



## Faculty of Medicine

# SOMS1501

# INSIDE THE CRIMINAL MIND

Summer 2020

COURSE OUTLINE

CRICOS Provider Code 00098G

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Please read this outline in conjunction with the following pages on the

[School of Medical Sciences website:](#)

- [Advice for Students](#)
- [Learning Resources](#)

(or see "STUDENTS" tab at [medicalsciences.med.unsw.edu.au](http://medicalsciences.med.unsw.edu.au).)

## Course Introduction

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This course aims to provide students from many disciplines an understanding of the workings of the criminal mind. From birth, genetics and early adolescence this course takes students through the life cycle of the criminal mind. Students will gain insights into the motivations of different offender groups including serial killers, lust murderers, paedophiles, women killers, and stalkers. We will examine where the criminal justice system and forensic psychiatry interface, how they coexist and how offenders are viewed in the media. The investigation process including forensic pathology (autopsies) will be covered, culminating in the arrest of the offender, their incarceration period and release.

## Course Details

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This course is offered as a 1 week intensive during Summer 2020 and has six units of credit (UOC).

The contact hours for this course are from Monday to Friday (13<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> January 2020) between 9am and 4.30pm.

There are no pre-requisites, and the course can be taken in any year of a degree.

This course is delivered in a **face-to-face** format.

## Course Staff

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**Course Convenor:** Professor Tony Butler

Room 619  
The Kirby Institute, Justice Health Research Program  
Level 6, Wallace Wurth Building  
E: [tbutler@kirby.unsw.edu.au](mailto:tbutler@kirby.unsw.edu.au)

**Co-convenor:** Mr Lee Knight  
The Kirby Institute, Justice Health Research Program  
Level 6, Wallace Wurth Building  
E: [lknight@kirby.unsw.edu.au](mailto:lknight@kirby.unsw.edu.au)

**Tutors:** To be advised

All students in the course are advised that email is the official means by which the Course Convenor and administrative staff will communicate with them. All email messages will be sent to the student's official UNSW email address (e.g., [z1234567@student.unsw.edu.au](mailto:z1234567@student.unsw.edu.au)). If a student does not wish to use the University email system, they MUST arrange for their official mail to be forwarded to their chosen address. The University recommends that students check their mail at least every other day.

## **Attendance Requirements**

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Students are expected to attend all of the lectures.

For further information on UNSW attendance policies and procedures concerning students, please see SOMS guidelines indicated under the table of contents.

## **Course Aims**

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This intensive course aims to give students:

1. Unique insights into the psychopathology of high profile offender groups;
2. A lifecycle approach is taken covering the antecedents of offending, genetic influences, the detection, prosecution, treatment, and punishment;
3. An introduction to the principles of forensic psychiatry and psychology; and
4. An introduction to the principals of law, forensic pathology, the coronial inquest process and the criminal justice system;

Real life examples will be used to illustrate the above.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

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At the completion of this course a successful student will be able to:

1. Describe the major theories, motivations and causes underlying serious criminal offending;
2. Identify the major issues involved in the investigation, prosecution and punishment of serious offenders;
3. Use critical thinking to distinguish between the common myths versus reality of various high profile offender groups;
4. Identify key mental health issues prevalent in this group and their impact on offending, culpability and the risk of reoffending;
5. Identify key issues, professional groups and social structures relating to the treatment, rehabilitation and punishment of serious offenders.

## **Graduate Attributes**

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This course will contribute to the following UNSW graduate attributes:

1. General interest in crime, offending and the investigation of high profile offender populations;
2. Willingness to contribute to discussions on this topic;
3. Willingness to consider new ideas and theories that may be challenging and cause discomfort;
4. Able to consider different viewpoints from differing perspectives.

See also: [medsciences.med.unsw.edu.au/students/undergraduate/advice-students#graduate](https://medsciences.med.unsw.edu.au/students/undergraduate/advice-students#graduate)

## Teaching Strategies

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The course employs a variety of teaching modes to facilitate student learning. These include:

Formal lectures will be delivered face-to-face at the University of New South Wales' Campus, over five days. Lectures will be recorded and broadcast to students unable to attend campus over the teaching period. Those students who wish to learn at their own pace will have access to recorded material (released after the intensive week) which they can watch via Moodle.

Lectures will comprise two-hour slots. The first hour will be given over to a lecture from an expert in a particular field being taught. The second hour will involve a short video, real-life case description, or other relevant activity to further analyse and discuss the material with the expert or other group activity.

Each day will end with the opportunity to prepare for the final online class debate. Students attending in person will have the opportunity to discuss their position on the proposed debate question and ask questions with the course convenors and experts. Students participating off campus will be able to liaise with their group via Moodle.

