

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN MENTAL HEALTH LAW

Presenter: David Shapiro, Ph.D., ABPP

Friday, March 20, 2026 ♦ 10:00am – 12:00pm EDT
ZOOM Webinar

Many psychologists and mental health professionals are aware that their evaluations are often disregarded or misused in courts, but do not realize currents in the legal system that underly these distortions. This webinar will deal with several of these distortions, how they are used, and areas of the law in which we often find them. The first is called *Sanism*, which is an irrational prejudice against mentally ill individuals; a good example is the attribution of violent behavior to the mentally ill when in fact the relationship between mental illness and violence is quite minimal. The second is called *Pretextualism*, the use of some questionable or totally inaccurate theory to explain away criminal behavior; an example is the use of non-validated IQ adjustments to justify the imposition of capital punishment. Finally, *ordinary common sense* is the third in which a prosecutor urges a jury to “ignore all the psychological gobbledygook” and use their common sense in determining whether a defendant was legally insane. These distortions will be explored over a variety of areas in criminal law.

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

David Shapiro, Ph.D., ABPP is a Professor Emeritus at the College of Psychology at Nova Southeastern University. He was involved in teaching, training, and research in the forensic concentration. He holds a Diplomate in Forensic Psychology from the American Board of Professional Psychology (1979). Dr. Shapiro has authored fifteen books and approximately forty peer reviewed articles and book chapters in forensic psychology, ethics, and malpractice issues. He has served on the ethics committees of the American Psychological Association and the American Board of Professional Psychology and has received distinguished Contribution Awards from the American Academy of Forensic Psychology and from Division 42 of the American Psychological Association.

PROGRAM AGENDA

10:00am – 10:30am	Innovative concepts in mental health law and their impact of legal changes
10:30am – 11:00am	Major changes in the concept of competency to stand trial
11:00am – 12:00pm	Appropriate vs. inappropriate use of mental illness in trial proceedings

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Participants will be able to:

- Apply innovative concepts in mental health law to an understanding of changes in the law
- Explain major changes in the concept of competency to stand trial
- Differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate use of mental illness in trial proceedings

For additional information on continuing education policies or upcoming workshops, 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. 03/31/27.

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. 11/30/27.

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.

NOTICES OF ACCREDITATION, MEMBERSHIP, AND NONDISCRIMINATION

Nova Southeastern University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097; Telephone number 404-679-4501) to award bachelor's, master's, educational specialist, and doctoral degrees. 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.) program is 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).

For additional information regarding our Nondiscrimination Policy, please visit the following link:

<https://psychology.nova.edu/ce/index.html#UniversityEqualOpportunityNondiscriminationStatement5>