

FRSC 368 (Weds 5-7:50 pm)

Instructor: Jennifer Bresett

Office hours: By appointment

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Course Description:

A survey of forensic science course that introduces students to the principles, theories, and practices of several disciplines of forensic science. Topics will include evidence types and analytical methods encountered in a typical full service forensic science laboratory. The analytical methods and theories supporting scientific crime investigation as well as providing expert testimony in a mock trial will be discussed using a variety of methods including media and lecture presentations via a synchronous/asynchronous format.

For the synchronous online meetings you are expected to be “virtually” present for these just as if we were meeting in a regular classroom. You must have a working computer, microphone, webcam, and internet connection. In the event of technical difficulty, email me immediately. Participation points may be deducted from the final grade if repeated technical difficulties or other instances of non-participation. Should the instructor be experiencing technical difficulty, wait 15 minutes before logging off. Check blackboard and your email for instructions which will be posted as soon as possible.

Course Objective:

To learn why and how a full service forensic crime laboratory operates. Upon successful completion of this course students will have a better understanding of how several disciplines of forensic science fits into the overall scheme of criminal investigations and be aware of some of the laws and legal requirements associated with forensic evidence examinations and testimony.

Evaluation

The course grade will be determined as follows:

<i>Exam 1</i>	<i>10%</i>
<i>Exam 2</i>	<i>10%</i>
<i>Assignments/Quizzes</i>	<i>40%</i>
<i>Mock Case Testimony</i>	<i>15%</i>
<i>Final Exam</i>	<i>15%</i>
<i>Participation</i>	<i>10%</i>

Grading

<i>A : 93-100</i>	<i>A-: 90-92.9</i>	
<i>B+: 87-89.9</i>	<i>B : 83-86.9</i>	<i>B-: 80-82.9</i>
<i>C+: 77-79.9</i>	<i>C : 70-76.9</i>	
<i>D+: 67-69</i>	<i>D : 60-66.9</i>	
<i>F : < 60</i>		

Attendance and Class Participation: Students must attend class regularly. If you must be absent from class, you must notify me and provide proper documentation. Students will still be responsible for any missed work. Make-up exams will only be given in case of medical or personal emergencies (proper documentation must be provided).

IMPORTANT: Students who fail to appear for first session of evening classes, may forfeit their space in class. Instructors have the right to release these spaces to other students wishing to add the class to their schedules. Students who lose their spaces must officially withdraw from the course through Enrollment Services to avoid earning an FX grade for non-attendance.

Course Outline

Week	Topic
01.27	Introduction to Professional Practices/Ethics
02.03	Quality Assurance <i>Assignment Due: Ethical Scenario Exercise and Discussion on Blackboard</i>
02.10	Crime Scene Overview <i>Assignments Due: 1. Complete Fishbone/Cause and Effect Diagram/Review Video</i> <i>2. Quality Assurance vs. Quality Control Short Answer Essay</i> <i>3. Article – Forensic Science International: Basic Elements of a Quality Assurance System for Forensic Document Examiners</i>
02.17	Blood Spatter <i>Assignment Due: Crime Scene Case Scenarios</i>
02.24	Serological Testing <i>Assignment Due: Blood Spatter Quiz</i>
03.03	Presentations (Serology Methods)
03.10	Exam 1/Readings <i>FBI SWGDRUG Guidelines</i>
03.24	Drug Analysis
03.31	DNA Analysis <i>Assignments Due: 1. Summary of Drug Analysis Presentation by BPD Drug Analyst</i> <i>2. Presumptive and Confirmatory Test/Category Assignment</i>
04.07	Latent Prints <i>Assignment Due: DNA Case Summary</i>
04.14	Trace Analysis/Firearms <i>Assignments Due: 1. Comparison Exercise</i> <i>2. Article - Forensic Science International: Lumicyano</i> <i>3. Watch link with Processing Lab Tour</i>
04.21	Exam 2/Court Articles <i>1. Journal of Forensic Sciences – Understanding Juror Perceptions of Forensic Evidence: Investigating the Impact of Case Context on Perceptions of Forensic Evidence Strength</i> <i>2. Journal of Forensic Sciences – The CSI Effect and the Canadian and the Australian Jury</i> <i>3. Case Report: The Frye Hearing in Florida: An Attempt to Exclude Scientific Evidence</i>

complete an assignment and/or exam (including free or pay websites that maintain textbook and/or instructor solutions). To clarify, copying or collaborating with other students or using external resources, including other people, on any type of assignments that are expressly designed to be completed individually is cheating.

Recorded sessions and any associated materials are designated ONLY for registered students in the class. Any sharing or dissemination of recordings beyond the student body registered in the course and section constitutes a violation of privacy and may also be categorized as cheating or defamation of character (depending on the circumstance), a possible copyright infringement.

Complicity in Academic Dishonesty means helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty. Some examples include but are not limited to: Allowing another to copy from one's paper during an examination or test; distributing test questions or substantive information about the material to be tested without authorization before the scheduled exercise; collaborating on academic work that is expressly designed to be completed individually; taking an examination or test for another student; signing a false name on an academic exercise; or sharing assignment or exam information before, during, or after the deliverable in written, electronic, video, or verbal form.

Abuse of Academic Materials means destroying, stealing, or making inaccessible library or other resource materials. Some examples include: Stealing or destroying library or reference materials needed for common academic exercises; hiding resource materials so others may not use them; destroying computer programs or files needed in academic work; stealing or intentionally destroying another student's notes or laboratory experiments; receiving assistance in locating or using sources of information in an assignment where such assistance has been forbidden by the instructor.

Loaner Laptop Availability and Student Support Funds:

The Office of Technology Services (OTS) has a limited number of laptops to loan to students whose personal computers are unable to run Blackboard, WebEx, Zoom or applications required by the curriculum. If you need to borrow a device, speak with the instructor who can submit a request on your behalf.

The Towson University Foundation has created the Student Emergency Fund, which has some funds available to assist students in purchasing hotspots, upgrading home internet, and other necessary technologies. For more information, see their website.