

Criminalistics I (CJSA 1308)



Credit: 3 semester credit hours (3 hours lecture)

Prerequisite/Co-requisite: None

Course Description

Introduction to the field of Criminalistics. Topics include the appreciation of scientific and technical methods in the investigation of crime including location, identification, and handling of evidence for scientific analysis

Required Textbook and Materials

1. *Forensic Science: An Introduction to Scientific and Investigative Techniques*.
Edited by Stuart H. James and Jon J. Nordby (3rd Edition)
 - a. ISBN number is 13: 978-1-4200-6493-3

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Describe the care required in identifying, collecting and preserving evidence for scientific examination. (SCANS C5, C9, F5, F8, F10, F12, F13, F17)
2. Explain the significance of field and laboratory findings. (SCANS C5, C6, C7, C18, C19)

SCANS Skills and Competencies

Beginning in the late 1980's, the U.S. Department of Labor Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) conducted extensive research and interviews with business owners, union leaders, supervisors, and laborers in a wide variety of work settings to determine what knowledge workers needed in order to perform well on a job. In 1991 the Commission announced its findings in *What Work Requires in Schools*. In its research, the Commission determined that "workplace know-how" consists of two elements: foundation skills and workplace competencies.

Course Outline

A. Syllabus

1. Introduction of Faculty and students
2. Instructor Resume
3. Comments

B. Chapter 1 Here We Stand: What a Forensic Scientist Does

1. Definitions
2. Scientific Method
3. The Expert's Role

C. Chapter 2 : The Role of the Forensic Pathologist

1. The Medical Examiner System
2. Coroner system
3. Training and Duties

D. Chapter 3 Forensic Nursing

1. Domain of Practice
2. What It Is
3. SANE

CJSA 1308
Course Syllabi

E. Chapter 4 Investigation of Traumatic Deaths

1. Cause and Mechanism of Death
2. Manner of Death
3. Time of Death
4. Classification of Traumatic Deaths

F. Chapter 5 Forensic Toxicology

1. The Testing Process
2. Drugs of Abuse
3. Case Studies

G. Chapter 6 Forensic Odontology

1. Introduction and History
2. Training and Expert Witness
3. Bite Marks

H. Chapter 7 Forensic Anthropology

1. Brief History
2. Taphonomy
3. Archaeology
4. Scene Processing

I. Chapter 8 Forensic Taphonomy

1. Human Remains in Water Environments
2. Buried Remains
3. Case Studies
4. The Future

J. Chapter 9 Forensic Entomology

1. Importance of Determining the Time of Death
2. Training
3. Determining if the Body has been moved
4. Body Disturbance
5. Linking suspect to Scene

6. Position of Wounds
7. Collection of Evidence
8. Report Submission and Testifying in Court

K. Chapter 10 Crime Scene Investigation

1. Defining the Crime Scene
2. Use of Information from Physical Evidence
3. General Crime Scene Procedures
4. Crime Scene Documentation
5. Crime Scene Searches
6. Collection and Preservation of Physical Evidence
7. Crime Scene Reconstruction

L. Chapter 11 Forensic Digital Photo Imaging

1. The Camera
2. The Digital Point and Shoot Camera
3. Imaging the Scene
4. Photo Images as Evidence
5. Evidence and Items of Interest
6. Photo Imaging Evidence
7. Conclusion

M. Chapter 12 Recognition of Bloodstain Patterns

1. History of Bloodstain Pattern Interpretation
2. Properties of Human Blood
3. Target Surfaces Considerations
4. Size, Shape and Directionality
5. Spattered Blood
6. The Use of Luminal
7. Report Writing

Grade Scale

90 – 100	A
80 – 89	B
70 – 79	C
60 – 69	D
0 – 59	F

CJSA 1308
Course Syllabi

Course Evaluation

Final grades will be calculated according to the following criteria:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| 1. 3 Unit Tests | 75% |
| 2. Comprehensive Final Exam | 15% |
| 3. Course Project | 15% |

Course Requirements

1. Three unit tests.
2. Course project.
3. Comprehensive final exam.
4. Reading assignments.

Course Policies

1. Proper classroom decorum must be maintained at all times.
2. No food, drinks, or use of tobacco products in class.
3. Cell phones, headphones, and any other electronic devices must be turned off while in class.
4. Do not bring children to class.
5. **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY WILL BE DEALT WITH MOST STRICTLY!** - An automatic F for the semester, plus a report will be filed.
6. On exam day, all desks **MUST** be clear except for exam materials. All purses, backpacks, notebooks, etc. should be stored under the desks - including **CELL PHONES**.
7. No late assignments will be accepted.
8. Makeup exams will not be given, unless arranged for in advance. If you miss an exam (including the final) for any reason, without making arrangements with me prior to the exam, you will receive a zero on that exam.
9. Exams (including the final) will begin on time. If you are more than 5 minutes late for the exam, you will not be allowed to take it.
10. If you wish to drop a course, the student is responsible for initiating and completing the drop process. If you stop coming to class and fail to drop the course, you will earn an 'F' in the course.
11. Attendance is expected and required.
12. Additional class policies as defined by the individual course instructor.

Disabilities Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal anti-discrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights for persons with disabilities. Among other things, these statutes require that all students with documented disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodations for their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Special Populations Coordinator at (409) 880-1737 or visit the office in Student Services, Cecil Beeson Building.

Course Schedule

Week of	Topic	Reference
Week 1	Course Introduction and policies Discussion of Syllabus Chapter 1 : Here We Stand What a Forensic Scientist Does	pp. 1-12
Week 2	Chapter 1: continued Chapter 2: The Role of the Forensic Pathologist	pp.13-24
Week 3	Chapter 3: Forensic Nursing SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Expert) Guest Speaker	pp. 25-42
Week 4	Chapter 4: Investigation of Traumatic Deaths Discussion The Medical/Legal Autopsy Review for Exam I (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4)	pp. 43-60
Week 5	Chapter 5. Forensic Toxicology EXAM I	pp.61-80
Week 6	Chapter 5- Continued Drugs of Abuse – Guest Speakers	
Week 7	Chapter 6:Forensic Odontology Bite Mark Evidence The Ted Bundy Case	pp. 81-100
Week 8	Chapter 7: Forensic Anthropology Scene Processing Examining Remains Practical Application	pp. 121-136
Week 9	Chapter 8:Forensic Taphonomy Buried Remains Practical Application/Shifting of Evidence Exam 2 Review (Chapters 5,6,7,8)	pp.137-166
Week 10	Chapter 9: Forensic Entomology EXAM 2	pp.137-166
Week 11	Chapter 10: Crime Scene Investigation Crime Scene Procedures and Documentation Crime Scene Reconstruction	pp. 167-193

CJSA 1308
Course Syllabi

Week 12	Crime Scene Search Collection and Preservation of Physical Evidence Practical Application	
Week 13	Major Crimes and Crime Scenes Major Forensic Studies Dr. Michael Baden Series (From JFK, O.J., James Byrd, Sid Vicious, etc.)	
Week 14	Chapter 11: Forensic Digital Photo Imaging the Camera The Digital Camera in Forensic Crime Scenes Photographing the Scene Practical Application : Photographing the Scene Exam 3 Review	pp. 193-210
Week 15	Chapter 12. Recognition of Bloodstain Patterns Properties of Human Blood Spattered Blood Interpretation of Blood Spatter Use of Luminol Exam 3	pp.211-242
Week 16	Final Exam	