

**COURSE SYLLABUS**
**CRJ 485: INTRODUCTION TO FORENSIC SCIENCE**

**Fall Semester (Session 2)**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Chris Findley, Ph.D.

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**COURSE SCHEDULE:** October 9th - December 3rd, 2023

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**
This course examines the development of forensic applications in criminal investigations and the rooting of forensics in the natural sciences. Topics include techniques of crime scene processing, an overview of physical evidence, forensic toxicology, biological stain analysis, DNA, and arson investigations.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK**
Saferstein, R. (2017). *Criminalistics: An introduction to forensic science* (13th ed.).
Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

**SUGGESTED REFERENCE SOURCE**
Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th edition

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

After completing this course, the student will be able to:

* Explain the history and development of forensic applications in criminal investigations

* Identify and explain procedures employed in searching crime scenes

* Explain the application of natural sciences in criminal investigations

* Identify and explain procedures for collecting and recording various types of evidence

* Identify and explain methods employed in the analysis of forensic evidence

* Explain forensic services employed by contemporary crime laboratories

**Course Policies & Procedures**

**CREDIT HOUR STATEMENT**

Courses offered in a 8-week session are twice as intensive as those held during a traditional full semester. Each week students should expect to spend 14 hours interacting with course content through a combination of direct instruction and out of class student work.

Examples of direct instruction may include viewing or reading course lectures, engaging in class forum discussions with the course instructor and other students, viewing or reading supplementary online content required by the instructor, completing course quizzes and/or examinations, and reading instructor announcements related to course material and instructor feedback on assignments.

Examples of out of class student work may include reading the assigned course textbook, doing independent library research, completing essay assignments, developing more extensive research papers, and studying in preparation for exams and quizzes.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

All assignments must be completed by the learner. Learners are expected to read and adhere to the Academic Integrity section of Reinhardt University’s Academic Catalog. Cases of academic dishonesty may result in expulsion from the University, a failing grade for the course, or a failing grade for the assignment.

The following are recognized as unacceptable forms of academic behavior at Reinhardt University:

* Plagiarizing, that is presenting words or ideas not your own as if they were your own. The words of others must be enclosed in quotation marks and documented. The source of the distinctive ideas must also be acknowledged through appropriate documentation. (NOTE: Strictly adhere to APA citation and referencing guidelines to avoid this).

* Submitting a paper written by another student or another person as if it were your own.

* Submitting a paper containing sentences, paragraphs, or sections lifted from another student’s work or other publication; there must be written documentation.

* Submitting a paper written by you for another course or occasion without the explicit knowledge and consent of the instructor.

* Fabricating evidence or statistics that supposedly represent your original research

* Cheating of any sort on tests, papers, projects, reports, etc.

* Using the internet inappropriately as a resource. See 3 above.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS/ASSIGNMENTS**

Knowledge of the material presented in this course will be evaluated based on the satisfactory completion of all coursework. Methods of instruction and learning include  reading assignments, discussion postings, individual research, and essay assignments. Learners are expected to complete all module activities during the week they are assigned and in the manner prescribed.

**Reading Assignments**

Learners are expected to complete the assigned textbook readings for each module prior to participating in discussions and/or submitting essay assignments. The assigned course textbook can be accessed through the "Vital Source Course Materials" link found in the left-side navigation menu.

**Discussion Assignments**

Each discussion posting must contain a minimum of a 200 word initial response. The deadline for postings shall be published within Module Academic Requirements.  Learners will be penalized 10 points for each day he/she is late on an initial posting. Initial postings will not be accepted after 11:59 PM (EST) on Friday. Initial postings must cite material from the course textbook and one outside scholarly source in accordance with APA requirements.

Learners must reply to THREE DIFFERENT students in the class with a minimum of a 100 word response for each. The responses must be substantive in nature by adding additional knowledge to the conversation. Responses should not be opinions or simple “agree/disagree statements.” Deadlines for response postings shall be published within Module Academic Requirements. Learners must also respond to any questions posed by the instructor.

All postings and replies must adhere to APA 7th Edition requirements regarding citations and referencing. Learners must also employ proper grammar, punctuation, and correct spelling.

**Essay Assignments**

Learners must submit essay assignments no later than 11:59 PM (EST) on the Sunday at the end of each module. Essay assignments often have more than one part. Be sure to answer each part of each question. Learners must adhere to the minimum word count specified for each assignment. Assignments must adhere to the citation and referencing requirements contained in the 7th Edition APA Manual. Learners must also employ proper grammar, punctuation, and correct spelling in all submissions.

