

Criminalistics I (CJSA 1308-9Y1)

CREDIT

3 Semester Credit Hours (3 hours lecture, 0 hour lab)

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face

PREREQUISITE/CO-REQUISITE:

None

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduction to the field of Criminalistics. Topics include the appreciation of scientific and technical methods in the investigation of crime including location, identification, and handling of evidence for scientific analysis

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Describe the various roles of the Forensic Scientist from the crime scene technician, to the medical legal forensic pathologist to the court room testimony of a criminal case.
- Explain and apply the scientific method to both research and to the actual crime scene.
- Explain and utilize the Locard's Theory and different crime scene search patterns.
- Demonstrate understanding of the actual participation of a mock crime scene and complete the on scene investigation to include a written report.

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor: Terry Higginbotham

Email: tlhigginbotham@libertyisd.net

Office Phone: (936) 336-6483

Office Location: Liberty High School, Room 125

Office Hours: 5th period

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS

Forensic Science Today by Dr. Henry C. Lee and George M. Taft (2nd Edition)

Approved: August 2024

Lawyers & Judges Publishing Company, Inc. Tucson, Arizona

a. ISBN number is 13: 978 1 933264 87 5

PARTICIPATION/ATTENDANCE POLICY

LISD attendance policy



DROP POLICY

If you wish to drop a course, you are responsible for initiating and completing the drop process. If you stop coming to class and fail to drop the course, you will earn an “F” in the course.

COURSE CALENDAR

The schedule reflects Liberty High School classroom instruction and is subject to adjustment for the Liberty ISD calendar.

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS (Due on this Date)	ASSIGNMENTS (Due on this Date)
Week 1-2	Course orientation; forensic science, scientific method, careers, and laboratory safety	Course policies and safety expectations	Safety and scientific- method practice
Week 3-4	Crime-scene search patterns, scene security, notes, sketches, and photography	Search-pattern practice	Scene documentation exercise

Week 5-6	Physical and trace evidence; Locard's Exchange Principle; collection and preservation	Evidence handling practice	Trace-evidence lab
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Week 7-8	Latent fingerprints: development, comparison, lifting, and documentation	Fingerprint development lab	Latent-print comparison and documentation
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9-10	Controlled substances and preliminary drug identification	Drug-identification practice	Evidence documentation assignment
11-12	Investigative report writing and case-file organization	Report-writing workshop	Crime-scene report draft
13-14	Mock crime-scene investigation: search, documentation, collection, and preservation	Mock-scene practical	Team case file and evidence submission
15-16	Courtroom testimony, course review, and final assessment	Testimony practice and review	Final practical and written assessment

COURSE EVALUATION

Final grades will be calculated according to the following criteria:

- Major Grades 40%
- Minor Grades 60%

GRADE SCALE

- 90-100 A
- 80-89 B
- 70-79 C
- 60-69 D
- 0-59 F

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students found to be committing academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, or collusion) may receive disciplinary action. Students need to familiarize themselves with the institution's Academic Dishonesty Policy available in the Student Catalog & Handbook at

<http://catalog.lit.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=80#academic-dishonesty>.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

The latest technical requirements, including hardware, compatible browsers, operating systems, etc. can be online at <https://lit.edu/online-learning/online-learning-minimum-computer-requirements>. A functional broadband internet connection, such as DSL, cable, or WiFi is necessary to maximize the use of online technology and resources.

DISABILITIES STATEMENT

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal antidiscrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights for persons with disabilities. LIT provides reasonable accommodations as defined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, to students with a diagnosed disability. The Special Populations Office is located in the Eagles' Nest Room 129 and helps foster a supportive and inclusive educational environment by maintaining partnerships with faculty and staff, as well as promoting awareness among all members of the Lamar Institute of Technology community. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Special Populations Coordinator at (409)-951-5708 or email specialpopulations@lit.edu. You may also visit the online resource at [Special Populations - Lamar Institute of Technology \(lit.edu\)](#).

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT STATEMENT

It is the responsibility of all registered Lamar Institute of Technology students to access, read, understand and abide by all published policies, regulations, and procedures listed in the *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook*. The *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook* may be accessed at www.lit.edu. Please note that the online version of the *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook* supersedes all other versions of the same document.

AI STATEMENT

Lamar Institute of Technology (LIT) recognizes the recent advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI), such as ChatGPT, have changed the landscape of many career disciplines and will impact many students in and out of the classroom. To prepare students for their selected careers, LIT desires to guide students in the ethical use

of these technologies and incorporate AI into the classroom instruction and assignments appropriately. Appropriate use of these technologies is at the discretion of the instructor. Students are reminded that all submitted work must be their own original work unless otherwise specified. Students should contact their instructor with any questions as to the acceptable use of AI/ChatGPT in their courses.

STARFISH

LIT utilizes an early alert system called Starfish. Throughout the semester, you may receive emails from Starfish regarding your course grades, attendance, or academic performance. Faculty members record student attendance, raise flags and kudos to express concern or give praise, and you can make an appointment with faculty and staff all through the Starfish home page. You can also login to Blackboard or MyLIT and click on the Starfish link to view academic alerts and detailed information. It is the responsibility of the student to pay attention to these emails and information in Starfish and consider taking the recommended actions. Starfish is used to help you be a successful student at LIT.

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES/INFORMATION