

**The University of Texas at El Paso**  
**College of Science**  
**Course Syllabus: Forensic Science I, FORS 3370, (CRN # 19423),**  
**Credit Hours: 3, Fall 2021**

**100% On-line (Asynchronous): No Live Class Meeting**

**Instructor: Dr. Roshanak Jafari**

**Virtual Office Hours:** Anytime via

- Blackboard Course Messages
- UTEP e-mail: [rjafari@utep.edu](mailto:rjafari@utep.edu)

I will try to answer your questions as soon as possible within 24-48 hours.

**Required Materials (Textbook):**

Criminalistics – An introduction to Forensic Science by Richard Saferstein, 12th edition, Prentice Hall, Pearson

**Important Semester Dates:**

<b>Aug. 23</b>	<b>Classes begin</b>
<b>Oct. 29</b>	<b>Course drop deadline (Last day to drop with an automatic W)</b>
<b>Nov. 25 – 26</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Holiday</b>

**Important Course Dates**

- **August 29** - Biography Due (10 point)
  - **Sep. 20 – 26** - Exam 1 (250 points)
  - **Oct. 25 – 31** - Exam 2 (250 points)
  - **Dec. 6-10** - Final Exam (250 points)
- \* **Discussion Questions** - (240 points)

You will be expected to make comments on 8 discussion questions on the Discussion Board in Blackboard. The Discussion Questions will be posted on Aug. 30, Sep. 6, 27, Oct. 4, 18, Nov. 1, 15, and 29, and you will have through the following Sunday at midnight to post your responses.

There will be eight (8) questions to answer over eight (8) weeks. Each week's comments by you will be worth 30 points with the total counting 240 points. See the section below titled "Discussion Question Answers" for more information about expectations for how you should answer a Discussion Question.

**Course Description**

This course is an introductory course over various areas of forensic science. Students will participate in discussions to gain a real world understanding of what forensic science entails.

## **Course Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Define and distinguish multiple disciplines of forensic science
2. Understand types of evidence and how they can affect the criminal justice system
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental elements and techniques utilized in forensic science.
4. Apply the scientific method to the analysis of various types of physical evidence
5. Identify the capabilities and limitations of crime laboratories
6. Learn the responsibilities of a forensic scientist

## **Student's Responsibility:**

Students will be expected to keep up with course assignments as indicated on the course syllabus. You will also be expected to make a substantial comment to each weekly question listed on the Discussion Board set up for this course. If you miss a scheduled exam or a deadline for an assignment, only a serious personal emergency will be considered as an excuse and you must apply in writing (e-mail O.K.) to the instructor to explain why an exam or assignment was missed. If any exam or assignment deadline is missed without an instructor approved excuse, one/half credit for the missed exam or assignment can be obtained by completing the exam or assignment within one week following the deadline. After one week has passed beyond the deadline for an exam or assignment, no credit will be able to be earned for that exam or assignment. The only exception to this rule is Final Exam which must be completed by the end of day on **Friday, December 10.**

## **Discussion Question Answers:**

Your posting in the discussion board must be at least 300 words long. Please remember to respond in your own words and if you use another person's writing, remember to put their words in quotes with appropriate reference to the author. To do otherwise is considered plagiarism which is a serious matter. Also note that responses to the discussion questions are due at the end of day on the Sunday following their publication on the previous Monday morning and your response must be in the Discussion Board folder indicated for that discussion question.

Also, please remember that tolerance of other students' ideas or responses is expected. Remember, what one publishes in text form on a discussion board can sound harsher than when saying it to a person face-to-face so keep that in mind when you respond to another student's posting. It is O.K. to critique an idea or what has been said but it is not appropriate to critique another person personally. I read the postings every day and after the deadline for responses.

## **Testing Condition:**

All exams will be "open book" exams which means that when exams are taken, you will be able to have any and all support materials you think are necessary to answer exam questions. All exams will be given via the Internet using Blackboard. Exams can be True/False and multiple

choice questions where you will have a list of answers to choose from a drop-down menu. Although the exams may be taken open-book, but they will be timed to permit you to have a total of 60 minutes for 50 questions. If you have to look up a lot of answers, you will not be able to finish the exam so it is important for you to know the material as well as you can before starting an exam. Exams will be available to take during the week of an exam from Monday morning of that week through the following Sunday at 11:59 PM. Exams are to be taken alone without help from another person so that you can determine and be proud of your own accomplishments.

### **Instructor's Responsibility:**

To provide students with a challenging environment for learning which also encourages questioning and respects individual opinions.

### **Being successful in an Online Class:**

Online learning is not a spectator sport. It is everyone's responsibility to participate as fully as they can so everyone can get the most from the experience. Here are some simple rules to follow to ensure your participation and engagement in the learning process:

- Ask questions: If you do not know the answer, someone else will.
- Reach out to others: Offer a fact, article, link or other item that can help others learn.
- Be appropriate: The online classroom is not the place for insulting or insensitive comments, attacks, or venting. Inappropriate behavior will usually be subject to disciplinary action, as well.
- Be diplomatic: When sending messages on emotionally charged topics, make sure you write the message and then walk away for at least an hour before re-reading the message and then sending it. Re-reading emotionally charged messages ensures that they are constructive instead of destructive. Think of the person at the other end.
- Stay focused: Stay on topic to increase the efficiency of your learning.
- Take advantage of all the resources given to you to succeed in the class.