**Learning is supported via Moodle. Announcements, timetables, lecture slides and other resources will be made available on Moodle during the course.**

## Assessment

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For UNSW assessment information and policy, see [student.unsw.edu.au/assessment](http://student.unsw.edu.au/assessment)

Assessment for SOMS1501 includes both individual and group work, as follows:

<b>Personal Reflection</b>	<b>1000 words</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Post course group assignment</b>	<b>5000 words spread between a team of 5 students*</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Class debate</b>	<b>Debate presentation by team</b>	<b>20%</b>

\* Group size may vary depending on class numbers.

### **Personal reflection (30%)**

Students will write a critical reflection on one aspect of the course they found particularly challenging or interesting. This could relate to a particular crime or offender discussed in the course or contrast the portrayal of a crime or offender as reported in the media with factual information presented by the experts during the course. The critical reflection will be 1000 words in length and weighted at 30% for successful completion of the course.

### **Group assignment (50%)**

The scenario is that a reputable TV station is planning to commission a TV series about a notorious criminal and the producer requires a detailed briefing before making a final decision to proceed to production. Each episode will feature a high profile criminal and will cover:

1. Background to the individual offender (journalist);
2. Police investigation (detective);
3. Psychiatric/psychological aspects of the offender ( profiler);
4. Legal process (legal defence and/or prosecution); and
5. Treatment options (forensic psychiatrist).

The group's task is to produce a briefing document covering the above scenario for the producer including the 5 perspectives specified above (reporter, detective, profiler, legal process, treatment), plus an executive summary providing a succinct overview is required. The cases chosen reflect the offender groups/crimes covered in the lectures.

1. Ivan Milat
2. Martin Bryant
3. Fred West
4. Richard Kuklinski
5. Dennis Ferguson

#### **Guide to group assignment:**

1. Academic rigour needs to be included in the document e.g.:
  - Forensic psychiatrist perspective will need to reference psychiatric theories, evidence-based treatment options, etc.
  - Legal perspective could reference specific laws or legal principles.
2. Could the offences have been prevented and at what point (e.g. treatments and interventions, or missed investigation opportunities)?
3. Ethical/moral aspects - responsibility (who is to blame – individual, society, mother, father?)
4. Media treatment / labelling of the offender
5. Executive summary ½ page (1.5 spacing) and agreed on by the group.

6. It is acceptable to take a negative view of the case and that it does not warrant further action.
7. Are you able to classify the offender? Does the offender fit a certain “profile” or type of offender (i.e. serial killer, sexual sadist, etc.)?

Student 1.	(The journalist)	1000 words
Student 2.	(The detective)	1000 words
Student 3.	(The profiler)	1000 words
Student 4.	(The lawyer)	1000 words
Student 5.	(The forensic psychiatrist)	1000 words

500 words - Group executive summary

The group report of approximately 5000 words (1000 words per student – 40 marks out of a possible 50 total marks for this component) plus a 500-word summary (the remaining 10 marks total for this component).

The scenario is that a TV documentary channel wishes to commission a series highlighting high profile offenders and you (the group) need to brief the producer regarding the particular offender. The briefing needs to cover the various aspects of the offender as outlined below.

Students need to nominate for one aspect of the assignment and write 1000 words. Groups must ensure that they cover all three aspects of the assignment - (1) the investigation, (2) adjudication, and (3) rehabilitation.

For example student 1 writes as the police officer investigating the case (investigation), student 2 writes as the profiler (investigation), student 3 writes as a lawyer defending or prosecuting the case (adjudication), student 4 writes as the forensic psychiatrist (rehabilitation), and student 5 the reporter who has to contextualise the background. Groups are also required to write a 500-word executive summary of the assignment. An overall mark will be allocated for the assignment and each student will receive this grade individually.

Students will be marked **individually** for their 1000-word contribution (40/50), however the executive summary will be given a **group** mark (10/50).

### ***Class debate (20%)***

Participants will be required to take part in an online class debate on one of three topics relevant to this area (these will be provided at the start of the course).

Each team will be given approximately 10 minutes to present their arguments and a 2-minute rebuttal by the team captain at the end. Teams can either nominate two spokespersons who will present the arguments on behalf of the group, for or against the topics outlined above, or the group can elect to each speak for 2 minutes. Students will be assessed by a group mark allocated by the moderators of the debates.



