Instructor: Wendy Owens  
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PREREQUISITES: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

* Canvas will be used in this class. It is an all Web based class. There will not be any classes on campus.

This course will broaden the student’s knowledge of the field of forensic sciences. This course is designed to teach the significance of physical evidence that is collected, stored and processed from a crime scene, which will subsequently impact that outcome of a criminal investigation in either a negative or positive way.

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This class will be conducted through a combination of textbooks, journal articles, media, PowerPoint presentations, Web Extras, discussion boards and real life examples.

The student will have to complete two term papers, assignments with the required reading and two exams. There will be Web Extras that will be optional. These are for your benefit as added study guides and review for the exams. The questions and Web Extras will not be included in grading and will not serve as extra credit.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

In this course students will learn the history, development, and concepts of forensic sciences. We will be examining the different branches of criminalistics and how they are important to the success of collecting evidence in a criminal investigation. The student will learn the importance of keeping the integrity of a crime scene, while maintaining professionalism under unique and stressful circumstances.

COURSE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The student, at the successful completion of this course, should be able to:

• Understand the concepts of forensic science and criminalistics
• Learn the history and development of forensic sciences
• Be able to define evidence, real /physical evidence & testimonial evidence
• Know the difference between identification evidence and individual evidence
• Why court decisions have pushed for physical evidence as important factor in proving cases
• Identify the responsibilities of the first responding law enforcement officer
• Learn the objectives of a crime scene investigator
• Understand the importance of note taking, sketching, photographs and the video taping of a crime scene
• Learn about possible health and safety issues at a crime scene
• The importance of communication and teamwork on a crime scene
• Learn how to establish the chain of custody of evidence
• Why the chain of custody of evidence is important in a crime scene
• Identify the importance of maintaining the integrity of a crime scene
• How to properly collect certain evidence at a crime scene
• Understand the concept of dynamic evidence
• Define Locard’s exchange principle
• Understand how hair, fibers & paint are collected and processed
• Learn how glass and soil are collected and preserved as evidence
• Will understand the differences between organic and inorganic analysis
• Learning about establishing identities through palm prints and fingerprints & the AFIS
• Learn where to look for fingerprints at a crime scene & the different types of fingerprints
• Understand the guidelines for forensic laboratory management and practices
• Learn about DNA evidence and why it may affect how a crime scene is processed
• Identify the sources, locations & limitations of DNA evidence
• Learn why elimination and reference samples are important
• What types of evidence needs reference samples
• Learn how to use CODIS in solving crimes
• How firearms evidence is collected and processed
• Understand the nature for forensic serology
• Learn about the identifying of human remains
• How evidence in a sexual assault case evidence is collected
• Understand the aspects of arson investigations and the collection of evidence
• Understand the aspects of investigations involving explosives and the collection of evidence
• The important points of testifying in court

**TEXT AND MATERIALS:**

There are three required texts for this class:


Any other materials will be provided through Canvas (Videos, PowerPoint Presentations, Web Extras and Journal Articles)

**COMPUTER LAPTOP USE:**
USFSM requires all students to have laptops that can be brought with them to class. This is an all on-line class therefore a laptop/desktop will be needed for class.

**Canvas Use:**
This is an all on-line class that will be delivered through Canvas. There will not be any in-class campus instruction for this course.

If you are not familiar with Canvas:

Tutorials for students CANVAS tutorials can be found in the Student Quickstart Guide at http://guides.instructure.com/m/8470.
If you need technical assistance during the course:

Please call or email either Kendi Judy | kjudy@sar.usf.edu | 941-359-4638 or
Carlos Montoya | cmmontoya@sar.usf.edu | 941-359-4295

The USF Tampa IT Helpdesk provides 24-hour support for CANVAS. Please call 813-974-1222 or email: help@usf.edu if you need assistance outside of USFSM’s E-Learning hours.

**Undergraduate Grading, Evaluation & Attendance Policies for this class:**

**Evaluation for grading will be as follows:**

The Scale for the letter Grades are as follows:

- **A+** 97-100
- **A** 94-96
- **A-** 90-93
- **B+** 87-89
- **B** 84-86
- **B-** 80-83
- **C+** 77-79
- **C** 74-76
- **C-** 70-73
- **D+** 67-69
- **D** 64-66
- **D-** 60-63
- **F** 59 and below

Evaluation for grading will be as follows:

- Term Paper Assignment #1 (due October 5, 2014 at 5pm)...worth 25% of your grade
- Exam#1 (due October 12, 2014 at 5pm)...worth 25% of your grade
- Case Study Term Paper Assignment #2 (due on November 23, 2014 at 5pm)...worth 25% of your grade
- Final Exam (due on December 5, 2014 at 5pm)...worth 25% of your grade

This is a Web based class. Students are expected to read and study pertinent text chapters prior as assigned each week, to participate in discussion boards, to complete assignments on time, to view all media, and read all assigned articles.

