



COURSE MANUAL

Name of the Course:
Critical Psychology and Law

Course Code: L-EA-0642

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This document is prepared by the course instructor and contains basic information relevant to the execution of the course. It is the official record for all intents and purposes as far the course, *Critical Psychology and Law*, is concerned.

This course manual can be used as a general guide to the subject. However, the instructor can modify, extend or supplement the course (without tampering with its basic framework and objectives) for the effective and efficient delivery of the course. The instructor will provide students with reasons for such changes.

Part I

Course Title: **Critical Psychology and Law**

Course Code: **L-EA-0642**

Course Duration: **One Semester (14 Weeks)**

No. of Credit Units: **4 Credits (4)**

Level: **UG**

Medium of Instruction: **Oxford English**

Pre-requisites (if applicable):

Equivalent Courses: N/A

Part II

1. Acknowledgement of Course Ideators: I acknowledge that this course is designed by me as course instructor.

2. Course Description

Adopting a critical approach, this course bridges the gap between psychology and law. The movement to inform law with cutting-edge psychology research becomes limited due to a lack of dialogue and commonsensical interpretations. The differences in the perspectives and methodology created further gaps. Critical psychology gives a fresh perspective on the engagement between psychology and law. It crosses the boundaries of individualism inherent in mainstream psychology and informs the law that our psychology is a matter of sociohistorical contexts and cultural adaptations. It is important to note that law is a sociotechnical system that mediates our adaptation to the social system and conventional morality. Critical psychology is also about being critically conscious of how we see the world and get swayed by our prejudices. It is necessary to make the law understood from the perspective of the subaltern. The idea is to empower the self of all the legal beings and agents and go beyond the neoliberal shaping of law and society to a more communitarian form. The carrying of the false consciousness of justice based on narrowly defined forensic methods, legal categories, and populist ideologies gives the incomplete impression of justice towards the oppressed gender minorities, the invisible working class, Dalits, and intellectually unique. Law is not limited but transformative and matters for liberation and rehabilitation. The standards of the legal domain are appreciated, and the avenues of engagement with the legal agents and people are explored through dialogues, critical thinking on the established psychological models and social activism. We will explore how, under ordinary circumstances and special circumstances, i) people become conscious of law, morality, and social conventions, ii) emphasize therapeutic psychology when it comes to behavioural and cognitive regulation, iii) understand the meaning of insanity, iv) resolve or accept the hegemonic orders shaping intentions and thoughts, and v) become active agents of social change.

3. Course Aims

- a. To make a case for the importance of critical psychology, and in what way critical psychology can make law meaningful and emancipating
- b. To understand how law can be better connected to psychological research

4. Teaching Methodology

1. Facilitating critical discussion on important experiments/case studies in psychology
2. Group discussions and seminars to promote critical engagement and collaborative learning.
3. Article Reading in the Library
4. Critical Incident Analysis with relevant technological support
5. Reflective writing assignments to deepen critical understanding of psychological aspects.

5. Intended Learning Outcomes

Course Intending Learning Outcomes	Weight	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessment Tasks/ Activities
By the end of the course, students should be able to:			
Be engaging with the critical psychology of law. It will add to their legal approach, the ability to critically analyze through the suitable methodological underpinnings.	50%	Explanation and discussion of various concepts prominent in the Critical psychology of law Logical thinking and active engagement to remove the conceptual errors dominant in the	Research Paper

Also, students shall get the real time information about how experts deal with various challenges in the critical integration of law and psychology		organizational context may be promoted	
It is important for the students to do writing exercise and express their ideas in a scientific and professional way. Students will assessed through the critical, analytical, descriptive and premise based questions to test their ability and motivation to understand the essence of this course.	20%	In- class case discussion	Presentation/Written Test
Discipline and attendance		Regularity and collegiality	

6. Grading of Student Achievement

The minimum passing marks for the end term examination is thirty (30) percent of the total marks for end term examination. For instance, if the end term examination is for 50

marks (in case of a core course), then the passing marks would be 15 (which is 30% of 50). Likewise, in the end term examination of an elective, the passing marks would be 9 where the total marks of end-term examination are 30. However, to pass the overall course, the minimum passing marks, cumulative of internal assessment and end term examination, is 40 out of 100.

