

FOR-110 Course Syllabus

Contact Information

Instructor

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Office hours

Virtual Office hours: Daily between 3pm and 9pm

Phone

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Course Information

Course Title

Introduction to Forensic Technology

Course Number

FOR-110 - Accelerated

Course Description

This is the introductory course in this program and is designed to expose students to a variety of information on numerous fields of forensic technology. While this course involves various forensic disciplines, including digital and non-digital methods, digital forensics does not exist in a vacuum. Other, non-digital but still highly technical forms of analysis are critical to creating a comprehensive and thorough examination of the facts in any case. Toward that end, the following topics will be covered:

- Introduction, Definition and History of Forensic Science
- Physical Evidence, Evidence Collection, and Crime Scene Management
- Fingerprints
- Drugs
- Forensic Toxicology
- Arson & Explosive Investigation
- Serology
- Firearms, Toolmarks, and Impressions
- Document and Voice Examination
- DNA
- Computer Forensics

Course Dates

09/02/08 - 10/18/08

Student Centered Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

Compare and contrast the various types of forensic technology and the methods used for analyzing both digital and non-digital evidence.

1. Perform cyber-research on various forensic topics.
2. Analyze case studies involving collaborative investigation.
3. Describe the critical aspects of a number of forms of forensic analysis.
4. Determine what forensic tools and methods are appropriate to a given situation.
5. Analyze findings and determine the degree of reliability inherent in each forensic tool.

Textbooks

Required Texts

The primary text for this course is Criminalistics: An Introduction to Forensic Science by Richard Saferstein. While there are numerous books on the topic of forensics and forensic technology, this text provides a good overview of all of the pertinent subject areas to be covered.

Other Supplementary Readings

List of articles available online or in the course in PDF format.

Topic Outline

- ⟨?Week 1: Chapters 1-3. Intro, Definition and History; Physical Evidence Collection; Scene Management - No Assignments Due
- ⟨?Week 2: Chapters 9 & 14. Fingerprints and Drugs - Final Paper Topic Due By Week's End
- ⟨?Week 3: Chapters 10 & 11. Forensic Toxicology, Autopsy, Arson/Explosives Investigation - Assignment 1 Due as Marked.
- ⟨?Week 4: Chapters 8, 12, 15. Serology; Hair/Fiber; Sex Assault; Firearms/Toolmarks - Final Paper Outline Due By Week's End
- ⟨?Week 5: Chapters 13 & 16. Document/Voice Examination; DNA - Paper 2 Due As Marked.
- ⟨?Week 6: Chapter 17. Computer Forensics - No Assignments Due
- ⟨?Week 7: Closure - Final Exam, Final Papers Due As marked

Academic Standards

The Student Handbook (*The Rudder*) describes the College's Academic Honesty Policy. You should be familiar with that policy, which states simply that if you cheat, you get a 0 (zero). More importantly, in the field of forensics and law enforcement there is quite simply no room for dishonesty. It will destroy a career instantaneously. If you have a problem, simply contact me and I will help to the greatest extent possible.

Methods of Assessment

Attendance, Homework, and Grading:

Attendance in this course is important, not only because of the breadth of information to be presented but also because there will be numerous guest speakers (live or virtual) that will be presenting as subject matter experts on a variety of topics. Each of them will have critical, practical information that will not be available in the text. Class discussions will serve as important cornerstones to the learning process to allow students to glean information from their peers not available from other sources.

Homework and other assignments will be given.

Papers: During the semester there will be three written assignments.

- Paper #1 - Please create a crime scene processing guide. Using information from your readings and the lectures create a 2 to 3 page (700 to 1050 words) guide or walk-through that you, or others, could use when processing an initial crime scene. Be sure to cover order of tasks, and what they should entail and take into consideration. Inclusion of checklists specific to the type of scene being processed (stabbing, shooting, burglary, etc.) are acceptable, and you should not hesitate to include them to augment your walk-through. Checklists will NOT be considered in the page/word count for this assignment, but they are highly recommended.
- Paper #2 - For this assignment you are asked to write what essentially amounts to a mini-paper on a topic of your choosing covered so far in the semester. This should involve using a minimum of three sources, one of which should be the text, and at least two other sources (articles, periodicals, news stories, books, or other similar sources. Take a topic covered so far in class (up to the week this assignment is due) and write a short paper (3-5 pages (1050 to 1750 words) typed, double spaced, weaving the reading, class lecture/module material, and your independent sources. Strict MLA/APA format not required, however some form of in-text citing of sources is needed for compliance with plagiarism policy.
- Final Paper: Choose a topic in the field of forensic technology and do independent research to construct a paper and presentation on that topic. Papers should contain a bibliography and footnotes as appropriate. Papers should generally be between 10 and 12 pages (3500 to 4200 words) in length and contain a bibliography and footnotes as appropriate using APA or MLA formatting (your choice). I am available to consult with you on possible topics. Topic selection and paper deadlines as well as dates of the presentation are noted on the course calendar below. A presentation that is suitable to be used as a visual aid to you were you to present your paper to an audience. The presentation should summarize your paper, and be something you would project onto a screen behind you while presenting. Topic presentations will need to be in Power Point presentation format, and be posted on the day the paper is due.

Class Participation: Online classes require participation in the discussion boards. This portion of the grade will be based on an expectation that students post at least two contributions to the discussion board per week. These contributions should be thoughtful and well constructed, and related to the chapters in the week. You must post a reply to the thread starter by Wednesday, and

a reply to your peers by the end of the week for each thread. Threads are graded on Wednesday and Friday, and those averages become your 25% Participation Grade.

Final Exam: A final examination covering all readings and lectures will be given at the conclusion of the course. Format will be a combination of multiple choice questions and essays.

Grades will be calculated and weighted as follows:

- 25% Discussion Grade
- 25% Final Paper and Presentation
- 20% Paper #2
- 15% Paper #1
- 10% Final Exam

Grade Calculation

The following scale will be used to determine letter grades:

	Grade
	Range
	A
93+	
	A-
90-92	
	B+
87-89	
	B
83-86	
	B-
80-82	
	C+
77-79	
	C

73-76

C-

70-72

D+

67-69

D

63-66

D-

60-62

F

Below 60

Students With Special Needs

If you believe that you have a disability requiring accommodations in this class, please contact the Coordinator of Support Services for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible. After you receive your accommodation form, please see me so that I can work with you to implement them in a timely fashion.

Contact: Allyson Krings, Coordinator of Support Services with Disabilities Office: Hauke 106A; Phone: 802-651-5961; Email: krings@champlain.edu

Academic Honesty Policy

In the preparation and presentation of any assigned work-including examinations, tests, quizzes, term papers, reports, themes and other written or oral exercises-every student shall conform to a strict standard of academic honesty. Any attempt to deceive a faculty member or to help another student to do so will be considered a violation of this standard. In all assignments, students must acknowledge the words and/or ideas of others taken from print or electronic media, whether a direct quotation or a paraphrase; any omission of this is dishonest. Cheating on examinations or tests consists of knowingly giving, receiving or using-or attempting to give, receive or use-unauthorized assistance during an examination or test. A faculty member may record a grade of "zero" for any assignment on which a student has plagiarized or cheated. For repeat offenses within a single course, the faculty member may record a grade of "F" for the course. Violations

of this policy in multiple courses may result in dismissal from the College. A student may appeal these decisions according to the Academic Grievance Procedure.

Additional information

Brief Rationale This course is intended as a survey of the relevant techniques and methods used in criminal investigation. Emphasis on real-world vs theoretical methods should be expected by the student.