

Syllabus for CRJ 146: Introduction to Physical Evidence

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General information University Office: Alpine
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Course CRJ 146: Introduction to Physical Evidence
Section: 01
Class Meets: Tuesday 7:00pm-9:50pm, Room 212 Douglas Hall

Prerequisite: Student must pass CRJ 110 with a minimum grade of C- and be either a Criminal Justice major, Fire Service Special Major or Forensic Investigation Minor to enroll in this class.

Spring Semester 2009 Instruction begins: Tuesday, January 27, 2009
Midterm examination: Tuesday, March 17, 2009
SPRING BREAK: MARCH 29-APRIL 4, 2009
Last day of instruction: Tuesday May 12, 2009
Final examination: Tuesday, May 19, 2009

Accommodations for students with disabilities If you have a disability and require accommodations, you need to provide disability documentation to SSWD, Lassen Hall 1008, (916) 278-6955. Please discuss your accommodation needs with me after class or during my office hours early in the semester.

Catalog course description This course provides an overview of the role of science in collecting and evaluating physical evidence as a component of the criminal investigation and legal process. Various operations in the examination and interpretation of physical evidence are examined with emphasis on the role of science in supporting the investigator and in the litigation process. Course is suitable for both science and non-science majors.

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Course goal The goal of this course is to develop a working knowledge of forensic science, forensic terminology, and the forensic examinations of physical evidence encountered or collected from the scenes of major crimes.

Learning objectives Demonstrate a working knowledge of forensic terminology and current forensic examinations of physical evidence encountered or collected from the scenes of crimes.

Describe and discuss the forensic laboratory's role in police investigations and the role of forensic science in public administration generally and in matters of criminal and civil law specifically.

Identify the forensic aspects of crime scene investigations, current methods of collecting physical evidence and the application of modern scientific knowledge to the crime scene investigator.

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of class and individual characteristics as they are applied to physical evidence.

Ability to define and discuss the various categories of physical evidence encountered at the crime scene and analyzed by the crime laboratory.

Discuss and illustrate the various operations undertaken in the analysis and interpretation of various categories of physical evidence

Demonstrate knowledge of the forensic aspects of drugs and toxicological analyses.

Demonstrate knowledge of the forensic aspects of arson and explosion investigations.

Discuss the key principles of serology and DNA analysis as applied to forensic investigations.

Demonstrate knowledge of firearms, tool marks and other impression evidence encountered or collected from crime scenes.

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Text

A text is not required for this course. Recommended reference texts:

Criminalistics An Introduction to Forensic Science

Author: Richard Saferstein
Ninth Edition, 2007, Pearson Prentice Hall

Forensic Science From the Crime Scene to the Crime Lab

Author: Richard Saferstein
First Edition, 2009, Pearson Prentice Hall

Fundamentals of Forensic Science

Authors: Max M. Houck and Jay A. Siegel
First Edition, 2006, Elsevier Academic Press

Forensic Science the basics

Author: Jay A. Siegel
2007 CRC Press

Introduction to Forensic Science & Criminalistics

Authors: R.E. Gaensslen, Howard A. Harris, and Henry Lee
2007, McGraw-Hill

Class Notes

Class notes may be found on SacCT at <https://online.csus.edu/> 24 – 48 hours before the scheduled class. You will be able to log into your SacCT course(s), provided that:

- Step 1: You have a [SacLink Account](#) AND
 - Step 2: You are officially [registered](#) for the course AND
 - Step 3: You have been placed in the SacCT course
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Class attendance

Roll will be called during the first three weeks of the semester or until all adds and drops are completed. The university policy regarding adds and drops will be followed.

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**Evaluation of
your effort**

Your final grade will be based upon:

- Mid-term Examination 35 %
- Final Examination 40 %
- On-line Quizzes 15 %
- Writing Assignment 10 %

**Make-up
examinations**

Make-up examinations for missed classroom exams are offered only in instances of sickness or other dire circumstances.

Contact the instructor before, or as soon as possible after the examination date - but no later than 2-days after the examination - to make arrangements to take the examination at the University Testing Center. The Testing Center offers a make-up test service, on a limited basis, for missed classroom exams. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements to take the examination at the Testing Center by calling ahead and making an appointment.

The Testing Center's make-up testing hours are by appointment only, Monday through Thursday at 5 PM. The fee is \$6.00 per exam. For additional information call (916) 278-7870.

The Testing Center is located in [Lassen Hall](#), room 2302.

**Writing
assignment**

Due Tuesday April 28, 2009.

Topic: To be announced.

The paper is to be no longer than four (4) typed pages, double-spaced (~1,000 words).

**Student tutorial
on plagiarism**

Refer to the student tutorial on plagiarism:

<http://library.csus.edu/content2.asp?pageID=353>

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Quizzes

Ten (10) quizzes will be posted on-line through SacCT.

Access to the quizzes begins at 10:00 p.m. on Tuesday and closes at 10:00 p.m. on Saturday.

Taking the on-line quiz

Before you start the quiz:

- The quiz questions
 - The questions for the quiz will be presented to you one at a time
 - The questions must be answered in the order given. Questions may be skipped; but, once a question has been answered or skipped, it cannot be revisited
 - Time to complete the quiz
 - The quiz will be posted on-line for 4 days – from 10:00 pm Tuesday until 10:00 pm Saturday
 - You will have 15 minutes to complete the quiz
 - Your completion time is measured from when you click **Begin quiz** to when you click on **Finish**
 - Once time has expired, you will not be able to save any more questions
 - How to begin the quiz:
 - To begin the quiz click on **Begin quiz** at the bottom of the instruction page.
 - The quiz screen appears in a new browser window
 - Please allow the quiz to load completely before attempting to do anything else
 - Answering the questions
 - To save your answer to a question, you must click on **Save answer**
 - This will ensure that any work you have done is not lost, in the event of any technical problems you must contact SacCT
 - Submitting the quiz for grading
 - To submit the quiz for grading click on **Finish**
 - A confirmation message appears. Click on **OK**
 - The Quizzes and Surveys screen appears, you must click on **OK** for your quiz to be submitted for grading
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Course schedule

The following is a schedule of class lectures:¹

January 27, 2009	<i>Course Orientation</i>
February 3, 2009	<i>Introduction to Forensic Science</i>
February 10, 2009	<i>Legal Aspects of Forensic Science</i>
February 17, 2009	<i>Crime Scene Procedures</i>
February 24, 2009	<i>Crime Scene Techniques & Analysis</i>
March 3, 2009	<i>The Nature of Physical Evidence and Physical Patterns as Evidence</i>
March 10, 2009	<i>Analytical Tools in Forensic Science</i>
MARCH 17, 2009	MIDTERM EXAMINATION
March 24, 2009	<i>Materials Evidence I</i>
MARCH 31, 2009	SPRING BREAK
April 7, 2009	<i>Materials Evidence II</i>
April 14, 2009	<i>Forensic Aspects of Arson & Explosion Investigation</i>
April 21, 2009	<i>Illicit Drugs & Drug Analysis</i>
April 28, 2009	<i>Forensic Toxicology</i>
	WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE
May 5, 2009	<i>Forensic Biology</i>
May 12, 2009	<i>Firearms & Toolmarks</i>
MAY 19, 2009	FINAL EXAMINATION

¹ Lecture material subject to change based on the instructor's schedule.