Any student who submits any late assignments will have points deducted for lateness. Any assignment that is not submitted by the closing date will not be accepted. The closing date and time for exams is 30 minutes past the time due (20 points will be taken for a exam that is late). The closing date for term paper assignment 1 is October 12, 2014 at 5pm (10 points will be deducted for the first 24 hours it is late and 5 points for each additional day that it is late). The closing date for the case study paper is November 30, 2014 at 5pm (10 points will be deducted for the first 24 hours it is late and 5 points for each additional day that it is late). If an assignment is not submitted by the closing date the student will get a zero for that assignment. The date and time each exam and assignment is due is listed in
that assignment.

Students do not have permission to sell notes or tapes of class lectures listed in Canvas including the PowerPoint Presentations.

Last day to drop with a ‘W’; no academic penalty; no refund is November 1, 2014.

**Reading and Other Weekly Assignments:**

Since this class is being taught through Canvas there are Modules depicting each week of the semester. Each module has links that you will click on to display the assignment.

These weekly assignments may also contain media that needs to be viewed or journal articles that need to be read. It will also contain optional materials for your benefit. These optional materials will not result in any grading or extra credit for the class.

If you have any questions related to the weekly reading materials e-mail me for clarification.

On the dates that have ‘Exam’ or ‘Final’ listed next to them that will be the week students will take the test. There will not be any other assignments under that link other then the description of the exam and how to access it.

The week that the term papers are due there is an added reminder under that week’s module. They will be submitted in Canvas and not attached to the reminder or e-mailed to me. If they are not submitted correctly you will lose points for lateness. A paper that is e-mailed and not submitted correctly will have points deducted for lateness, if it is not submitted properly by the due date and time.

**Term paper Assignments:**

**Term Paper #1**

Term paper #1 is due on October 5, 2014 at 5pm.

This term paper assignment will count for 25% of your grade.

Any student who submits any late assignments will have points deducted for lateness. A student should give himself or herself proper time to submit the paper. If you wait until 4:55 on the date due to submit your paper and experience any technical difficulties the paper will be considered late at 5:01 pm. The closing date for term paper assignment 1 is October 12, 2014 at 5pm (10 points will be deducted for the first 24 hours it is late and 5 points for each additional day that it is late). No papers will be accepted after the closing date.

The paper is to be submitted in Canvas for grading. It is not to be e-mailed to me.

This is a traditional research term paper on one of the branches of forensic sciences with cited material to support your paper's points. What type of prior training or education is needed to process this type of evidence? It should include what is involved in processing the evidence? What special tools are needed to process this type of evidence? How this particular field of forensic science is useful in an investigation? These questions are a guide in writing your paper. This is a traditional term paper as previously stated and it is not an essay answering the above listed questions. You are explaining all aspects of on branch of forensic sciences to include real life case examples.

The paper topic should be related to the class material (Handwriting and document examination, forensic aspects of arson, firearms, tool marks, DNA evidence, blood evidence, glass & soil, fingerprints, hair, fibers, & paint, etc.). You can choose any one of the previous listed topics or any other branch (forensic psychiatry, forensic odontology,
forensic engineering, forensic computer and digital analysis) that relates to forensic sciences. If you are unsure if the topic is appropriate than e-mail it to me for clarification.

You should also use real life case examples (use at least three examples) that show how a case was strengthened by this type of evidence, or how it exonerated the defendant. These cases should be written into the term paper appropriately. They should not be forced into the paper at the end to have three cases awkwardly mentioned in it. They should be used to support a point within the paper. If you want to use more than three real life case example’s to support the data in your paper you can, but only three are required in the paper.

The paper should be well written with correct spelling and proper grammar. You should begin the paper with your thesis statement, followed by the body of the paper and end the paper with a conclusion. The paper should easily flow from point to point within the body of the paper. The paper should display your understanding and knowledge of the topic. The paper should not contain your opinion on the topic. It should contain the facts and demonstrate your knowledge of those facts.