A "Discussion Board" area will be set up in the courses Blackboard shell to allow students to ask questions to each other. Make use of it, since your instructor can monitor your questions and provide feedback.

### **Evaluation**

Three exams and eight discussion questions will be given for this course. Two exams will be given during the semester. The final exam will be given during the finals week and is due December 10 at 11:59 p.m.

## Grading

Students can potentially earn **1,000** points in this online course based on successful completion of the following assignments:

- 250 points: Exam 1
- 250 points: Exam 2
- 250 points: Final Exam
- 240 points: Eight Discussion Question (30 points/ Discussion)
- 10 point: Brief Bio

Total: 1,000

1,000 - 900 points	A
899 – 800 points	B
799 – 700 points	C
699 – 600 points	D
599 points or below	F

## Effective Electronic Communication:

It is 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 communications are lost. Consequently, interpreting emotions and innuendos is much more difficult. Only what is written, or drawn, carries the message. Often, excitement can be misinterpreted as anger or insult. It is important that we all keep this in mind as we communicate. Words in print may seem harmless, but they could emotionally injure us when working at a distance. Hence, it is vitally important that we are conscious of how we communicate while working at a distance.

- For example, avoid the use of caps in your electronic messages, as wording in caps comes across as shouting.

The standard practice ("Netiquette") for participation in networked discussion requires that all participation be focused on the topic at hand, not become personalized, and be substantive in nature. (Translation: you may certainly disagree with others, but you must do so respectfully; you may express strong beliefs or emotions, but you may not get so carried away that you lose all perspective on the course itself.)

- More information on Netiquette, the etiquette of Internet communication, can be found at [www.albion.com/netiquette](http://www.albion.com/netiquette)

**Academic Integrity Policy:** Information on UTEP’s Policies regarding academic integrity can be found at <http://academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=23785>

**Disability Statement:** If a student has or suspect he/she has a disability and needs an accommodation, he/she should contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5184 or at [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu) or go to room 106 in the Union East Building. The student is responsible for presenting to the instructor any CASS accommodation letters and instructions.

**FORS 3370 Forensic Science I - Weekly Schedule**  
 Course is 16 weeks long, from August 23 to December 10, 2021

<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Tasks to Complete</b>	<b>Assignment Due Dates</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>
<b>Week 1</b> 8/23 – 8/29	Chapter 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction</li> <li>• Forensic Science /Crime Laboratories</li> </ul>	Bief Bio ( <b>Due Sunday</b> )	10
<b>Week 2</b> 8/30 - 9/5	Chapter 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime Scene</li> </ul>	Discussion Question # 1( <b>Due Sunday</b> )	30
<b>Week 3</b> 9/6 - 9/12	Chapter 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Evidence</li> </ul> Chapter 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime-Scene Reconstruction: Bloodstain Pattern Analysis</li> </ul>	Discussion Question # 2 ( <b>Due Sunday</b> )	30
<b>Week 4</b> 9/13 – 9/19	Chapter 6: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fingerprints</li> <li>• Fingerprint Comparisons</li> </ul>		
<b>Week 5</b> 9/20 – 9/26	Review Chapters 1,2,3,4,& 6	Exam 1 over Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4, & 6 ( <b>Due Sunday</b> )	250
<b>Week 6</b> 9/27 – 10/3	Chapter 8: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Microscopy</li> </ul> Chapter 9: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Firearms, Tool Marks, and Impressions</li> </ul>	Discussion Question # 3 ( <b>Due Sunday</b> )	30

<b>Week 7</b> 10/4 – 10/10	Chapter 10: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Matter, light, Glass Examination</li> </ul>	Discussion Question # 4 ( <b>Due Sunday</b> )	30
<b>Week 8</b> 10/11 – 10/17	Chapter 11: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hairs and Fibers</li> </ul>		
<b>Week 9</b> 10/18 – 10/24	Chapter 12: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drugs</li> </ul>	Discussion Question # 5 ( <b>Due Sunday</b> )	30
<b>Week 10</b> 10/25 – 10/31	Review Chapters 8, 9, 10, 11, & 12	Exam 2 over Ch. 8, 9, 10, 11, & 12 ( <b>Due Sunday</b> )	250
<b>Week 11</b> 11/1 – 11/7	Chapter 13: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forensic Toxicology</li> </ul>	Discussion Question # 6 ( <b>Due Sunday</b> )	30
<b>Week 12</b> 11/8 – 11/14	Chapter 14: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metals, Paints, and Soil</li> </ul>		
<b>Week 13</b> 11/15 – 11/21	Chapter 15: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forensic Serology</li> </ul>	Discussion Question # 7 ( <b>Due Sunday</b> )	30
<b>Week 14</b> 11/22 – 11/28	Chapter 16: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DNA</li> </ul>		
<b>Week 15</b> 11/29 – 12/5	Chapter 18: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document Examination</li> </ul>	Discussion Question # 8 ( <b>Due Sunday</b> )	30
<b>Week 16</b> 12/6 – 12/10	Review Chapters 13, 14, 15, 16, & 18	Final Exam over Ch. 13, 14, 15, 16, 7 18 ( <b>Due Friday, Dec 10</b> )	250

Total points to be earned for semester: 1000