Course Syllabus

Course Description
Forensic Science, or "criminalistics," is the application of science to the investigation of crime. Many professions are involved in the investigation of crime. These include Criminology, Pathology, Human Biology (anatomy and physiology), Physical Anthropology, Engineering, Psychiatry, Toxicology, Law, Pharmacy, Physics, Biomedical Science and Dentistry. A Forensic Scientist must be capable of integrating knowledge and skills in the examination, analysis, interpretation, reporting, and testimonial support of physical evidence.

Forensic Science in the broad sense includes ballistics and firearms expertise, DNA analysis and serology, chemistry, and many other fields. It is not restricted to crimes such as burglary, assault, arson, and murder, but is also important in cases such as dumping of toxic substances into the environment, unsafe working conditions, adulteration of food and drink, production and distribution of hazardous substances, and many others.

Course Goals
Upon the completion of this course the students will be expected to understand:

- Integration of knowledge and skills in the examination, analysis, interpretation, reporting, and testimonial support of physical evidence
- Evidence identification, collection, and processing
- Quality assurance and technical issues
- Physical parameters of interpretation of evidence

Course Objectives
- Provide information on Forensic Science at an introductory level while incorporating enough comprehensive information to meet the needs of more advanced students studying in the fields of Law, Forensic Science Laboratories, and Education.
- Create a relevant technical knowledge base in undergraduate students, as well as extend the expertise of criminologists pursuing careers in Law Enforcement, research and education.
- Examine the use of Forensic Science data in the courts using court cases.

Course Structure
After reviewing the syllabus and course outline, you will find that there are several components to this class. In addition to completing assignments found in each module, you will participate in "threaded discussions" each week. The discussion questions found in each module are the ones to be answered during our threaded discussions. Each student must sign on and answer both discussion questions. You can also interject your own comments positive and negative into the statements from other students. The professor will read all the comments on the discussion line.

Communication between student and professor is primarily via e-mail, and the professor will respond to all e-mail questions within 24-48 hours.

Required Textbook
| UTTC Bookstore | Barnes & Noble | Amazon

Activities
Each chapter has assignments and discussion questions. The discussions are where you will post your answers for all other students to see and respond to.
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Technical Requirements
You will be taking this entire course on your computer. You must have the minimum hardware and software to successfully complete this course. If you are in the market for a new system, please consider spending a bit more to upgrade to a more optimal system.
You may wish to visit the UT TeleCampus Computer Requirements page to determine if your computer meets the minimum computer requirements.

In addition to Hardware/Software issues addressed by the UT TeleCampus Computer Requirements page, you are required to have for this course two other software packages:

1. Microsoft Office. If you do not have Microsoft Office, check with your University of Texas branch store for the special Microsoft Office package which includes Word, Excel and PowerPoint.
   - Contact the UTEP Bookstore (915)747-5594 for more info.
2. Adobe Flash: This application is for advanced multimedia presentations/interactions over the internet.
   - This will be important when you reach Lesson 3 in the course.
   - You may download this player from the Adobe Download site.
3. Optional: Within many lessons, there are videos you can view on your computer. In addition, many of the videos are downloadable for portable multimedia MP4 and/or MP3 players. These devices are NOT required, as all videos are viewable on your computer using Adobe Flash.
4. Finally, Acrobat Reader will also be required as well.

You may also utilize the UTTC online Browser Checker to see if you have all of the tools for your browser installed correctly.

Course Outline

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Ch. 10,11 + 13</td>
<td>Module 1: Crime Scene Investigation and Module 2: Blood, Bloodstains, and Recognition of Patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Ch. 14, 15 + 34</td>
<td>Module 3: Identification of Biological Fluids and Stains; Module 4: Techniques of DNA Analysis and Legal Issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Ch. 16 + 17</td>
<td>Module 5: Microanalysis and Examination of Trace Evidence Module 6: Fingerprints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Ch. 20 + 22</td>
<td>Module 7: Firearm and Tool Mark Examinations; Module 8: Analysis of Controlled Substances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Ch. 24, 4 + 2</td>
<td>Module 9: Fire and Explosion Investigation; Module 10: Investigation of Traumatic Deaths and the Role of the Forensic Pathologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Ch. 5</td>
<td>Module 11: Forensic Toxicology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Ch. 7</td>
<td>Module 12: Forensic Anthropology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Ch. 28</td>
<td>Module 13: Forensic Psychology Case Completion reports Posted Online</td>
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Activities
Each chapter has Assignments and Discussion Questions. The Discussions are online and you post your answers for all other students to see and respond to.
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Course Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two exams (each worth 100 points)</td>
<td>200 points total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Discussion Participation</td>
<td>100 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study</td>
<td>100 Points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading is based on total points achieved. To get an A, you need 360 points, B=320, C=280 and D=240 points.

**Tests:** There will be two exams, each of which you will receive by e-mail, as noted on the syllabus. You will have three days to complete each exam and e-mail your answers back to me. More detailed instructions will be included on your first test.

