

**PERU STATE COLLEGE
HONORS SEMINAR: HP 300-00A ANALYSIS OF EVIL I
SYLLABUS – FALL SEMESTER 2009**

- Instructor:** James R. Nevitt, Ph.D.
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- Office Hours:** 8:30-9:30 AM and 3:15-4:00 PM Monday through Thursday
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- Course Meets:** Tuesday and Thursday 12:30- 1:45 PM
Room 326, T.J. Majors Building
- Required Text
And Other Teaching
Resources** Nevitt, James *Evolving a Theory of Evil in the 21st Century*.
(Revised Manuscript for Fall 2009) - Required
Manuscript available for free, electronically on Blackboard
- Hickey, E. W. (2006). *Serial Murderers and their Victims* (4th ed.)
Belmont, CA: Wadsworth**
- PowerPoint Slides** -Instructor created PowerPoint presentations
Available free to students, electronically on Blackboard
- Graphic Novel – *Fallen Hollow***
Instructor created graphic novel will be available free to students
on Blackboard.
- Secondary Resource Text (Recommended but not required)**
**Newton, Michael (2000) *The Encyclopedia of Serial Killers*,
Checkmark Books**
- Secondary Resource - Cd Rom (not required)**
Mind of a Serial Killer Wadsworth-Thomson Publishing
- Prerequisites:** **HP 101-00A and/or permission of the Dean of the School of
Professional Studies**

Course Description:

This course provides an overview and understanding of evil. This course includes an exploration of the definition and descriptions of evil as portrayed by religion, pop culture, selected American literature (short story and novel) and cultural anthropology. Additional focus will be given to various psychological, philosophical, sociological and behavioral theories of evil, insights into the lives of serial murderers, and law enforcement response to the acts of such people. Additional focus will be given to the topic of both victim and offender “profiling”.

Please note: Some of the course content features real cases and fictional events that are graphically violent. These may prove to be unsettling to some students. Those with concerns should discuss them with the instructor BEFORE the add/drop period so that they may drop the course in a timely manner. Student should also note that there are other courses to take for honors credit and over time the faculty and administration of Peru State College expects to offer something for most everyone's interests.

Course Objectives:

1. To develop a broad and multi-disciplinary understanding of the definition and historical evolution of evil with focus upon psychopathology and the topic of homicide.
2. To develop an understanding of various culture’s religious conceptions of evil with emphasis on historical origins how similar or different they are from those the student has been exposed to in their lifetime.
3. To develop an understanding of the connections between the psychological, sociological and sociocultural relationships involved in the act of serial murder.
4. To gain a greater understanding of the psychological, sociological, biological and anthropological theories of evil in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.
5. To gain a greater understanding of various individuals deem by society as evil within the last two centuries, including a significant review of serial murderers.
6. To understand the processes, procedures and aspects of law enforcement investigations associated with serial murder.
7. To improve research and communication skills.

Explanation of Instruction and Course Schedule:

Class lectures, discussion groups, graphic novel, internet research, DVD materials, applied exercises in critical thinking, and other educational materials as deemed necessary will be utilized in this course. The instructor reserves the right to make changes in the schedule to

facilitate student learning. Any changes in the schedule will be communicated to students in advance.

We will, at times, have class discussions and possible class activities, but much of the course content will be conveyed in critical thinking exercises attached to lectures. Note that lectures will draw on assigned readings, but they are designed to complement and expand upon them, not to repeat them. If I was to simply summarize the book for you in lecture format, there would be no reason to come to class, and I honestly do look forward to seeing each of you in class this semester.

Grading:

Exams:

300 Points

There will be 3 exams scheduled throughout the semester. Each exam is worth 100 points. Students are expected to be present when all assessments are given. Only by prearranged, mutual agreement between the student and instructor shall assessments be taken at a different time than scheduled. There shall be no exceptions to this policy.

Research Paper/Presentation:

150 Points

An APA formatted paper, 5-7 pages long, using 12 point font, double spacing, and including a reference section and cover sheet is required in this course. Students should contact the lead instructor with their topics prior to beginning research within the first two weeks.

Topics for a paper may include:

- 1) Societal, religious, or cultural connotations of evil.
- 2) A specific serial murderer, their methodology, and underlying psychological or behavioral traits of that person.
- 3) A Perspectives or reflection paper on infamous leaders described as evil or known for acts associated with evil.
- 4) A mutually agreed upon topic between the lead instructor and the student.

A fifteen minute student presentation is required as an additional part of this project. A schedule for a time to present student papers to the class will be presented during the third week of the course.

Abstract/Book Report

100 Points

As a scholarly venture, students shall be required to submit an abstract. The abstracts shall include an overview or synopsis and learner perspective on a current scholarly journal article or

nonfiction book related to the concept of evil, serial murder, a specific theory of evil, or a mutually agreed upon topic with the lead instructor.

Each abstract should be approximately five typewritten, double-spaced pages in length. The inclusion of an APA writing style reference section at the end of the paper is required but will not be included as satisfying the length requirement.

Scholarship, Attendance and Weekly Assignments 100 Points

Participation in critical thinking exercises, simulations, written responses to Discussion Board questions and proactive scholarship efforts.