**Research Paper**

Learners must complete an APA style research paper on a forensic science topic approved by the instructor. The research paper will be 5 to 6 pages in length (minus title and reference pages) and the student must use at least 5 scientific sources. Scientific resources consist of peer reviewed journal articles, government publications and professional literature.  If you have any questions about this see the instructor.

\*\*\* These are the minimum requirements for assignments in order to complete this course. Please be sure to review the grading rubric or scoring guide for each assignment’s grading criteria. \*\*\*

**EVALUATION & GRADING**

The following grading scale will be utilized in the determination of the student’s course grade:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Percentage of Points Earned** | **Corresponding Letter Grade** |
| 90% to 100% | A |
| 80% to 89% | B |
| 70% to 79% | C |
| 60% to 69% | D |
| 0% to 59% | F |

**NOTE: Criminal justice students must earn a final grade of "C" or higher.**

**FINAL AVERAGE BREAKDOWN**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assignment Category** | **Percentage of Final Grade** |
| Discussion Assignments | 20% |
| Essay Assignments | 60% |
| Research Paper | 20% |

**PROJECTED LEARNING SCHEDULE**

**Module 1:   October 9th – October 22nd (2 weeks)**
Chapter 1: Introduction
Chapter 2: The Crime Scene
Chapter 3: Physical Evidence

**Module 2:   October 23rd – November 5th (2 weeks)**
Chapter 5: Death Investigation
Chapter 12: Drugs

**Module 3:  November 6th - November 12th (1 week)**
Chapter 13: Forensic Toxicology
Chapter 16: DNA: The Indispensable Forensic Science Tool

**Module 4:  November 13th – November 19th (1 week)**
Chapter 4: Crime Scene Reconstruction: Bloodstain Pattern Analysis
Chapter 11: Hairs, Fibers, & Paint

**Module 5:  November 20th - December 3rd (2 weeks)**
Chapter 9: Impression Evidence

Chapter 6: Fingerprints

**ONLINE ATTENDANCE AND WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

Students are accountable for all required work in each of their courses. They must assume full responsibility for class attendance in a way satisfactory to the instructor and for work missed because of absence. Since class sessions function not merely for individual learning but also for group interaction, absences can become a serious problem both for the individual and for the group.

Online courses are delivered over a period of eight (8) weeks with activities and assignments specified for each week. An online week is defined as being Monday 12:00 AM (EST) through Sunday at 11:59 PM (EST). Deadlines for attendance are based on Eastern Standard Time.

A student will be considered in attendance for a given week of online instruction if he or she participates in the course. Participation is defined as posting a response to a discussion assignment or submitting a completed course room activity/assignment during the online week prior to Sunday at 11:59 PM (EST).

**Initial Course Participation**
A student who fails to participate during the first 8 calendar days of a course shall be administratively withdrawn from the course.

**Ongoing Course Participation**
Ongoing course participation is satisfied through the continued completion of course room activities, such as assignments or discussion question responses. Students who do not participate in a course for 7 or more consecutive days are not satisfying ongoing course participation. There are weekly discussion questions for this course.

Students who are not satisfying the ongoing course participation requirement will be notified via University email. The learner must resume participation in the course within 3 calendar days following an absence.

Students who do not resume participation in the course will be administratively withdrawn from the course and issued a grade of “W” or “F”. A grade of “W” will be issued if the administrative withdrawal occurs before 11:59 PM (EST) on Monday of the fifth week of the course.

Students may be impacted academically and financially in the case of voluntary and administrative withdrawals. It is the student’s responsibility to understand these implications.

**NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

Reinhardt University does not discriminate in any of its policies, programs, or activities on the basis of race, color, age, culture, national origin, socioeconomic status, gender, religious belief, sexual orientation, physical (dis)ability or genetic information.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a documented disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Academic Support Office (ASO).

Reinhardt University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Therefore, if you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to register with the Academic Support Office (ASO). The ASO may be reached at 770-720-5567.

**ONLINE ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES**

Reinhardt University offers academic support services for online students through BrainFuse HelpNow. Services include access to live tutors, writing lab assistance, and study center resources. These resources are offered at no additional charge and are available on demand through [Course Resources](https://reinhardtuniversity.instructure.com/courses/9195/pages/course-resources).