



El Camino College
COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD – Official

Course Acronym:	AJ
Course Number:	132
Descriptive Title:	Forensic Crime Scene Investigation
Division:	Health Sciences and Athletics
Department:	Administration of Justice
Course Disciplines:	Administration of Justice
Catalog Description:	This course provides students with an introduction to forensic Crime Scene Investigation (CSI). It examines the methods utilized in the forensic analysis of crime scenes, pattern evidence, instruments, firearms, questioned documents and controlled substances. Topics covered will include the workings of a CSI unit, an overview of the relationship between forensic science and law enforcement, as well as evidence collection and analysis rules.
Prerequisite:	
Co-requisite:	
Recommended Preparation:	Eligibility for English C1000 or equivalent
Enrollment Limitation:	
Hours Lecture (per week):	3
Hours Laboratory (per week):	0
Outside Study Hours:	6
Total Course Hours:	54
Course Units:	3
Grading Method:	Letter Grade only
Credit Status:	Credit, degree applicable
Transfer CSU:	Yes
Effective Date:	fall 2009
Transfer UC:	No
Effective Date:	
General Education: ECC	
Term:	
Other:	
CSU GE:	
Term:	
Other:	
IGETC:	
Term:	

Other:	
CalGETC:	
Term:	
Other:	
Student Learning Outcomes:	SLO #1 Crime Scene Investigation Upon completion of this course and by participating in the learning process, the students will achieve a basic level of proficiency and an ability to demonstrate the fundamental skills and knowledge necessary to conduct a basic crime scene investigation SLO #2 Investigator Role Upon completion of this course and by participating in the learning process, the students will gain a principal understanding of the role of the Crime Scene Investigator in the criminal investigation process. SLO #3 Crime Scene Evidence Upon completion of this course and by participating in the learning process, the students will recognize evidence at the crime scene and understand the value of crime scene evidence as it relates to crime scene investigation and providing investigative leads.
Course Objectives:	1. Identify and explain the role of forensic specialists in the Criminal Justice System. 2. Explain the process of locating, identifying, marking, and properly collecting various categories of evidence located within a crime scene. This would include physical objects, latent fingerprints, biological material, shoe and tool impressions and any type of trace evidence. 3. Demonstrate crime scene documentation techniques such as sketches and photography which includes the nature of the crime, observations of the crime scene, identity of all persons who enter and leave, evidence found, evidence collected including the nature of the evidence item, who collected the item, how it was collected, and how it was secured and preserved. 4. Analyze crime scenes to identify supplies and equipment needed to conduct a proper crime scene investigation. 5. Explain the procedures for the collection and preserving Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) evidence to prevent contamination. Identify the three methods of DNA typing. 6. Compare and contrast the roles of the crime scene investigation process and that of the crime lab in which the criminalist performs the analysis on evidence collected during the crime scene investigation. 7. Explain the various databases available to the investigator to search for known standards to compare to specimens recovered from a crime scene including the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)'s Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) fingerprint database and the State of California's Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) DNA database. 8. Apply all rules of search and seizure concerning evidence found and collected at a crime scene including the application of the 4th amendment and all applicable exceptions to the 4th amendment as they relate to search and seizure. 9. Identify the various types of crime scenes and differentiate between crime scene process versus crime scene analysis.

	10. Identify and differentiate depressant, stimulant, hallucinogen, and narcotic substances and explain the methods of analyzing each type of substance in a forensic laboratory. 11. Identify and explain Personal Identification Patterns that identify a person. 12. Identify and differentiate the types of pattern evidence and explain their respective importance in crime scene reconstruction.
Major Topics:	I. OVERVIEW OF ROLE OF FORENSIC SCIENCE WITHIN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM (4 hours, lecture) A. Overview of forensic science B. Major contributors to the field C. The crime lab D. The role of the Forensic Specialist E. Role of the Crime Scene Investigator F. Compare and contrast crime scene processing and crime scene analysis G. Reality versus public perception CSI II. FIRST RESPONSE TO CRIME SCENE (3 hours, lecture) A. Crime scene preservation and crime scene management B. Crime scene logs C. Documenting crime scenes D. Crime scene protocol III. PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION (3 hours, lecture) A. Organizing investigative team B. Crime scene searches C. Evidence documentation D. Crime scene sketches E. CSI and evidence documentation supplies IV. INVESTIGATIVE REPORT WRITING (3 hours, lecture) A. Writing investigative reports that document collection for use in criminal prosecutions B. Writing investigative reports that document analysis V. EVIDENCE IDENTIFICATION (3 hours, lecture)

A. Conducting a crime scene search

B. Reading and logging items

1. Was item handled by perpetrator?
2. Was item connected to crime in some way?
3. Does item have probative value?

VI DNA FORENSIC ANALYSIS (6 hours, lecture)

