

BA (Hons with Research) in Psychology (8th Semester)

COURSE NAME: FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY

COURSE NO. PSYR2822M

MAXIMUM MARKS: 100

CONTACT HOURS: 60

CONTACT HOURS PER CREDIT: 15

CREDITS: 04

THEORY: 04

PRACTICUM: Nil

Course Objectives

- To introduce students to the basic concepts, roles, and applications of forensic psychology in the legal system.
- To help students understand how psychological knowledge is used in criminal investigations, courts, and correctional settings.
- To develop awareness of ethical issues and professional responsibilities in forensic psychology practice.

Course Outcomes

- Students will be able to explain the role of psychology in legal and criminal justice settings.
- Students will be able to describe methods used in offender assessment, eyewitness evaluation, and risk assessment.
- Students will be able to recognize ethical challenges and apply basic principles in forensic and correctional work.

Unit I: Foundations of Forensic Psychology and Legal Interface

- a) History, scope, and development of forensic psychology
- b) Role of forensic psychologists in psycho-legal cases and court processes
- c) Professional training, certification, and credentialing in forensic psychology
- d) Theories of criminal behaviour and admissibility of expert testimony

Unit II: Offender Assessment and Criminal Responsibility

- a) Offender profiling: concepts, methods, and approaches
- b) Psychological evaluation of sexual offenders
- c) Battered Woman Syndrome and its relevance in legal contexts
- d) Competence to confess, interrogation psychology, and criminal responsibility

Unit III: Psychology of Witnesses, Victims, and Family Law

- a) Eyewitness identification: memory, accuracy, and influencing factors
- b) Psychology of jury selection and juror decision-making
- c) Child custody and access evaluations in family courts
- d) Psychological assessment in child sexual abuse cases

Unit IV: Forensic Assessment, Intervention, and Ethics

- a) Risk assessment for violence and recidivism
- b) Involuntary commitment and civil forensic evaluations
- c) Psychological interventions in correctional and forensic settings
- d) Ethical issues and mitigation roles of forensic psychologists

Readings

1. Bartol, C. R., & Bartol, A. M. (2021). Introduction to Forensic Psychology: Research and Application (6th ed.). Sage Publications.
2. Howitt, D. (2018). Introduction to Forensic and Criminal Psychology (6th ed.). Pearson.
3. Towl, G. J., & Crighton, D. A. (Eds.). (2021). Forensic Psychology (3rd ed.). Wiley.
4. Weiner, I. B., & Otto, R. K. (Eds.). (2013). The Handbook of Forensic Psychology (4th ed.). Wiley.
5. Huss, M. T. (2014). Forensic Psychology: Research, Clinical Practice, and Applications (3rd ed.). Wiley.
6. Wrightsman, L. S., & Fulero, S. M. (2005). Forensic Psychology (2nd ed.). Wadsworth.
7. Pozzulo, J., Bennell, C., & Forth, A. (2021). Forensic Psychology (6th ed.). Pearson.