## Timetable

Time	Topic	Expert
<b>Day 1 - Monday 13<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>		
09.00–10.00	Introduction to course	Tony Butler & Lee Knight
10.00 – 10.15	BREAK	
10.15 - 11.00	Interactive Session	
11.00- 11.15	BREAK	
11.15 – 12.15	Natural Born Killers – is there a criminal gene?	Rodney Scott
12.15 – 1.15	Interactive Session - genetics	
1.15 – 2:00	LUNCH	
2.00 – 3.00	The making of a criminal – younger offenders	John Kasinathan
3.00- 3.15	BREAK	
3.15 – 4:00	Interactive Session – younger offenders	
4.00-4.30	Debate preparation	
<b>Day 2 - Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>		
09.00 – 10.00	Violent Offenders	Kerri Eagle
10.00 – 10.15	BREAK	
10.15 – 11.00	Interactive Session – violent offenders	
11.00 – 11.15	BREAK	
11.15 – 12.15	Serial Killers & psychopaths	Steve Allnut
12.15 – 1.15	Interactive Session – serial killers	
1.15 – 2.00	LUNCH	
2.00 – 3.00	Fatal Attraction – Stalkers and obsession	Sunny Wade
3.00 – 3.15	BREAK	
3.15 – 4.00	Interactive Session - stalkers	
4.00 – 4.30	Debate preparation	
<b>Day 3 - Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>		
09.00 – 10.00	Smooth Criminal – the escapee	John Killick
10.00 – 10.15	BREAK	
10.15 – 11.00	Interactive Session – Prison Break	
11.00 – 11.15	BREAK	
11.15 – 12.15	Paedophiles and Child Molesters	David Greenberg
12.15 – 1.15	LUNCH	
1.15 – 2:00	Interactive Session – paedophiles	
2.00 – 3.00	Sexual Sadists, and lust murders	Lee Knight
3.00 – 3:15	BREAK	
3.15 – 4.00	Interactive Session – sexual sadists	
4.00 – 4.30	Debate preparation	

Day 4 - Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Topic	Expert
09.00 – 10.00	The Coroner	Hugh Dillon
10.00 - 10.15	BREAK	
10.15 – 11.00	Interactive Session – the Coroner	
11.00 – 11.15	BREAK	
11.15 – 12.15	Wrinkly Wrongdoers	Sharon Reutens
12.15 – 1.15	LUNCH	
1.15 – 2.00	Interactive Session – older offender	
2.00 – 2.30	Bone Collector - The post-mortem	Istvan Szentmariay
2.30 - 3.15	Interactive Session – post-mortem	
3.15 – 3.30	BREAK	
3.30 – 5.30	Blue Bloods – the detectives	Steven Davies & Luke Walshe
6.00 – 7:30	Drinks and conversation – the Kirby Institute	
Day 5 - Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> Jan		
09.00 – 10.00	Women Who Kill	Danny Riordan
10.00 – 10.15	BREAK	
10.15 – 11.00	Interactive Session – women who kill	
11.00 – 11.15	BREAK	
11.15 – 12.15	Defending and Prosecuting a murderer	TBA
12.15 – 1.15	Interactive Session - prosecuting	
1.15 – 2.00	LUNCH	
2.00 – 3.00	Green is the New Orange – what happens in prison & who to release?	Luke Grant
3.00 – 3:15	BREAK	
3.15 – 4.00	Interactive Session – the prison & parole	
4.00 – 4.30	Debate Preparation	

### SOMS1501 – Module content and learning objective

Day	Module	Key lecture concepts / content	Learning objectives
Day 1	Introduction to course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to course, assessment.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the major theories, motivations and causes underlying serious criminal offending;</li> <li>2. Identify the major issues involved in the investigation, prosecution and punishment of serious offenders;</li> <li>3. Use critical thinking to distinguish between the common myths versus reality of various high profile offender groups;</li> <li>4. Identify key mental health issues prevalent in this group and their impact on offending, culpability and the risk of reoffending;</li> <li>5. Identify key issues, professional groups and social structures relating to the treatment, rehabilitation and punishment of serious offenders.</li> <li>6. Identify common TV/media myths versus reality.</li> </ol>
Day 1	Natural Born Killers – is there a criminal gene?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gene-environment interaction</li> <li>• Legal cases involving genetics</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe whether there is a genetic basis for offending</li> <li>2. Identify common TV/media myths versus reality.</li> </ol>
Day 1	The making of a criminal – younger offenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are young offenders?</li> <li>• Youth offender trajectories.</li> <li>• How do we manage young offenders in custody?</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand why some young people offend</li> <li>2. Describe the differences between juvenile and adult offenders</li> <li>3. Understand why some young offenders progress to adult offending</li> <li>4. Identify common TV/media myths versus reality.</li> </ol>
Day 2	Violent Offenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are violent offenders?</li> <li>• What types of crimes do they commit?</li> <li>• Who are the victims?</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the differences between instrumental and reactive violence</li> <li>2. Describe the prevalence of mental illness in violent offenders</li> <li>3. Understanding risk assessment</li> <li>4. Describe the characteristics of violent offenders</li> <li>5. Identify common TV/media myths versus reality.</li> </ol>
Day 2	Serial Killers and psychopaths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is a serial killer?</li> <li>• What is a psychopath?</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe common characteristics of serial killers &amp; psychopaths.</li> <li>2. Understand why serial killers continue to kill.</li> <li>3. Describe crime scenes consistent with this type of offender.</li> <li>4. Identify common TV/media myths versus reality.</li> </ol>
Day 2	Fatal Attraction – Stalkers and obsession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are stalkers?</li> <li>• What is 'obsession' versus natural attraction?</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the different typologies of stalking.</li> <li>2. Understand treatment options for stalkers.</li> <li>3. Describe why people stalk and common risk factors for stalking behaviour.</li> <li>4. Identify common TV/media myths versus reality in relation to stalking.</li> </ol>
Day 3	Smooth Criminal – the escapee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who escapes from prison?</li> <li>• Famous prison escapes</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand the motivations of those who escape from prison.</li> <li>2. Identify common TV/media myths versus reality.</li> </ol>
Day 3	Paedophiles and Child Molesters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are common paraphilias?</li> <li>• What is paedophilia?</li> <li>• Who are child molesters?</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand the different paraphilias.</li> <li>2. Describe the difference between paedophiles and child molesters.</li> <li>3. Understand what drives a person to offend sexually against children.</li> </ol>

