

FORENSIC ASSESSMENT OF TRAUMA IN CIVIL AND CRIMINAL CASES

Presenter: Dawn M. Hughes, Ph.D., ABPP

**Friday, December 6, 2024 ♦ 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Zoom Webinar**

Forensic evaluations of trauma survivors involved in legal proceedings give rise to unique practical, professional, and ethical challenges due to the nature of the law, which differs from clinical settings. Forensic psychologists specializing in traumatic stress can significantly aid in the courtroom by explaining the science behind violence, abuse, exploitation, and manipulation, and as well as outlining the acute and long-term psychological and traumatic impacts of such experiences.

This presentation will cover essential aspects of forensic evaluations in cases involving intimate partner violence, sexual harassment, adult survivors of sexual assault, and rape/sexual assault. It will highlight the differences between forensic and clinical assessments, and address key principles for ethical and comprehensive evaluations. Topics include informed consent, awareness of litigants' rights, maintaining objectivity, and resolving legal and psychological tensions. The use of third-party information, collateral interviews, and psychological testing for malingering and trauma symptomatology will also be discussed. The goal is to equip professionals with the skills to accurately identify trauma-related characteristics and their relevance to civil or criminal cases.

Level of Curriculum Content: Intermediate

Zoom at a Glance

Zoom is a web-based video conferencing tool with a local, desktop client and a mobile app that allows users to meet online, with or without video, whether you are connecting multiple conference rooms or meeting with attendees from their personal desktops or mobile devices. For more information or to download Zoom, please visit <https://zoom.us/>.

ABOUT THE PRESENTER

Dawn M. Hughes, PhD, ABPP is a clinical and forensic psychologist who specializes in the assessment and treatment of interpersonal violence and traumatic stress. She maintains an independent practice in clinical and forensic psychology and is a Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychology serving on the voluntary faculty in the Department of Psychiatry at Weill Cornell Medical College – New York Presbyterian Hospital, where she participates in the psychology training program. Dr. Hughes is Board Certified in Forensic Psychology from the American Board of Professional Psychology and is the immediate past president of the Trauma Psychology Division of APA. Dr. Hughes is a Nova Southeastern University doctoral graduate and completed her internship at Yale University and her postdoctoral fellowship at Weill Cornell Medical College.

Dr. Hughes has over 25 years of experience within the field of traumatic stress and interpersonal violence, including intimate partner violence, rape, sexual assault, adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and other non-interpersonal traumatic experiences. She has treated or evaluated hundreds of individuals who have experienced psychological trauma, victimization, and abuse in their lives. Her forensic work comprises comprehensive psychological evaluations, attorney consultations, and expert witness testimony in the areas of forensic psychology, interpersonal violence, and traumatic stress in state and federal courts nationwide. She has served as an expert witness on many high-profile matters and hundreds of criminal and civil cases involving psychological trauma, intimate partner violence and homicide, coercive control, rape, sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse, clergy abuse, Boy Scout abuse, sexual harassment, cult abuse, and wrongful conviction, among others.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Participants will be able to:

- Describe the differences between clinical and forensic evaluations
- Identify the critical components of a comprehensive forensic evaluation of a trauma survivor
- Explain how trauma-based disorders present unique challenges for the legal system and how psychologists can utilize scientific and empirical data to educate the courts

PROGRAM AGENDA

12:00 p.m. – 12:40 p.m.	Clinical versus forensic evaluations
12:40 p.m. – 1:20 p.m.	Trauma-informed comprehensive forensic evaluations
1:20 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Trauma-based disorders and the legal system

For additional information on continuing education policies, please visit our web site at <https://psychology.nova.edu/ce>

CONTINUING EDUCATION INFORMATION

Psychologists: Nova Southeastern University's College of Psychology is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. Nova Southeastern University maintains responsibility for this program and its content.

Clinical social workers, mental health counselors, and marriage and family therapists: Nova Southeastern University's College of Psychology is approved by the state of Florida's Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy, and Mental Health Counseling to offer continuing education. Provider number: BAP# 330, Exp. 03/31/25.

School psychologists: Nova Southeastern University's College of Psychology is approved by the state of Florida's Board of Medical Therapies/Psychology, Office of School Psychology, to offer continuing education. Provider number: SCE# 11, Exp. 11/30/25.

Nova Southeastern University's College of Psychology is approved by the National Association of School Psychologists to offer continuing education for school psychologists. Nova Southeastern University maintains responsibility for this program and its content. Provider# 1024

Professional counselors: Nova Southeastern University's College of Psychology has been approved by NBCC as an Approved Continuing Education Provider, ACEP No. 4548. Programs that do not qualify for NBCC credit are clearly identified. Nova Southeastern University's College of Psychology is solely responsible for all aspects of the programs.

All mental health professionals will receive two (2) continuing education credits for the workshop. Full attendance is required. No partial credit will be awarded. Check your licensing state's rules and regulations for more information regarding your continuing education requirements.

Nova Southeastern University is committed to making its programs accessible to all prospective attendees. Let us know if you have specific requirements due to a disability.

ABOUT THE SPONSOR

Nova Southeastern University's College of Psychology is dedicated to providing high-quality training, education, research, and service its students and to the community. The college offers two American Psychological Association (APA)-accredited doctoral programs (Ph.D. and Psy.D. in Clinical Psychology); a specialist and a doctoral program in school psychology; master's degree programs in counseling (clinical mental health counseling, school counseling, substance abuse counseling, and applied behavioral analysis), forensic psychology, experimental psychology, and general psychology; and bachelor's degree programs in psychology and behavioral neuroscience. The College of Psychology has two APA accredited doctoral internship programs, the South Florida Consortium Internship Program and the Psychology Services Center Internship program.

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Nova Southeastern University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate's, baccalaureate, master's, educational specialist, doctorate, and professional degrees. Nova Southeastern University also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of Nova Southeastern University may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and School Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org). The university is chartered by the State of Florida. The College of Psychology Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association. The College of Psychology Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.) programs are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association. The College of Psychology has two APA accredited doctoral internship programs, the South Florida Consortium Internship Program and the Psychology Services Center Internship program. Questions related to the programs' accredited status should be directed to the Commission on Accreditation: Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation, American Psychological Association, 750 1st Street, NE, Washington, D.C., 20002-4242, Phone: (202) 336-5979, Email: apaaccred@apa.org, Web: www.apa.org/ed/accreditation. The college's master's degree program in school counseling and specialist program in school psychology are approved by the Florida Department of Education. In addition, the specialist and doctoral programs in school psychology holds the designation of National Recognition by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP).

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