**Case Study:** Application of what you have learned in this class will be evident when each student presents a case in “front” of the entire class. The case, and helpful hints will be sent to you via e-mail by Week 6 of the course. You will present your case by posting it on the Discussion Board. You will also submit your Case Study to me as a WORD document to the following e-mail address: telecampusdna@yahoo.com

All students in this class must review each case and make any pertinent comments to the Tribunal (i.e., Me, Myself and I) (Note: It is always important to have an uneven number of votes on your committee).

**Late Work:** Not tolerated… you will get a ‘zero’ for any assignment, test, etc. turned in past the due date. This can result in your failing the course. From the time you receive the assignment or test, you have plenty of time to get it done. The only reason for accepting anything late is if the servers for the computers are down. But then you could fax your assignments to me instead (866-263-4960).

**When Is All This Due?:** On Monday of each week (see Module Number on the syllabus), you should post your answer on the "Threaded Discussion" section to both of the two discussion questions. To get the highest score for your answers, follow the the Grading Rubric on the syllabus. You should revisit the Discussion Board often to see what other people are saying in response to your statements. You should also interject some comments (intelligent and to the point) about what others have said on the issue of the week.

The instructor reserves the right to make changes in the syllabus/course as deemed necessary. Students will be given plenty of notice of any and all changes.

**Grading Rubric for Discussion Postings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maximum Points</th>
<th>Points: Instructors Discretion</th>
<th>Minimum Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Responds fully to what the question asks</td>
<td>• Responds adequately to question asked</td>
<td>• Partially responds to what the question asks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Exercises good judgment in giving a realistic response</td>
<td>• Selects ideas which are supportive</td>
<td>• Responds to question with some errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expresses ideas clearly and persuasively</td>
<td>• Presents ideas clearly</td>
<td>• Ideas are lacking in support and unclear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Exercises good judgment in selection of relevant ideas</td>
<td>• Expresses facts correctly</td>
<td>• Facts are inaccurate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Presents ideas clearly, logically, coherently</td>
<td>• Ideas are organized and in own wording</td>
<td>• Copies, wording from sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expresses facts correctly</td>
<td>• Contains noticeable errors in grammar, punctuation, word choice, spelling</td>
<td>• Contains substantial errors in grammar punctuation, word choice or spelling throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ideas are well organized and in own wording</td>
<td>• Expresses ideas with some confusion</td>
<td>• Presents ideas unclearly with little organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Responses are at least 150</td>
<td>• Exercises good judgment in</td>
<td>• Less than 50 words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Course Syllabus**

- Responses to others are thoughtful and supported with research and practical application
- Giving a realistic response
- Expresses ideas clearly and persuasively
- 50-150 words
- Responses reflect general ideas without supporting references to readings and supporting research.
- Responses to others is minimal or none. (i.e. "I agree!" or "I like the ideas!")

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**Discussion Posting Grading Rubric**

Since writing is the primary way we will be communicating in this online course, we need to do it well in order to have our ideas appreciated. Grading is based on the quality and the structure of your writing. Always do a spelling and grammar check before posting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of Posting</th>
<th>Max Points</th>
<th>Instructor’s Discretion</th>
<th>Min Points</th>
<th>0 Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response to assignment questions</td>
<td>Responds completely to all questions.</td>
<td>Responds to most questions.</td>
<td>Responds to a few of the questions.</td>
<td>Responds to one question or less.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on Topic</td>
<td>There is one clear, well-focused topic. Main idea stands out and is supported by detailed information.</td>
<td>The main idea is clear but the supporting information is too general.</td>
<td>The main idea is somewhat clear but there is a need for more supporting information.</td>
<td>The main idea is not clear. There is a seemingly random collection of information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relates text and articles to the assignment</td>
<td>Cites the text and all articles in relation to the assignment.</td>
<td>Cites the text and almost all articles in relation to the assignment.</td>
<td>Makes few citations from text and articles in relation to the assignment.</td>
<td>Makes very few or no citations from text and articles in relation to the assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy of Facts</td>
<td>All supportive facts are reported accurately.</td>
<td>Almost all supportive facts are reported accurately.</td>
<td>Most supportive facts are reported accurately.</td>
<td>NO facts are reported OR most are inaccurately reported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources</td>
<td>All sources used for quotes and facts are credible.</td>
<td>Most sources used for quotes and facts are credible.</td>
<td>Few sources used for quotes and facts are credible.</td>
<td>Sources used for quotes and facts are less than credible (suspect).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure of the Posting</th>
<th>Max Points</th>
<th>Instructor’s Discretion</th>
<th>Min Points</th>
<th>0 Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Spelling</td>
<td>Writer makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.</td>
<td>Writer makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.</td>
<td>Writer makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.</td>
<td>Writer makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitalization and Punctuation</td>
<td>Writer makes no errors in capitalization or punctuation, so the paper is exceptionally easy to read.</td>
<td>Writer makes 1 or 2 errors in capitalization or punctuation, but the paper is still easy to read.</td>
<td>Writer makes a few errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the reader's attention and interrupt the flow.</td>
<td>Writer makes several errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the reader's attention and greatly interrupt the flow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citations</td>
<td>Sources are cited correctly in APA format.</td>
<td>Most sources are cited correctly in APA format.</td>
<td>Few sources are cited correctly in APA format.</td>
<td>No sources are cited correctly in APA format</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scholastic Integrity**

The University of Texas at El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence. In all matters of intellectual pursuit, UTEP faculty and students must strive to achieve excellence based on the quality of work.
produced by the individual. In the classroom and in all other academic activities, students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any form of scholastic dishonesty is an affront to the pursuit of knowledge and jeopardizes the quality of the degree awarded to all graduates of UTEP. It is imperative, therefore, that the members of this academic community understand the regulations pertaining to academic integrity and that all faculty insist on adherence to these standards.

Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. Proven violations of the detailed regulations, as printed in the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP), and available in the Office of the Dean of Students, and the homepage of The Dean of Students (DOS) at http://www.utep.edu/dos, may result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary probation, to failing grade on the work in question, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or dismissal, among others.

**Students with Disabilities**

If you have or believe you have a disability, you may wish to identify yourself. You can do this by contacting the Disabled Student Services Office (DSSO) to show documentation of a disability or to register for testing and services. Students who have been designated as disabled must reactivate their standing with the DSSO yearly. If you feel that you may have a disability requiring accommodations and/or modifications, contact DSSO at 915-747-5148 or email: dss@utep.edu. You also can visit the DSSO website at http://studentaffairs.utep.edu/dsso or the DSSO office in Room 108 East Union Building.

**Plagiarism Software Notice**

This course may utilize third party software that has the ability to automatically detect plagiarism on documents submitted for grading.

**Copyright Notice**

Many of the materials that are posted within this course are protected by copyright law. These materials are only for the use of students enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further retained or disseminated.

**Effective Electronic Communication**

Keep your messages concise and clearly written. Most ideas can be stated in a couple of paragraphs, although sometimes a longer message may be needed to develop your thoughts adequately. Keep in mind that people are more apt to read and digest shorter messages than long ones.

1. Be respectful of other's ideas, opinions, and beliefs. It's fine to disagree with someone, but please respect their right to think differently.
2. Avoid posting simple two or three word statements such as "I agree" or "Good point". If you think someone has made an especially strong point, and you want to say so; then, explain why by adding a few sentences describing your response or adding to the original point.
3. A message that demonstrates substance contributes to the understanding and application of ideas by doing one or more of the following:
   a. **Reflection about meaning**: Describes thoughtfully what something means or new insights it provides, or raise a question as a seed for clarification or further discussion.
   b. **Analysis**: Discusses relevant themes, concepts, main ideas, components, or relationships among ideas. Or, identifies hidden assumptions or fallacies in reasoning.
   c. **Elaboration**: Builds on ideas of others or ideas found in the readings by adding details, examples, a different viewpoint, or other relevant information.
   d. **Application**: Provides examples of how principles or concepts can be applied to actual classroom situations, or discusses the implications of theory for practice.
   e. **Synthesis**: Integrates multiple views to provide a summary, a new perspective, or a creative refashioning of ideas.
   f. **Evaluation**: Assesses the accuracy, reasonableness, or quality of ideas.
A Word of Caution

At this point in the course, it is also important to share a word of caution, so we can become wiser about interpersonal distance learning communications. When communicating electronically, many of the feelings or impressions that are transmitted via body language in face-to-face communication, can be easily lost. Consequently, interpreting emotions and innuendoes is far more difficult. Only what is written or drawn, carries the message. Often excitement can be misinterpreted as anger or an insult. It is important that we all keep this in mind as we communicate electronically. Words in print may seem harmless but could emotionally injure a distant learner.

IMPORTANT: Avoid the use of caps in your electronic messages as wording in caps comes across as shouting.

Adding Body Language to Your Messages

More information on Netiquette can be found at:
http://www.albion.com/netiquette

Technical Support

The University of Texas TeleCampus Help Desk is open 24/7 at no additional cost to you. If you encounter technical problems, you may call their toll free number 1.866.321.2988.

Tutorial for New Online Students

UTTC provides a variety of student services and support. Familiarize yourself with this page esp. tools and links listed on the left hand side of the page. If you are new to online learning or wish to brush up on your computer skills, I recommend the Get Started welcome and resources link, the Handbook link for orientation and tutorials, and the free Computer Basics course.

Time Management

The rule of thumb for time planning for a course is approximately three (3) hours for every credit hour taken. This is a standard figure recommended across the board by American universities. For a 3 credit course, course you should expect to spend:

3 hours of class time + 9 hours of study and prep time = 12 hours per week.

The Evidence Never Lies

You can lead a jury to the truth but you can’t make them believe it. Physical evidence cannot be intimidated. It does not forget. It doesn’t get excited at the moment something is happening - like people do. It sits there and waits to be detected, preserved, evaluated, and explained. This is what physical evidence is all about. In the course of the trial, defense and prosecuting attorneys may lie, witnesses may lie, the defendant certainly will lie. Even the judge may lie. Only the evidence never lies.