Your term paper should contain at least ten academic resources cited in it. Your text books may be used but do not count as an academic resource for paper purposes. You may use text books as academic resources if they are not the class texts. Other resources used should be “peer reviewed”, “academic” or “scholarly” journals. (Examples of these types of journals: Criminology, Justice Quarterly, Public Administration Review, Criminal Justice Review, Criminal Justice Review) You may use credible on-line resources. (Examples of these types of credible on-line resources are The DEA Government Website, The FBI Government Website, and Bureau of Justice Statistics). Do not use Wikipedia as one of your ten resources for the paper. You cannot use all on-line websites as your ten references. You must use a variety of the accepted resources as your cited references.

The format for your citations is of your choosing but must be consistent throughout your paper.

The paper should be 8-10 pages with a font at least of 10 and no larger than 12. The font should either be Arial or Times New Roman. It should be double spaced.

If the paper is not at least 8-pages in written content then points will also be deducted. The reference page and any title page do not count as part of that 8-page requirement. Also, the spacing between paragraphs should not be tripled or quadrupled to make the paper appear longer. Dividing your paper with several headings also will not count in making your paper longer. It should be at least 8 full pages of written material on the topic. It should be submitted as a word document in Canvas.

**Term Paper#2: Case Study Paper**

Case Study term paper #2 is due on November 23, 2014 at 5pm.

Term paper assignment will count for 25% of your grade.

Any student who submits any late assignments will have points deducted for lateness. A student should give himself or herself proper time to submit the paper. If you wait until 4:55 on the date due to submit your paper and experience any technical difficulties the paper will be considered late at 5:01 pm. The closing date for the case study paper is November 30, 2014 at 5pm (10 points will be deducted for the first 24 hours it is late and 5 points for each additional day that it is late). If an assignment is not submitted by the closing date the student will get a zero for that assignment.

The paper is to be submitted in Canvas for grading. It is not to be e-mailed to me.

You will write an 8-10 page term paper on a case study. This is an actual investigation/court case where you will
discuss all the forensic evidence in that case. You will show how the all forensic evidence either strengthened or weakened the case. You will discuss how the evidence should have been collected, preserved and processed, and if it was done correctly. If the technology was not available in in your case topic then discuss how it would have been handled if it was available in that time period. You are to show your knowledge of the evidence and your understanding of how it should have been collected if that technology had existed during that time. Whatever forensic branches are part of the case study you will include in your paper. In this paper you may discuss multiple branches, if they apply to the case study.

Your term paper should contain at least ten academic resources cited in it. Your textbooks may be used but do not count as an academic resource for paper purposes. You may use textbooks as academic resources if they are not the class texts. Other resources used should be “peer reviewed”, “academic” or “scholarly” journals. (Examples of these types of journals: Criminology, Justice Quarterly, Public Administration Review, Criminal Justice Review, Criminal Justice Review) You may use credible on-line resources. (Examples of these types of credible on-line resources are The DEA Government Website, The FBI Government Website, and Bureau of Justice Statistics). Do not use Wikipedia as one of your ten resources for the paper. You cannot use all on-line websites as your ten references. You must use a variety of the accepted resources as your cited references.

The paper should be well written with correct spelling and proper grammar. You should begin the paper with your thesis statement, followed by the body of the paper and end the paper with a conclusion. The paper should easily flow from point to point within the body of the paper. The paper should display your understanding and knowledge of the topic. The paper should not contain your opinion on the topic. It should contain the facts and demonstrate your knowledge of those facts.

The format for your citations is of your choosing but must be consistent throughout your paper.

The paper should be 8-10 pages with a font at least of 10 and no larger than 12. The font should either be Arial or Times New Roman. It should be double spaced.

If the paper is not at least 8-pages in written content then points will also be deducted. The reference page and any title page do not count as part of that 8-page requirement. Also, the spacing between paragraphs should not be tripled or quadrupled to make the paper appear longer. Dividing your paper with several headings also will not count in making your paper longer. It should be at least 8 full pages of written material on the topic. It should be submitted as a word document in Canvas.