The details of the grades as well as the criteria for awarding such grades are provided below:

PERCENTAGE OF MARKS	GRADE	GRADE VALUE	GRADE DESCRIPTION
80 and above	O	8	Outstanding – Exceptional knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and extraordinary critical and analytical ability
75 – 79	A+	7.5	Excellent - Sound knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and critical and analytical ability
70 – 74	A	7	Very Good - Sound knowledge of the subject matter, excellent organizational capacity, ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles, critically analyze existing materials and originality in thinking and presentation
65 – 69	A-	6	Good - Good understanding of the subject matter, ability to identify issues and provide balanced solutions to problems and good critical and analytical skills
60 – 64	B+	5	Fair – Average understanding of the subject matter, limited ability to identify issues and

PERCENTAGE OF MARKS	GRADE	GRADE VALUE	GRADE DESCRIPTION
			provide solutions to problems and reasonable critical and analytical skills
55 – 59	B	4	Acceptable - Adequate knowledge of the subject matter to go to the next level of study and reasonable critical and analytical skills.
50 – 54	B-	3	Marginal - Limited knowledge of the subject matter and irrelevant use of materials and, poor critical and analytical skills
45 – 49	P1	2	Pass 1 – Pass with basic understanding of the subject matter
40 – 44	P2	1	Pass 2 – Pass with rudimentary understanding of the subject matter
Below 40	F	0	Fail - Poor comprehension of the subject matter; poor critical and analytical skills and marginal use of the relevant materials. Will require repeating the course
Incomplete	I	0	Incomplete - “Extenuating circumstances” preventing the student from taking the end-semester, or re-sit, examination as the case may be; the Vice Dean (Examinations) at their discretion assign the “I” grade. If an "I" grade is assigned, the student would appear for the end-semester, or re-sit examination, as the case may be, as and when the subsequent opportunity is provided by the University.

7. Criteria for Student Assessments

Assessment of the participants will be based on the following criteria.

- a. Mid-Sem (70)
 - i. Group-based term paper (October 1st on UMS) (25 marks)
 - ii. Classroom writing test (25 Marks) (September 21)
 - iii. Presentations on Research Paper (October) (20 marks)
- b. End-Sem: Sit Exam (30 marks)

Part III

Course/Class Policies

Cell Phones, Laptops and Similar Gadgets: You can intelligibly use in my course in order to enhance your knowledge and induce discussion.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Learning and knowledge production of any kind is a collaborative process. Collaboration demands an ethical responsibility to acknowledge who we have learnt from, what we have learned, and how reading and learning from others have helped us shape our own ideas. Even our own ideas demand an acknowledgement of the sources and processes through which those ideas have emerged. Thus, all ideas must be supported by citations. All ideas borrowed from articles, books, journals, magazines, case laws, statutes, photographs, films, paintings, etc., in print or online, must be credited with the original source. If the source or inspiration of your idea is a friend, a casual chat, something that you overheard, or heard being discussed at a conference or in class, even they must be duly credited. If you paraphrase or directly quote from a web source in the examination, presentation or essays, the source must be acknowledged. The university has a framework to deal with cases of plagiarism. All form of plagiarism will be taken seriously by the University and prescribed sanctions will be imposed on those who commit plagiarism.

Disability Support and Accommodation Requirements

JGU endeavours to make all its courses inclusive and accessible to students with different abilities. In accordance with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016), the JGU Disability Support Committee (DSC) has identified conditions that could hinder a student's overall well-being. These include physical and mobility related difficulties, visual and hearing impairment, mental health conditions and intellectual/learning difficulties e.g., dyslexia, dyscalculia. Students with any known disability needing academic and other support are required to register with the Disability Support Committee (DSC) by following the procedure specified at <https://jgu.edu.in/disability-support-committee/>

Students who need support may register before the deadline for registration ends, as communicated by the DSC via email each semester. Those students who wish to continue receiving support from the previous semester, must re-register every semester prior to the deadline for re-registration as communicated by the DSC via email. Last minute registrations and support are discouraged and might not be possible as sufficient time is required to make the arrangements for support.

The DSC maintains strict confidentiality about the identity of the student and the nature of their disability and the same is requested from faculty members and staff as well. The DSC takes a strong stance against in-class and out-of-class references made about a student's disability without their consent and disrespectful comments referring to a student's disability. With due respect for confidentiality, faculty and students are encouraged to have honest conversations about the needs of students with disabilities and to discuss how a course may be better tailored to cater to a student with disability.

All general queries are to be addressed to disabilitysupportcommittee@jgu.edu.in

Safe Space Pledge

This course may discuss a range of issues and events that might result in distress for some students. Discussions in the course might also provoke strong emotional responses. To make sure that all students collectively benefit from the course, and do not feel disturbed due to either the content of the course or the conduct of the discussions. Therefore, it is incumbent upon all within the classroom to pledge to maintain respect towards our peers. This does not mean that you need to

feel restrained about what you feel and what you want to say. Conversely, this is about creating a safe space where everyone can speak and learn without inhibitions and fear. This responsibility lies not only with students, but also with the instructor.

