

Learning Objectives

Forensic Evaluation: Principles & Practice

Fall 2022

After completing the program requirements, trainees will be able to:

1. Describe critical difference between therapeutic roles and forensic roles of mental health professionals.
2. Discuss legal foundations of forensic practice in systems of law, court systems, and criminal justice proceedings.
3. Name components of the forensic mental health system in Virginia.
4. Discuss issues of sentencing involved with forensic evaluation of adults.
5. Identify important legal and Constitutional standards regarding evaluation of competency to stand trial for the courts (e.g. *Dusky v. U.S.*, *Drope v. Missouri*, and other standards).
6. Discuss the relevant abilities of individuals who are found competent to stand trial, and lack of relevant abilities of individuals who are found not competent to stand trial, under Virginia law.
7. Discuss foundational clinical and practical considerations for mental health professionals to prepare and to conduct evaluations of competence to stand trial.
8. Identify critical issues involved with intellectual disability and forensic evaluation.
9. Discuss critical issues involved with restoration of competency with adults.
10. Describe elements observed from viewing one or two recorded forensic evaluations where issues of competence to stand trial were involved and discuss their observations.
11. Use a checklist to assist collecting information from interviews and from collateral documents with a case involving competence to stand trial.
12. Outline stages in the development of the legal standard for insanity and describe the meaning of insanity under Virginia law (including the 'cognitive' and the 'volitional' prongs).
13. Identify critical parameters under Virginia law for conducting and reporting and testifying regarding conclusions made by mental health professionals regarding insanity (including difference between evaluating for the defense and evaluating for the prosecution).
14. Discuss foundational clinical and practical considerations for mental health professionals to prepare and to conduct evaluations of sanity at the time of the offense.
15. Describe elements observed from viewing one or two recorded forensic evaluations where issues of sanity at the time of the offense were involved and discuss their observations.
16. Use a checklist to assist collecting information from interviews and from collateral documents with a case involving sanity at the time of the offense.
17. Outline legal standards involved with preparing for and offering testimony as a forensic expert (including qualifications, Frye standard, Daubert standard, rules of evidence).

18. Discuss aspects of best professional practices when preparing for and offering testimony in a forensic case (including the voir dire, presenting testimony, and handling cross-examination).
19. Discuss varieties of collateral documents that may support a forensic evaluation and handling of information from collateral documents in a report.
20. Identify some common writing problems when drafting and finishing a forensic evaluation report.
21. Identify critical issues involved with assessing for malingering.
22. Discuss contributions of psychiatry to forensic evaluation with adults.
23. Participants will review all materials and complete a multiple choice exam.
24. Participants will view a recorded forensic interview and draft a forensic report. Faculty review and comment back on the writing exercise.