

# WRONGFUL CONVICTIONS



Cassidy Haigh, M.A.



Little Hall 0127



T 1:55-2:45 | TH 1:55-3:50

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

As of August 2022, the [National Registry of Exonerations](#) has documented over 3,200 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 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.

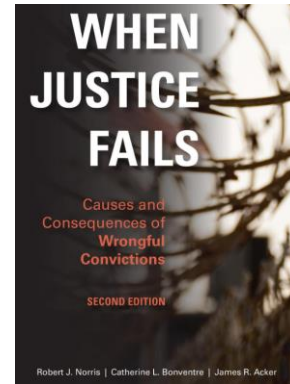
# MATERIALS

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



This textbook is **optional**:

Norris, R. J., Bonventre, C. L., & Acker, J. R. (2021). *When justice fails: Causes and consequences of wrongful convictions* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Carolina Academic Press.



## CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR

**Email:** [cassidyhaigh@ufl.edu](mailto:cassidyhaigh@ufl.edu)

During the work week (M-F), you can expect a response from me within 48 hours, unless previously conveyed. After 4 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?** Tuesday 3-4; Thursday 11-12; and by appointment

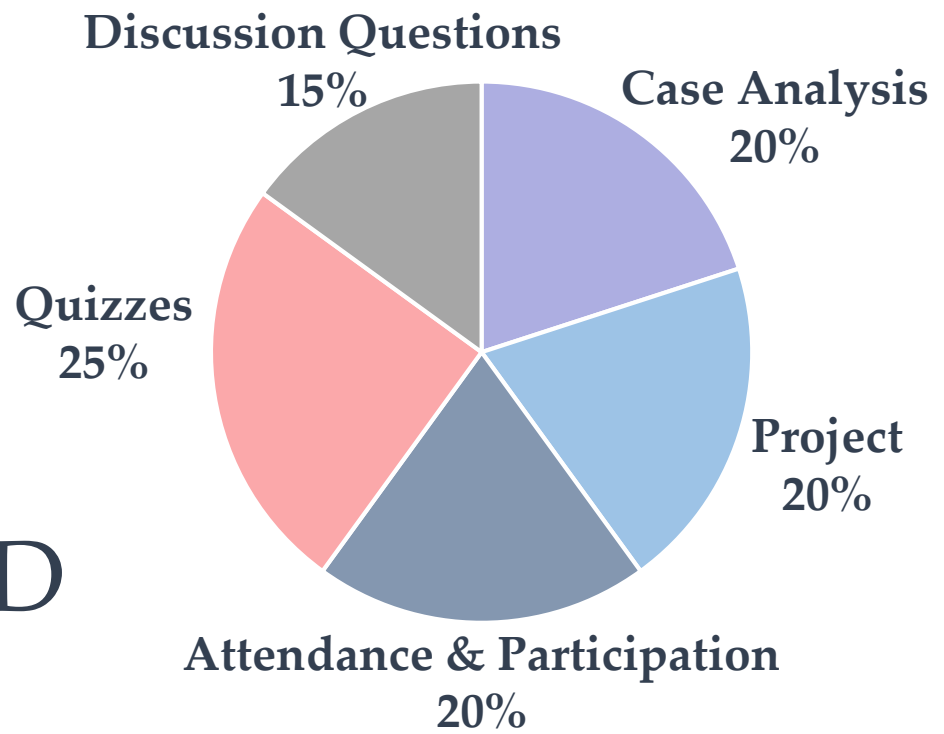
**Where?** Turlington Hall 3347

**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!](#)

# HOW SUCCESS IS MEASURED



Assessment	Description	% of Final Grade
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**Attendance & Participation**

Regular attendance and participation is required. Your participation will be determined by attendance taken throughout the semester in the form of in-class activities. Lack of attendance and participation in assignments cannot be made up at a later date unless you have a documentable reason for missing class. Vacations, work, and travel are not considered legitimate reasons for missing class or assignments. However, you get three “freebies” that will be dropped at the end of the semester.

I will bring my very best effort to every class, and I expect you to do the same. Arrive for class on time, be prepared and ready to begin, and remain for the duration. If you attend the first half of class and we do an attendance assignment in the second half of class, you will be marked absent, and this will not be excused. Incomplete attendance assignments will not be counted (i.e., do not leave half way through the class and expect to get attendance/participation points).

20%

**Discussion Questions**

To help prepare for discussion, you must submit one discussion question for 8 of the 11 modules. Good discussion questions should be open-ended. Discussion questions can make connections between multiple readings (in the same week or over several weeks), make connections to other courses, draw out appropriate and scientific critiques of the material, or consider the implications of legal decisions and research findings.

15%

**Assessment****Description****% of Final  
Grade****Quizzes**

There will be four non-cumulative, closed-note quizzes. The quizzes consist of 25 multiple choice and true/false questions. You will have 28 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.**

Because the quiz is timed, it is necessary for you to know all the material prior to starting the quiz (i.e., there will not be enough time to look up each answer in your notes, so you should prepare as if your notes were not available to you).

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.

25%

**Case  
Analysis**

A major area of inquiry for scholars in criminology, psychology, and law has been to investigate why wrongful conviction occurs and how we can create science-based policy and procedures for preventing it from occurring in future cases. To that end, one practical application of research is to provide analysis of what occurred in individual cases, educating juries, attorneys, and judges about the factors that could have contributed to the wrongful conviction in the first place.

