ANT 4740, SECTION 7879 – INTRODUCTION TO FORENSIC SCIENCE

Instructor: Heather Freiman, M.A.
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Course Time: MWF, Period 4 (10:40am-11:30am)
Course Location: Little Hall, Room 101
Office Location: Turlington Hall, Room
Office Hours: Monday 2:30pm-3:30pm, Thursday 10:00am-12:00pm, and by appointment.
Course website: Accessed through WebCT Vista (http://lss.at.ufl.edu/), login with your Gatorlink Username and password.

Course Description: Forensic science encompasses the skills and expertise of individuals from a multitude of scientific disciplines to assist in the investigation of cases of legal significance. This course is designed to provide the student with a broad introduction to techniques utilized by today’s forensic professionals. We will explore the application of the physical and social sciences in specialized forensic contexts, investigation of a crime scene, the role of law enforcement crime labs, and other important issues relating to forensic investigation. Class lectures, guest lectures, readings, and video presentations will be used to enhance the students’ understanding of a broad spectrum of issues in the modern forensic sciences.

Textbook and Readings: There is no required textbook for the class, but there is an optional recommended text. Students will be responsible for all required readings posted on WebCT throughout the semester and announced in class.

Although this text is not required for the course, it will be useful as a reference to review topics covered during lecture. The first edition of this text is also acceptable for use as a reference.

Attendance: Although attendance will not always be taken, attendance is critical. Since there is not a required textbook for this course, it is imperative that students attend all lectures in order to learn the material which will be covered on the exams. Many topics discussed in this course are only briefly covered in the recommended text. The instructor will not distribute lecture notes or PowerPoint presentations outside of in-class lectures. If you miss a class, you must make arrangements to get notes from a classmate.

Students must arrive to class on time! Cell phones, pagers, and all other mobile devices (e.g., MP3 players, PSPs, etc.) must be turned off during class.
Exams: There will be four non-cumulative exams that cover material from lectures, assigned readings, guest lectures, and films presented in class. All exams must be taken during the scheduled time except in extreme circumstances. Any rescheduling is subject to the discretion of the instructor and must be discussed with the instructor at least one week before missing the scheduled exam.

Extra Credit: Extra credit will not be given on an individual basis. Two to three extra credit assignments will be given during the semester each worth 10 possible points. Details of the assignments and due dates will be announced later in the semester and posted on the WebCT page.

Grading: Exams = 100 points each (400 total), Extra Credit = 10 points each

Your grade for this course will be out of 400 points. Grades will be based on the following percentages; however, the instructor reserves the right to curve grades in order to achieve a fair distribution.

Final grade guidelines:
A 90-100%; B+ 89-87%; B 86-80% C+ 79-77%, C 70-76%, D+ 67-69%, D 60-66%, E <60%.

Academic Honesty: As a result of completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement: “I understand the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University.”

Anyone that is caught cheating on an exam will receive a “0” and be reported to the departmental chair. Plagiarism or cheating in any form is subject to university policy as outlined by the Dean of Students (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academichonestystudent.html).

Classroom Accommodation:
Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Students experiencing personal problems that are interfering with their academic performance are encouraged to contact the University Counseling Center (301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575), Student Mental Health (Student Health Care Center, 392-1171), or Sexual Assault Recovery Services (Student Health Care Center, 392-1161).
COURSE OUTLINE/LECTURE SCHEDULE

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: Introduction to the Course
August 24: Introduction to the course; Syllabus review:
expectations, grading and assignments

WEEK 2: Introduction to Forensic Science, Forensic Pathology and
the Medical Examiner
August 27: What is forensics? Who are forensic scientists?
Development of the field
August 29: The role of the forensic pathologist; Medical examiner
system; Cause and manner of death
August 31: The Medical examiner system continued

WEEK 3: Death Investigation & Forensic Odontology
September 3: No class - Labor Day
September 5: Death Investigation
September 7: Forensic Odontology

WEEK 4: Forensic Anthropology and Forensic Taphonomy
September 10: Forensic Anthropology
September 12: Human variability and the biological profile
September 14: Forensic Taphonomy, Archaeology and the
Postmortem Interval

WEEK 5: Forensic Archaeology, Exam 1
September 17: Forensic Archaeology
September 19: Exam 1 Review
September 21: Exam 1

SUGGESTED READING

Forward; Chapter 1
Chapter 2
Chapter 2
Chapter 4
Chapter 6
Chapter 7
Chapter 8
WEEK 6: Forensic Entomology, Forensic Toxicology, Forensic Psychology
September 24: Forensic Entomology
September 26: Forensic Toxicology and Controlled Substances
September 28: Forensic Psychology/Psychiatry

WEEK 7: Criminal Profiling, Crime Scene Investigation, Trace Evidence
October 1: Criminal Profiling
October 3: Crime Scene Investigation and the Crime Lab
October 5: Trace Evidence: glass, hair, fibers & soil

WEEK 8: Trace Evidence, Exam 2
October 8: Trace Evidence: paint, tape, fingerprints, gunshot residue
October 10: Exam 2 Review
October 12: Exam 2

WEEK 9: Bloodstain Patterns & Testing, DNA
October 15: Bloodstain Patterns
October 17: How blood is tested at the scene and in the lab, Biological fluids, staining and identification
October 19: Introduction to DNA

WEEK 10: Forensic DNA, Questioned Documents
October 22: Forensic DNA
October 24: Legal Issues in Forensic DNA Testing
October 26: Questioned Documents
WEEK 11: Footwear and Tire Impressions
October 29: Footwear and Tire Impressions Chapter 18, 19
October 31: Exam 3 Review
November 2: No Class – Homecoming

WEEK 12: Exam 3, Tool mark and Firearm analysis
November 5: Exam 3
November 7: Firearm Analysis; Tool mark analysis
November 9: Tool mark analysis

Chapter 20

WEEK 13: Arson, Vehicular Accidents, Mass Fatalities
November 12: No Class – Veterans’ Day
November 14: Arson, Fire & Explosions
November 16: Vehicular accident reconstruction, Mass fatalities

Chapter 24
Chapter 25, 23

WEEK 14: Mass Fatalities
November 19: Mass fatalities: trains, planes and buildings
November 21 & 23: No Class – Happy Thanksgiving!

Chapter 23

WEEK 15: Legal Aspects of Forensic and Ethics
November 26: Legal Aspects of Forensic Science
November 28: Ethics and the Future of the Forensic Science
November 30: Who wants to be a forensic scientist?

Chapter 32, 33

WEEK 16: Exam 4
December 3: Exam 4 Review
December 5: EXAM 4

The suggested chapters correspond to the 2nd edition of the text.
Additional (required) readings will be posted on WebCT and announced in class.

Note: This syllabus is a guideline. The instructor reserves the right to make minor modifications due to the availability of potential Guest Speakers or Subject Matter Experts not currently on the schedule. No substantive assignment changes will be made.