

University of Maryland

OFFICIAL COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE: CCJS318G-ESG1 - **Introduction to Forensic Science**, 3 credits

INSTRUCTOR: Jennifer Karschner, M.S.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course introduces students to the study of physical evidence through the application of scientific principles. This course consists of an introduction to the various disciplines and principles of forensic science as used in crime laboratories across the United States.

TEXTBOOK: Saferstein, R. *Criminalistics, An Introduction to Forensic Science*, 11th ed. Pearson Education, Inc. Upper Saddle River, NJ 2011.

Format, Adobe Reader; ISBN-13: 9780133482164

Format, textbook; 0133458822

COURSE CONTENT OBJECTIVES:

At the conclusion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Describe and understand the “scientific method.”
2. Describe the concept of “class” and “individual” characteristic evidence.
3. Describe the various forensic specialty areas which comprise a modern comprehensive forensic laboratory, and their function within the criminal justice system.
4. Discuss and describe major legal decisions which relate to crime scene investigations and the handling of physical evidence.
5. Identify the basic principles associated with the scientific evaluation of physical evidence.

This course consists of an introduction to the various disciplines and principles of forensic science as used in crime laboratories and law enforcement agencies across the United States and around the world. A variety of learning aids will be used throughout the semester in addition to class lecture. These include:

1. PowerPoint Presentations
2. Demonstrations
3. Class hand-outs
4. Practical exercises

NOTICE: Throughout this class, audio-visual aids will be used. Some of this material will be graphic in nature, representing actual events.

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance and Participation:

Class starts on time with the taking of attendance. The expectation is that students attend ALL classes and be on time. If for some reason you are required to run late, please find a seat without disturbing the class.

Class attendance contributes significantly to academic success. Students who attend classes regularly tend to earn higher grades and have higher passing rates in courses. Failure to attend class will negatively affect your grade. In case of absence due to emergency (illness, death in family, accident), or participation in OFFICIAL college functions, it is the student's responsibility to confer with the instructor about the absence or expected absence as soon as possible. It is also the student's responsibility to make up work and assignments missed. Participation in class discussions is encouraged and expected. You cannot participate if you are not here, and simply being here is not conducive to participating. There will be material covered in the lecture which is not presented in the text.

It is the student's responsibility to withdraw officially from any class, which he/she ceases to attend. Failure to do so may result in the recording of an "F" grade.

Classroom Decorum:

Any type of behavior that detracts from the class is unacceptable and the student/students causing the disruption will be asked to leave the class and not return until they are prepared to study the course materials as outlined in the syllabus. All cell phones and mobile devices must be placed on vibrate or silent mode and put away (**out of view**) at the commencement of class. "Texting" is not allowed during class. In case of an emergency requiring telephone contact, please excuse yourself from the room.

The classroom is a tobacco free environment. This includes smoking, chewing and snuff. This will be strictly enforced due to the need for maintaining classroom space in an acceptable condition for the next class.

The instructor has the right to control what, if any, food/drink items may be brought into the classroom.

COURSE OUTLINE/OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS:

Week 1 September 1 - 7	Overview and Introductions Chapter 1: Introduction
Week 2 September 8 - 14	Chapter 1: Continued
Week 3 September 15 - 21	Chapter 2: The Crime Scene
Week 4 September 22 - 28	EXAM ONE
Week 5 Sept 29 – Oct 5	Chapter 3: Physical Evidence
Week 6 October 6 - 12	Chapter 12: Drugs Chapter 13: Forensic Toxicology
Week 7 October 13 - 19	Chapter 15: Serology Chapter 16: DNA: The Indispensable Forensic Science Tool
Week 8 October 20 - 26	Chapter 9: Firearms, Toolmarks, and Other Impressions
Week 9 October 27 – Nov 2	EXAM TWO
Week 10 November 3 - 9	Chapter 4: Crime-Scene Reconstruction: Bloodstain Pattern Analysis
Week 11 November 10 - 16	Chapter 17: Forensic Aspects of Fire and Explosion Investigation
Week 12 November 17 - 23	MOCK SCENE and LABORATORY EXERCISES
Week 13 November 24 - 30	NO CLASS – Thanksgiving break
Week 14 December 1 - 7	MOCK SCENE and LABORATORY EXERCISES
Week 15 December 8-12	PROJECT PRESENTATIONS
Week 16 December 15 - 20	FINAL EXAM

GRADING RUBRIC:

YOUR final grade will be determined by a weighted balance for all grading components of the course. Evidence of academic dishonesty (i.e. cheating) will automatically result in zero points begin awarded for the exam/activity. It is the student's responsibility to familiarize themselves

with the University of Maryland Honor Code regarding academic dishonesty and the resulting consequences.

Missed examinations or assignments may not be rescheduled unless approved in advance by the instructor. Rescheduling of examinations is often unfair to other students.

The student is responsible for reading the assigned textbook chapters. All assignments are due at the start of class. LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Test/Quizzes.....60%
Assignments.....20%
Project10%
Attendance.....10%
TOTAL.....100%

A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	70 - 79
D	60 - 69
F	Below 60