			4. Identify common TV/media myths versus reality.
Day 3	Sexual Sadists and Lust murders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are sexual sadists?</li> <li>• Who makes a lust murderer?</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the features of a sexual sadist.</li> <li>2. Understand what drives a sexual sadist to offend.</li> <li>3. Understand why females may assist a sexual sadist.</li> <li>4. Identify common TV/media myths versus reality.</li> </ol>
Day 4	The Coroner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does a coroner do?</li> <li>• Suspicious deaths and actual murders</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the role and powers of the coroner.</li> <li>2. Understand which deaths require a coronial inquest.</li> <li>3. Describe how a coroner determines the cause of death.</li> <li>4. Identify common TV/media myths versus reality.</li> </ol>
Day 4	Wrinkly Wrongdoers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role of cognitive impairment (e.g. dementia) in offending</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe conditions of old age that may have a role to play in offending behaviours.</li> <li>2. Understand how population ageing has impacted on the offender population.</li> </ol>
Day 4	The post-mortem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is a post-mortem?</li> <li>• When are post-mortems required?</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand the importance of forensic medicine in determining cause of death.</li> <li>2. Describe how forensic medicine can assist in conviction.</li> <li>3. Understand the role of the forensic pathologist in giving expert evidence in the court room.</li> <li>4. Identify common TV/media myths versus reality.</li> </ol>
Day 4	Blue Bloods – the detective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How a police murder investigation is undertaken</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand the use of evidence in the detection of a murder investigation.</li> <li>2. Understand the various stages in an investigation.</li> </ol>
Day 5	Women Who Kill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are women killers?</li> <li>• Couples who kill</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the key differences between male and female killers.</li> <li>2. Understand what drives women to kill.</li> <li>3. Describe the psychopathology of women killers.</li> <li>4. Identify common TV/media myths versus reality.</li> </ol>
Day 5	Defending and Prosecuting a murderer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to defend a murderer in court?</li> <li>• Defence and prosecution strategies?</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe key differences in the roles of defence and prosecution lawyers.</li> <li>2. Understanding 'reasonable doubt' in murder cases.</li> <li>3. Identify common TV/media myths versus reality.</li> </ol>
Day 5	Green is the New Orange – what happens in prison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing high risk offenders in prisons</li> <li>• How do other prisoners treat high profile prisoners?</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the main challenges of incarcerating high profile/celebrity offenders.</li> <li>2. Describe the prison routine.</li> <li>3. Identify common TV/media myths versus reality.</li> </ol>

# INSIDE THE CRIMINAL MIND

This exciting elective provides insights into the minds of high profile offender groups such as serial killers, psychopaths, sexual predators, child molesters, and women killers. What makes these individuals tick, how are they caught, and can they be treated and rehabilitated?

Taught by some of Australia's leading experts in psychiatry, law and corrections the course offers insights into the detection, prosecution, treatment, and detention of these offender groups.

The course is worth 6 UOC and is open to all.

Dates: 13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> January 2020



**UNSW**  
AUSTRALIA

**COURSE CODE:**  
**SOMS1501**

## WHAT OUR STUDENTS SAY

“ I entered this course hoping to gain a number of different perspectives relating to crime and the criminal justice system and the course has certainly delivered in this respect. ”

“ The format of this course was really great – fantastic speakers and the rare opportunity to not only listen to but also ask questions of top experts in the field who were all very willing to be interactive with students. ”

“ The content was so current and practical. The classroom environment was cohesive and enthusiastic to learn and the course conveners were passionate about the subject! This has been the best class I have ever taken in university and I would highly recommend it!! ”

For more info email [somsenquiries@unsw.edu.au](mailto:somsenquiries@unsw.edu.au) OR call 02 9385 2464