P.S. The course instructor, as part of introducing the course manual, will discuss the scope of the Safe Space Pledge with the class.

Part IV

Keywords Syllabus

Critical Psychology, Decolonization, Critical Social Psychology, Indigeneity, Psychopathology, Social Cognition, Social Justice, Gender, Applications, Mental Health, Ethical Issues, Psychology of Legitimacy, The reasonable person fiction, False consciousness, Social construction of madness, Decolonizing insanity, Epistemic violence, Psychology of legitimacy, Neoliberalism and law, Law and identity, The trap of neutrality

Course Design and Overview

S. No.	Topic	Month
1.	Introducing critical psychology Central concerns and vision Methods of inquiry Ethics and practicing critical psychology	August 2026 (Weeks 1 and 2)

2.	Psychology and law: Critical overview Forensic Psychology, Legal Psychology Psychological Jurisprudence and public policy	(Weeks 3 and 4)
3.	Challenging System Legitimacy ¹ Procedural justice, substantive justice, and false consciousness Law, capitalism, and distributive justice Neoliberalism, psychology, and law The reasonable person fiction The side effect problem	September (Weeks 5 and 6)
4.	The critical perspective in psychological jurisprudence ² Anarchism Critical Legal Studies Feminist Jurisprudence Postmodernism Chaology Social Identity	(Weeks 7 and 8)
5.	Psychology as politics Decolonizing psychology: Global South and Indian Perspectives on Critical Psychology Indian systems of psychology, Source of knowledge, evidence, verification	October (Weeks 9 and 10)

¹ D. Fox and I. Prilleltensky (eds.) (1997). *Critical Psychology: An introduction*. Sage

² In Bruce A Arrigo (ed)(2004). *Psychological Jurisprudence: Critical explorations in law, crime, and society*. State University of New York Press.

See David Canter and Rita Zukauskienė (2008). *Psychology and Law: Bridging the gap*. England: ASHGATE

See Bruce Arrigo and Dennis Fox. (2009). *Psychology and the law: The crime of policy and the search for justice*. In D. Fox and I. Prilleltensky (eds.), *Critical Psychology: An introduction*. Sage

6.	<p>Psychopathology and law</p> <p>Madness: Biological or constructed³</p> <p>Insanity defense</p> <p>Myths of mental illness and the future of therapeutic psychology⁴in law</p> <p>Decolonizing insanity in law: Cultural perspective</p>	(Weeks 11 and 12)
7.	<p>Reflection for Critical Psychology and social justice⁵</p> <p>Epistemic Violence and Epistemic Justice</p> <p>Inequality and oppression: The Role of Ideology</p> <p>Intention and Consequence: The Trap of Neutrality</p> <p>Inequality and oppression: The Role of Ideology</p> <p>The Scope of Social Change and Law through social-political Action</p>	November (Weeks 13 and 14)
8	Revision	(Week 15)

³ In Ian Hacking (1999). The social construction of what? Harvard University Press

⁴ Nikolas Rose. (2018). Are mental disorders “Brain Disorder? In Our Psychiatric Future. Polity Press

⁵ Dennis Fox, Isaac Prilleltensky, and Stephanie Austin. (2009). Critical Psychology for Social Justice: Concerns and Dilemmas. In D. Fox and I. Prilleltensky (eds.), Critical Psychology: An introduction. Sage

Part V Relevant Readings / Essential Readings/Possible Readings

1. Ambedkar, B. R: Annihilation of Caste.
2. Augoustinos, M., Walker, I., & Dinaghue. (2014). *Social cognition: An integrated introduction*. Sage
3. Bastos, F. I., & Andreatini, R. (2013). *Cultural Psychology in Non-Western Contexts*.
4. Burr, V. (1995). *Social Constructionism*. Routledge.
5. Chomsky, N. (2008). *The essential Chomsky*. Penguin.
6. Dalal, A. K. (2002). *Social Interventions to Promote Health: The Role of Community Psychology*.
7. Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and Punish* .Routledge Classics
8. Fox, D., Prilleltensky, I., & Austin, S. (2009). *Critical Psychology: An Introduction*.
9. Fromm, E. (1941). *Fear of freedom*. Routledge Classics.
10. Fromm, E. (1962). *Beyond the chains of illusion. My encounter with Marx and Freud*
11. Gergen, K. (2001). *Social Construction in Context*.
12. Guru, G. (2009). *Archaeology of Untouchability*.
13. Hook, D. (2004). *Critical Psychology*. Routledge.
14. Kumar, K. (2004). *What is Worth Teaching?*
15. Markova, I. (2016). *The dialogical mind*. CUP.
16. Martín-Baró, I. (1994). *Writings for a Liberation Psychology*.
17. Nandy, A. (1983). *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism*.
18. Parker, I. (2007). *Revolution in Psychology: Alienation to Emancipation*.
19. Prilleltensky, I. (1997). *Values and Psychology: Beyond Positivism and Objectivism*.
20. Decolonizing Social Psychology in India: Exploring its role as Emancipatory Social Science. *Psychology & Society*, 8 (1), 57-74. (2016).
21. Note on the 'history of psychology in India: Problems and Prospects'. *History of Psychology*, 20 (1), 126-128. (2017; APA).
22. Sinha, C. Transforming Psychological Jurisprudence: Beyond Passivity and Determinism. *Integr. psych. behav.* **60**, 25 (2026). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12124-026-09977-0>