Students may choose their own case study or one of the case studies listed below:

1) The case of serial killer Ted Bundy
2) The Jeffrey MacDonald Case
3) The case of Richard Ramirez (The Night Stalker)
4) The case of Gary Ridgway (The Green River Killer)
5) The case of Dennis Rader (BTK)
6) The OJ Simpson Case
7) The Jon Benet Ramsey Case
8) The case of serial killer John Wayne Gacy, Jr
9) The case of serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer
10) The case of serial killer Anthony Sowell
11) The Caylee Anthony Case

International cases:
1) The Azaria Chamberlain Case
2) The Amanda Knox Case
**Exams:**

**Exam 1:** This exam is worth 25% of your grade.

This exam will consist of essay questions. The questions are scheduled to appear under the assignments module on October 12, 2014 at 5pm. It must be completed and submitted in Canvas by October 19, 2014 at 5pm. You must have completed the exam within this time period. It may be submitted at anytime during that time period. You can submit the exam early. A student should give himself or herself proper time to submit the paper. The closing date and time for exams is 30 minutes past the time due. This thirty-minute grace period does not mean lateness is acceptable (20 points will automatically be deducted for lateness). This exam will close at 5:30pm on October 19, 2014. No exams will be accepted after this time. Any exams e-mailed to me will not be accepted.

This is an essay exam and not short answer. You have a period of days to complete this exam. Your answers will be held to scale since you have all the materials and time to develop a solid answer that should not include a bunch of random facts that does not pertain to the question. The answers must be in complete sentences and in paragraph form. The answer should be well written with correct spelling and proper grammar. You should structure your answer by beginning the answer with your thesis statement and end the essay with a conclusion. The body of the essay exam is more than just a statement of facts, but should also contain your understanding of those facts. You are able to use all class materials so pertinent facts, figures, and examples should be included in your answer. All parts of the question must be fully answered.

You will be able use the text, PowerPoint Presentations, videos, and articles that were part of the class modules to answer this question. You may also cite some Websites (government, academic). You cannot cite Wikipedia. You must cite the material that you use. You may choose the citation form but be consistent in the exam. The references should be listed following the completion of each question. For example, after you write your essay answer to question 1, the references should go right under it before your essay to question 2.

The font should be at least of 10 and no larger than 12. The font should either be Arial or Times New Roman. The answers should be double spaced.

You are to complete this exam on your own without any assistance from any other party. Refer to the Academic Dishonesty Policy listed on this class syllabus.

**Final Exam:** This exam is worth 25% of your grade.

This final exam will consist of essay questions. The questions are scheduled to appear under the assignments module on December 5, 2014 at 5pm. It must be completed and submitted in Canvas by December 12, 2014 at 5pm. You must have completed the exam within this time period. You can submit the exam early. It may be submitted at anytime during that time period. A student should give himself or herself proper time to submit the paper. The closing date and time for exams is 30 minutes past the time due. This thirty-minute grace period does not mean lateness is acceptable (20 points will automatically be deducted for lateness). This exam will close at 5:30pm on October 19, 2014. No exams will be accepted after this time. Any exams e-mailed to me will not be accepted.

This is an essay exam and not short answer. You have a period of days to complete this exam. Your answers will be held to scale since you have all the materials and time to develop a solid answer that should not include a bunch of random facts that does not pertain to the question. The answers must be in complete sentences and in paragraph form. The answer should be well written with correct spelling and proper grammar. You should structure your answer by beginning the answer with your thesis statement and end the essay with a conclusion. The body of the essay exam is more than just a statement of facts, but should also contain your understanding of those facts. You are able to use all class materials so pertinent facts, figures, and examples should be included in your answer. All parts of the question must be fully answered.
You will be able use the text, PowerPoint Presentations, videos, and articles that were part of the class modules to answer this question. You may also cite some Websites (government, academic). You cannot cite Wikipedia. You must cite the material that you use. You may choose the citation form but be consistent in the exam. The references should be listed following the completion of each question. For example, after you write your essay answer to question 1, the references should go right under it before your essay to question 2.

The font should be at least of 10 and no larger than 12. The font should either be Arial or Times New Roman. The answers should be double-spaced.

You are to complete this exam on your own without any assistance from any other party. Refer to the Academic Dishonesty Policy listed on this class syllabus.

Discussion Boards:

Discussion boards will be used as class participation since this is an all web-based class. You can access the discussion boards under the Discussions link in Canvas.

There is no percentage value assigned to class participation for grading. But, if you participate you may qualify to raise your final grade. For example, if your final grade is 89.50 than it will be pushed to a 90 for class participation (from a B+ to an A-). It will only be rounded up if it is a .50 or better. The final grade average will not be raised more than a half of point for participating in discussion boards. There will be thirteen discussion boards this semester. I am requiring participation in seven discussions to qualify.

The discussion board posted will end at 11 pm on the end date. For example, the discussion board for week one is posted for August 25-August 31, 2014, which means it will end on August 31, 2014 at 11 pm. Anyone attempting to post a response after that time will not get credit for participation in that discussion board.

