someone who did not take this class about the topic you select. To communicate your information, you have two options from which you will choose one to complete. The first option is to create an infographic. The second option is to create a podcast episode. For both options, as part of the project grade you will need to submit an outline. The outline is due Sunday, April 16. The project is due Sunday, April 30.</p>	20%
Introduction Post & Responses	<p>During the first week of the course, you will complete an introduction discussion post introducing yourself to the class. After submitting your initial post, you will need to respond to at least two posts submitted by your classmates. The initial introduction post is due Thursday, January 12, and the response posts are due Sunday, January 15.</p>	1%
Course Orientation Quiz	<p>During the first week of the course, you will need to complete a quiz testing your knowledge of the course syllabus. The quiz consists of ten multiple choice and true/false questions. It is open-note/syllabus. It is not timed. The quiz is due Sunday, January 15.</p>	1%

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date/Module	Assignments
<p>Jan. 9-22</p> <p>Module 1: Introduction & Overview</p>	<p>Introduction post due 1/12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses due 1/15 <p>Course orientation quiz due 1/15</p> <p>M1 discussion question due 1/19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses due 1/22 <p>Writing assignment #1 due 1/22</p>
<p>Jan. 23-29</p> <p>Module 2: Eyewitness Identification</p>	<p>M2 discussion question due 1/26</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses due 1/29 <p>Writing assignment #2 due 1/29</p>
<p>Jan. 30-Feb. 5</p> <p>Module 3: Interrogations & Confessions</p>	<p>M3 discussion question due 2/2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses due 2/5 <p>Writing assignment #3 due 2/5</p> <p>Quiz 1 due 2/5</p>
<p>Feb. 6-12</p> <p>Module 4: Guilty Pleas & Plea Bargaining</p>	<p>M4 discussion question due 2/9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses due 2/12 <p>Writing assignment #4 due 2/12</p>
<p>Feb. 13-26</p> <p>Module 5: Forensic Science Evidence</p>	<p>Writing assignment #5 due 2/19</p> <p>M5 discussion question due 2/23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses due 2/26 <p>Writing assignment #6 due 2/26</p>
<p>Feb. 27-Mar. 5</p> <p>Module 6: Incentivized Informants</p>	<p>M6 discussion question due 3/2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses due 3/5 <p>Writing assignment #7 due 3/5</p> <p>Quiz 2 due Sunday, 3/5</p>

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date/Module	Assignments
<p>Mar. 6-12</p> <p>Module 7: Government Actors: Police & Prosecutors</p>	<p>M7 discussion question due 3/9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses due 3/12 <p>Writing assignment #8 due 3/12</p>
<p>Mar. 20-26</p> <p>Module 8: Defense Attorneys</p>	<p>M8 discussion question due 3/23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses due 3/26 <p>Writing assignment #9 due 3/26</p>
<p>Mar. 27- Apr. 2</p> <p>Module 9: No Crime Cases</p>	<p>M9 discussion question due 3/30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses due 4/2 <p>Writing assignment #10 due 4/2</p> <p>Quiz 3 due Sunday, 4/2</p>
<p>Apr. 3-16</p> <p>Module 10: Life After Exoneration</p>	<p>Writing assignment #11 due 4/9</p> <p>M10 discussion question due 4/13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses due 4/16 <p>Writing assignment #12 due 4/16</p> <p>Project outline due 4/16</p>
<p>Apr. 17-23</p> <p>Module 11: Societal Consequences of Wrongful Conviction</p>	<p>M11 discussion question due 4/20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses due 4/23 <p>Writing assignment #13 due 4/23</p> <p>Quiz 4 due Sunday, 4/23</p>
<p>Project due 4/30</p>	

FINAL LETTER GRADES WILL BE ASSIGNED BASED ON THE FOLLOWING RANGES:

A = 93 +

A - = 90-92.99

B + = 87-89.99

B = 83-86.99

B - = 80-82.99

C + = 77-79.99

C = 73-76.99

C - = 70-72.99

D + = 67-69.99

D = 63-66.99

D - = 60-62.99

E = 59.99 and below

Note: I do not round up or add points at the end of the semester, so please do not ask. However, you will be given extra credit opportunities this semester. I encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities! They are provided so that if your grade is considered 'borderline' or within a few points of the next highest grade, you will have the opportunity to boost your grade. Extra credit opportunities are offered fairly to everyone, unlike arbitrarily asking the instructor to award extra points on an individual basis at the end of the semester. You can find more information on UF grading policies [here](#).

MAKE-UP AND LATE WORK

All assignments will be accepted up to 24 hours after the due date without penalty. Assignments submitted more than 24 hours after the due date will have the grade lowered as a penalty. For each day the assignment is late after the first 24 hours, your grade will be reduced by 10%.

All make-up work is the student's responsibility. If you know you may miss a class or assignment, inform me as soon as possible. I understand that sometimes one's personal life interferes with the ability to take a quiz, turn in a paper, attend class, etc. If you have a legitimate reason for missing a class or assignment (e.g., documented illness), and **can provide documentation**, you will be allowed to make up what you missed without a grade deduction IF you contact me immediately before/after the missed assignment. Religious holidays are excused without documentation but must be discussed with the instructor in advance. You are responsible for getting any notes and/or assignments from your fellow classmates should you need to miss class. As students, you must take responsibility for learning the material covered in class.

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from the Help Desk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You **MUST e-mail me within 24 hours** of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

DISPUTING GRADES

All grades are posted on Canvas throughout the semester. It is your responsibility to review your grades regularly. Should you have a grading question, please reach out to me. If you have questions about your grade on a quiz, paper, etc. you have **72 hours** after the grade is posted on Canvas in which to inquire about your grade (that is, to ask for point changes based on justifiable criteria). After that time period, the grade stands. However, you can ask questions about class material at any point to increase your understanding of what you did wrong. If you want to question your grades before the final grades are submitted, you need to do so no later than Friday, May 5. Should you raise serious questions about how something was graded, I reserve the right to re-grade your entire assignment (meaning your grade may go up or down).

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND PREFERRED NAME

It is important to the learning environment that you feel welcome and safe in this class; and that you are comfortable participating in class discussions and communicating with me on any issues related to the class. If your preferred name is not the name listed on the official UF roll, please let me know as soon as possible by e-mail or otherwise. I would like to acknowledge your preferred name, and pronouns that reflect your identity. Please let me know how you would like to be addressed in class, if your name and pronouns are not reflected by your UF-rostered name.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Part of learning about wrongful convictions involves examining some sensitive topics. If this becomes emotionally difficult at times, I encourage you to seek out campus resources for support. UF provides several different types of resources.

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).

University Police Department: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.

On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

COURSE EVALUATION

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Conduct Code](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

DISCLAIMER

The instructor reserves the right to alter the course syllabus as circumstances dictate. You are responsible for learning all the material contained in the syllabus as well as any modifications that are made to the syllabus during class time. Any changes will either be announced in class or posted on Canvas. Students not attending class are responsible for obtaining this information.