A. DNA Evidence

B. Three methods of DNA Testing

C. Sources of DNA

D. CODIS database

VII. DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY AND CRIME SCENES (3 hours, lecture)

A. Crime scene photography

B. Proper protocol in documenting crime scene photography

C. Properly framing items of evidence to be photographed

D. Shooting overall scenes and close ups of individual items of evidence

VIII. EVIDENCE COLLECTION PROCEDURES (3 hours, lecture)

A. Documenting chain of custody

B. Properly marking items of evidence

C. Recording through proper documentation all evidence collected

D. Documenting the location from which evidence was seized by

E. Photographing such items and including them on a crime scene sketch

IX. LATENT FINGERPRINTS (6 hours, lecture)

A. Identification and processing

B. Lifting prints from a variety of surfaces

C. Entering prints in AFIS and comparing latent prints with known standards

X. COURTROOM PRESENTATION OF EVIDENCE (6 hours, lecture)

A. Testifying in court concerning evidence collected at crime scene

	B. Using models and exhibits to illustrate testimony C. Properly authenticating all evidence seized through testimony XI. LEGAL ASPECTS OF CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION (3 hours, lecture) A. Ethics and issues B. Various constitutional guidelines and restrictions C. Complying with various appellate court decisions XII. ARSON INVESTIGATIONS (2 hours, lecture) A. Identifying and differentiating the chemical and material evidence in arson and explosives crime scenes B. The role of the Fire Marshall C. The role of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms investigators D. Laboratory analysis of the evidence XIII. NARCOTICS INVESTIGATIONS (3 hours, lecture) A. Identifying and differentiating depressant, stimulant, hallucinogen and narcotic substances B. Explaining the methods of analyzing each type of these substance in a forensic laboratory C. Special precautions in handling narcotic evidence XIV. INVESTIGATIVE TOPICS IN FORENSICS ANALYSIS (4 hours, lecture) A. Identifying and explaining Personal Identification Patterns that identify a person B. Identifying and explaining the processes for analyzing questioned documents C. Identifying and explaining the processes for analyzing tool mark and firearm evidence XV. CAREER PREPARATION (2 hours, lecture) A. Determining the minimum qualifications for a career in forensic science B. Identifying the desired qualifications for a career in forensic science C. Exploring employment opportunities in the discipline
Total Lecture Hours:	54

Total Laboratory Hours:	0
Total Hours:	54
A.1. Primary Methods of Evaluation (Part 1 - CCN courses only):	
A.2. Primary Method of Evaluation (Part 2 - all courses; choose one):	Skills demonstration
Typical Assignment Using Primary Method of Evaluation:	Examine a simulated crime scene. Using industry protocol standards, establish a crime scene perimeter, secure the crime scene, initiate documentation, conduct a search, locate and identify evidence, and properly secure the evidence. Write a five to ten page crime scene investigation report and submit to the instructor.
Critical Thinking Assignment 1:	Analyze and research a high profile death using a minimum of three sources. Write a three- to five- page report analyzing forensic cause and include a coroner's report. Submit report to the instructor.
Critical Thinking Assignment 2:	Working in groups, examine a crime scene. After using appropriate techniques, compare known information with the crime scene and identify investigative procedures. Submit a three to five page investigative report to the instructor.
Other Evaluation Methods:	Class Performance, Completion, Embedded Questions, Fieldwork, Multiple Choice, Other (specify), Other Exams, Performance Exams, Reading Reports
Instructional Methods:	Demonstration, Discussion, Field trips, Group Activities, Guest Speakers, Lecture, Multimedia presentations, Other (specify), Role play/simulation
If other:	
Work Outside of Class:	Answer questions, Observation of or participation in an activity related to course content (such as theatre event, museum, concert, debate, meeting), Other (specify), Problem solving activity, Required reading, Skill practice, Study, Written work (such as essay/composition/report/analysis/research)
If Other:	
Up-To-Date Representative Texts:	Richard Saferstein, <u>Forensic Science: From the Crime Scene to the Crime Lab</u> , 4th ed., Pearson, 2019.
Alternative Texts:	
Required Supplementary Readings:	
Other Required Materials:	Crime Scene Kit / Casting Materials
Requisite:	
Category:	
Requisite course(s): List both prerequisites and corequisites in this box.	
Requisite and Matching skill(s): Bold the requisite skill. List	

the corresponding course objective under each skill(s).	
Requisite Skill:	
Requisite Skill and Matching Skill(s): Bold the requisite skill(s). If applicable	
Requisite course:	
Requisite and Matching skill(s): Bold the requisite skill. List the corresponding course objective under each skill(s).	
Requisite Skill:	Eligibility for English 1A
Requisite Skill and Matching skill(s): Bold the requisite skill. List the corresponding course objective under each skill(s). If applicable	Ability to read and comprehend crime scene material. Ability to write investigative reports. Summarize, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize college-level tests. Write a well-reasoned, well-supported expository essay that demonstrates application of the writing process.
Enrollment Limitations and Category:	
Enrollment Limitations Impact:	
Course Created by:	Raymond Lewis
Date:	09/01/2008
Original Board Approval Date:	01/20/2009
Last Reviewed and/or Revised by:	Dina Mauger
Date:	03/24/2024
Last Board Approval Date:	06/26/2025
Effective Term:	FA 2026