Discussion 1: August 25, 2014 to August 31, 2014 at 11pm.
Discussion 2: September 1, 2014 to September 7, 2014 at 11pm.
Discussion 3: September 8, 2014 to September 14, 2014 at 11pm
Discussion 4: September 15, 2014 to September 21, 2014 at 11pm
Discussion 5: September 22, 2014 to September 28, 2014 at 11pm
Discussion 6: September 29, 2014 to October 5, 2014 at 11pm
Discussion 7: October 6 to October 12, 2014 at 11pm
Discussion 8: October 20 to October 26, 2014 at 11pm
Discussion 9: October 27 to November 2, 2014 at 11pm
Discussion 10: November 3, 2014 to November 9, 2014 at 11pm
Discussion 11: November 10, 2014 to November 16, 2014 at 11pm
Discussion 12: November 17, 2014 to November 23, 2014 at 11pm
Discussion 13: December 1, 2014 to December 5, 2014 at 11pm

Extra Credit:

There will not be any extra credit offered for this class.

Web Extras: (Optional)

All Web Extras are Optional.

They may help you better visualize the materials that you are reading about in the textbooks. They are not graded and do not count as extra credit.
The materials contained within these Web Extras are not testable unless it is specifically discussed in the text readings. Everything in your text readings is testable material.

You also may need to upgrade you flash plug-in to complete some of these Web Extras.

**Chapter Review Option (Optional)**

At the end of each chapter in the Criminalistics book by Saferstein there are review questions. These questions can help you get a better understanding of the book's reading materials. It is also a way to help test yourself for the exams.

You will not be graded on these questions and will not get any extra credit for answering them.

**Forensics in the News Link (Optional Reading)**

The link contains web based news articles relating to forensic science. If you read an article on-line that others in the class may also be interested in reading then you may e-mail me the link. I will read the article and post it if it relates to the class material. The articles posted under this link are optional reading and no extra credit will be given for posting an article or reading them.

**Journal Articles Link (Optional Reading)**

The journal articles link contains links to peer reviewed scholarly journals on Forensic Science Topics. These articles are not required reading, and no extra credit will be offered for reading them.

**USFSM & Class Policies:**

**Academic Dishonesty:**

The University considers any form of plagiarism or cheating on exams, projects, or papers to be unacceptable behavior. Please be sure to review the university’s policy in the USFSM Catalog, the USF System Academic Integrity of Students, and the USF System Student Code of Conduct.

**Academic Disruption:**

The University does not tolerate behavior that disrupts the learning process. The policy for addressing academic disruption is included with Academic Dishonesty in the USFSM Catalog, USF System Academic Integrity of Students, and the USF System Student Code of Conduct.

**Contingency Plans:**

In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for USFSM to suspend normal operations. During this time, USFSM may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to: Canvas, Elluminate, Skype, and email messaging and/or an alternate schedule. It’s the responsibility of the student to monitor Canvas site for each class for course specific communication, and the main USFSM and College websites, emails, and MoBull messages for important general information. The USF hotline at 1 (800) 992-4231 is updated with pre-recorded information during an emergency. See the Campus Police Website for further information.
Disabilities Accommodation:

Students are responsible for registering with the Office of Students with Disabilities Services (SDS) in order to receive academic accommodations. Reasonable notice must be given to the SDS office (typically 5 working days) for accommodations to be arranged. It is the responsibility of the student to provide each instructor with a copy of the official Memo of Accommodation. Contact Information: Disability Coordinator, 941-359-4714 http://usfsm.edu/disability-services/

Fire Alarm Instructions:

At the beginning of each semester please note the emergency exit maps posted in each classroom. These signs are marked with the primary evacuation route (red) and secondary evacuation route (orange) in case the building needs to be evacuated. See Emergency Evacuation Procedures.

Religious Observances:

USFSM recognizes the right of students and faculty to observe major religious holidays. Students who anticipate the necessity of being absent from class for a major religious observance must provide notice of the date(s) to the instructor, in writing, by the second week of classes.

Instructor Copyright:

Students may not sell notes or other course materials

GENERAL INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS:

Academic Support Services:

Information Commons provides students with individual and group study spaces, computers, printers, and various media equipment for temporary use. Information Commons is staffed with a librarian, learning support faculty, tutors, and technology and e-learning specialists. Students challenged by the rigors of academic writing, mathematics, or other course content are urged to contact their professors early in the semester to chart out a plan for academic success, and/or regularly use the tutoring services provided by the Learning Support Services, which are provided at no cost to students.