For this assignment, you will pick a case of exoneration in which there were at least two causes of the wrongful conviction. You will need to: 1) provide a summary of the case, 2) use the social scientific literature to explain the most likely reasons the wrongful conviction occurred in the first place, and 3) make any policy changing recommendations that you believe would prevent similar wrongful convictions from occurring in the future.

As part of the case analysis grade, you will need to submit an outline. The outline is due **October 16**. The full case analysis is due **October 30**. The rubric and additional details are available on Canvas.

20%

**Course  
Project**

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 **November 20**. The project is due **December 11**. For both options, rubrics and additional details are available on Canvas.

20%

# COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Class Description	Complete Before Class
Extra credit: Email two facts about yourself to Cassidy by Wednesday 8/24		
Thurs., 8/25	Syllabus	Syllabus
Tues., 8/30	Wrongful Conviction: Introduction & Overview	<a href="#">Race and Wrongful Conviction Infographic Hollway (2016)</a> (p. 1-4, 17-20)
Thurs., 9/1	Wrongful Conviction: Introduction & Overview	<b>Submit module 1 discussion question by 9 AM</b> Norris, Bonventre, & Acker (2021) (p. 267-278)
Tues., 9/6	Eyewitness Identification	
Thurs., 9/8	Eyewitness Identification <b>Guest speaker: Jackie Katzman</b>	<a href="#">Wells et al. (2020)</a>
Tues., 9/13	Eyewitness Identification	<b>Submit module 2 discussion question by 9 AM</b>
Thurs., 9/15	Interrogations & Confessions	<a href="#">Scherr, Redlich, &amp; Kassin (2020)</a>
Tues., 9/20	Interrogations & Confessions	
Thurs., 9/22	Interrogations & Confessions	<b>Submit module 3 discussion question by 9 AM</b>
Quiz 1 due Sunday, 9/25		
Tues., 9/27	Guilty Pleas & Plea Bargaining	<a href="#">Redlich, Wilford, &amp; Bushway (2017)</a> <a href="#">Natapoff (2017)</a>
Thurs., 9/29	Guilty Pleas & Plea Bargaining	<b>Submit module 4 discussion question by 9 AM</b>
Tues., 10/4	Forensic Science Evidence	<a href="#">Bonventre (2020)</a> <a href="#">False Positive: When Forensic Science Fails</a>
Thurs., 10/6	Forensic Science Evidence	<b>Submit module 5 discussion question by 9 AM</b> <a href="#">Dror &amp; Kukucka (2021)</a>
Tues., 10/11	Informants & snitches	
Thurs., 10/13	Informants & snitches	<b>Submit module 6 discussion question by 9 AM</b>
Quiz 2 due Sunday, 10/16		
Case analysis outline due Sunday, 10/16		
Tues., 10/18	Lawyers (prosecutors)	
Thurs., 10/20	Lawyers (prosecutors)	
Tues., 10/25	Lawyers (defense attorneys)	<b>Submit module 7 discussion question by 9 AM</b> <a href="#">Webster (2022)</a>
Thurs., 10/27	Alibis <b>Guest speaker: Emma Rempel</b>	<b>Submit module 8 discussion question by 9 AM</b>
Case analysis due Sunday, 10/30		
Tues., 11/1	No crime cases	

# COURSE SCHEDULE

Thurs., 11/3	No crime cases	<b>Submit module 9 discussion question by 9 AM</b>
Quiz 3 due Sunday, 11/6		
Tues., 11/8	Life after exoneration: Health	<a href="#">Kukucka, Horodyski, &amp; Dardis (2022)</a>
Thurs., 11/10	Life after exoneration: Discrimination <b>Guest speaker: Leah Hamovitch</b>	Zannella, Clow, Rempel, Hamovitch, & Hall (2020)
Tues., 11/15	Life after exoneration: Compensation	<a href="#">Madrigal &amp; Norris (2022)</a> Kukucka & Evelo (2018)
Thurs., 11/17	No Class – American Society of Criminology Conference	
Project outline due Sunday, 11/20		
Tues., 11/22	Life after exoneration	<b>Submit module 10 discussion question due 9 AM</b>
Thurs., 11/24	No Class – Thanksgiving	
Tues., 11/29	Societal consequences of wrongful conviction	<a href="#">Norris et al. (2019)</a>
Thurs., 12/1	Societal consequences of wrongful conviction	<b>Submit module 11 discussion question by 9 AM</b> <a href="#">Cole (2012)</a>
Quiz 4 due Sunday, 12/4		
Tues., 12/6	TBA	
Project due Sunday, 12/11		



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

A = 93 +	C = 73-76.99
A - = 90-92.99	C - = 70-72.99
B + = 87-89.99	D + = 67-69.99
B = 83-86.99	D = 63-66.99
B - = 80-82.99	D - = 60-62.99
C + = 77-79.99	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 make-up work is the student's responsibility. If you know you may miss a class, 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.

All assignments except for discussion questions will be accepted up to 48 hours after the due date without penalty. Assignments submitted more than 48 hours after the due date will have the grade lowered as a penalty. For each day the paper is late after the first 48 hours, your grade will be reduced by 10%. Discussion questions must be submitted by the due date – the 48 hour grace period does not apply – and late posts will not be accepted.

**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, December 16. 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](mailto: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](mailto: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.