23. Critical Psychology and the Brain: Rethinking Free will in the Legal Context. *Integrative Psychological & Behavioural Science* (2024, Springer). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12124-024-09827-x>
24. Making sense of law: Critical reflection on neuroscience, socialization, and self. *Integrative Psychological & Behavioural Science* (2023, Springer).
25. Sinha, C. Beyond the Chains of Technology: Social Justice and the Psychology of Revolutionary Education. *Integr. psych. behav.* **59**, 52 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12124-025-09921-8>
26. Sinha, C. (2020). Authentic Leadership, Power and Social Identities: A Call for Justice in Indian Higher Education System. *Higher Education for the Future*, 7(2), 147-168. [**Scopus Q1 Indexed, CiteScore: 3.7, SJR: 2.115**].
27. Sinha, C. (2025). Decolonial Voices in Education: Resistance, Critical Epistemology and Shaping of the Psychology of Education in India. In S. Bhatia, Fernandez, J. S., & Sonn, C. (Eds.), *Decolonial Psychology: Academic and Activist Perspectives*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003492214-7>
28. Sinha, C., Bharte, U., & Mishra, A. K. (2025). Critical Indigenous Psychologies in India: Striving for Human Liberation. In Gao, Z & Medved, M. I. (Eds.), *Global Perspectives on Cultural Politics in Indigenous Psychology*. Palgrave Studies in Indigenous Psychology, Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-96813-6_6
29. Sinha, C. (2026). *Transformative Social Psychology: Towards Social Change and Justice* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003734222>
30. Sinha, C. (2023). *Power Dynamics in Education* (1st ed.). Routledge India.
31. Sinha, D. (1997). *Indigenizing Psychology*.
32. Teo, T., Gao, & Zhipeng Gao. *Methodologism/Methodological Imperative*. Springer.
33. D. Fox & I. Prilleltensky (Eds). *Critical Psychology: An Introduction*. Sage
34. I. Parker (2007). Critical Psychology: What it is and what it is not. *Social and personality psychology compass*, 1 (1), 1-15.
35. Fromm, E. (1941). *Fear of freedom*. Routledge Classics.
36. Fromm, E. (1962). *Beyond the chains of illusion. My encounter with Marx and Freud*
37. A. Kapardis (2003). *Psychology and law: A critical introduction*. Cambridge University Press.

38. I. Martin-Baro (1994). Writings for a liberation psychology. Harvard University Press.
39. Tom Tyler (2006). Psychological perspectives on legitimacy and legitimation. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 57, 375-400.
40. Social Media and Morality (JJ Van Bavel)
41. R. D. Laing: The divided self. Pelican
42. R. D. Laing: The politics of experience.
43. Derek Hook: A Critical Psychology of the Postcolonial: the mind of Apartheid: Routledge
44. Erving Goffman: Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity: Penguin
45. Erving Goffman: The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life: Penguin
46. Franz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask: Pluto
47. Franz Fanon: The Wretched of the Earth: Penguin
48. John Shotter: Images of Man in Psychological Research: Methuen & Co Ltd
49. Michel Foucault: The Birth of the Clinic: Vintage
50. Nikolas Rose & Joelle M. Abi-Rached: Neuro: The new Brain Science and the Management of the Mind: Princeton University Press
51. Nikolas Rose: Our Psychiatric Future: Polity Press
52. Paulo Freire: Pedagogy of the Oppressed: Continuum
53. Peter Zachar: A Metaphysics of Psychopathology: The MIT Press
54. Rom Harre: Physical Being: Blackwell
55. Sigmund Freud: Civilization and its Discontents: Penguin
56. Thomas Franck: The Empowered Self: Law and Society in the Age of Individualism: Oxford University Press
57. Thomas Szasz: Ideology and Insanity: Penguin
58. Thomas Szasz: The Myth of Mental Illness: Harper Perennial.
59. Rollo May. The discovery of being. W. W. Norton & Company
60. Oliver Sacs. The man who mistook his wife for a hat. Picador