Summary of Evaluation Elements

3 exams @ 100 points.....300 points
1 Research paper/presentation.....150 points
1 Abstract/Book Report.....100 points
Discussion Board, Homework, Participation100 points

650 Total Points

Keep track of your grades, do not email me at the end of the term when you are well aware that you did not do well on any test and still expect to pass this course. You are all adults and have ample material available to you to do extremely well in this course. Come to class, study, use the online tools available and you WILL do well!

The Grading Scale for HP 300 00A is based upon a percentage of the total number of points offered by exams, presentation, and abstract/book report. It is listed below:

90 – 100%	A
80 – 89%	B
70 – 79%	C
60 – 69%	D
Below 60%	F

Instructor may subtract student earned points for frequent unexcused absences and failure to participate during discussion or classroom activities.

Class Attendance & Participation:

It is important that students attend each session as scheduled. Class time is important. Attendance will be taken and will count as a significant part of the student's grade (see section on Final Grade). Attending a lecture or videotape presentation is defined as "being present throughout the entire period"; as such, attendance will be taken during the first ten minutes of class. Late arrivals will be counted on the attendance roster at the discretion of the instructor if the reason seems valid.

There are only two kinds of absences: excused and unexcused. An excused absence is due to five possible reasons: (1) illness of student or serious illness of a member of the student's immediate family; (2) death of a member of the student's immediate family; (3) attendance on a sponsored College trip; (4) major religious holidays; and (5) any other circumstance which the instructor finds reasonable cause for nonattendance (there aren't many these days).

Any absence that cannot be verified as excused will be considered unexcused. Make-up work will not be allowed for an unexcused absence. For example, "I overslept", "I went out of town to be with friends" or "My roommate kept me out late, so I missed class" are examples of situations that are your responsibilities, not mine.

Students may miss the equivalent of **one week of class (2 day sessions)** without an adverse effect on their grade; thereafter, the student's grade will be reduced by 5 points per absence from the total number of points offered this semester. If you are absent for an 'excused' reason, such as an athletic event or a field trip for another class, **it is your responsibility to acquire documentation, provide me with same documentation and inquire about any make up work to remediate for your absence. Absences for medical reasons will be excused if a student can provide documentation that they have seen a doctor. Regular unit exams must be taken at the scheduled time unless excused in advance by Dr. Nevitt, with the exception of a medical emergency verified by a doctor's confirmation.**

Class Conduct:

Students are expected AND required to be courteous to others in the class, including the professor. Any student engaged in a disruptive behavior will be asked to leave the class. Disruptive behaviors include (but are not limited to): arriving to class late, talking with a classmate while others are talking (including the professor), wearing headphones/listening to music, reading or working on materials other than those specifically dealing with the class. Finally, students are asked to turn off cell phones and beepers or (at least) to switch them to vibrating mode for the duration of class.

Academic Honesty:

Academic honesty and the submission of your own work is expected, required and designed to assist you in developing your ability to perform. Unless otherwise directed, students are expected to do their own work on assignments and exams. Academic dishonesty will result in actions according to the college's disciplinary policy.

Academic misconduct is a serious offense at PSC because it diminishes the quality of the scholarship and learning experience for everyone on campus. An act of academic misconduct, including cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, and classroom disruption, (e.g. cell phones) may lead to penalties such as a reduction in grade, probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Incomplete Coursework:

To designate a student's work in a course as incomplete at the end of a term, instructors record the incomplete grade (I). Students may receive this grade only when serious illness, hardship, death in the immediate family, or military service during the semester in which they are registered prevents them from completing course requirements. In addition, to receive an incomplete, a student must have completed a majority of the course's major requirements. Unless extenuating circumstances dictate otherwise, students must initiate requests for an incomplete by filling out an Incomplete Grade Completion Contract, which requires the student and faculty signature.

The Incomplete Grade Completion Contract cites the reason(s) for the incomplete and details the specific obligations the student must meet to change the incomplete to a letter grade. If students agree to complete required work prior to the normal deadline for making up an incomplete – the end of the subsequent semester – this date must appear in the contract. The division chair, the instructor, and the student receive signed copies of the Incomplete Grade Completion Contract.

Even if the student does not attend Peru State College, all incomplete coursework must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester. Unless Faculty Senate approves an extension, if the student does not fulfill contract obligations in the allotted time, the incomplete grade automatically becomes an "F". Students who have filed an application for graduation are not eligible for a grade of Incomplete.

Accommodation Statement:

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (public law 93-112) Section 504, provides that "no otherwise qualified disabled individual the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any special circumstances that would affect his/her ability to compete equally in the college environment. Learning disabilities must be appropriately documented. While students are encouraged to self-identify at the earliest possible time, students may not know or choose to self- identify, but can still receive services at any time once they self-disclose and document. Students should contact the office of Student Support Services, Vice President for Student Affairs or the Director of Admissions for further advisement. Students with special needs are encouraged to make them known to the instructor.

A Final Word:

Like a good mattress, these policies are firm, but not rock-hard. I am aware that some

individual circumstances may arise warranting a change in some of these procedures or policies, but you should not count on that being the case. If you have any questions regarding where you stand in the course, then I strongly recommend that you come and talk to me. I want to emphasize the importance of consulting with me as soon as possible should any difficulties arise in your life that might interfere with your performance in the course. Waiting until the last two weeks of class or when final grades are distributed to talk to me is altogether too late!

The instructor reserves the right to modify any aspect of the course syllabus or content to enhance student learning. Any modifications will be communicated to students in advance. A tentative course schedule will be printed separately.