



Postbaccalaureate Graduate Certificate Program in
Forensic Science: Crime Scene Investigation (CSI)

Course Descriptions

FSC 501 FORENSIC SCIENCE FOUNDATIONS

CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION: Credits: 3. Survey of methods, techniques, and applications of basic crime scene processing and investigation. Topics include: an understanding of physical evidence, processing various types of crime scenes, assessing crime scenes, basic crime scene photography, crime scene sketching and mapping, and crime scene reporting, crime scene processing skills (using light technology, various fingerprinting lifting techniques, shooting scene documentation and reconstruction, bloodstain pattern analysis), documenting the body as a crime scene, assessing special crime scenes, the role of crime scene analysis and reconstruction, and utilizing forensic science specialists.

DETAILED COURSE DESCRIPTION: This 3-credit hour course offers students an understanding of basic crime scene processing and investigations and a myriad of forensic science specializations. Students will learn scientific concepts through required readings and various media and apply these concepts on examinations. This foundational course enables students to develop a breadth of understanding of crime scene processing and investigations and prepares them for a career as a crime scene investigator.

FSC 502 EXPERT TESTIMONY AND CHALLENGES IN COURT

CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION: Credits: 3. Introduction to proper behavior and proceedings in a criminal trial to include: being recognized as an expert witness, understanding the Daubert case and how it affects scientific testimony, and the ethics of forensic science and proper disclosure and testimony. Additionally, the students will research and discuss several challenges that have been brought before the court regarding forensic science and its reliability and accuracy.

DETAILED COURSE DESCRIPTION: This 3-credit hour course offers students an understanding of how to testify and become a subject matter expert in a criminal trial and understand several of the challenges that are facing the forensic science community. The students will discuss and research courtroom testimony and these challenges as well participate in a mock testimony at the end of the course.

FSC 503 SEMINAR IN CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION: Credits: 3. Exploration of topics related to launching a career in crime scene investigation as a well-prepared, polished professional. Emphasis on creating the professional demeanor; building and maintaining a high standard of morals, ethics, and personal integrity; honing strong oral and written communication skills through resume-writing, job-seeking strategies, and job-interviewing; exploring concepts related to team-building and stress management as well as goal-setting for future career growth.

DETAILED COURSE DESCRIPTION: This 3-credit hour course offers students the opportunity to develop their professional persona in preparation for securing employment and launching their career as a successful Crime Scene Investigator. Topics include: understanding the significance of integrity and a strong moral and ethical character to ensuring success as a professional crime scene investigator, building detailed job-specific resumes, how to target the most appropriate positions for which to apply, and best practices for job interviewing. Further, students will gain an understanding of the unique challenges crime scene investigative work may pose and explore ways to maintain the professional demeanor, as well as impart solution-oriented mechanisms for managing stress, both intra-personally and interpersonally. Finally, students will consider planning their future career growth and trajectories.

FSC 504 CRIME SCENE PHOTOGRAPHY

CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION: Credits: 3. Overall introduction to crime scene photography and the use of several methods and techniques to properly document a crime scene with photography. Topics include: composition, the four cardinal rules, overall, midrange, and close-up, exposure, depth of field, shutter speed, aperture, ISO, electronic flash, low light, laser trajectory, alternate light sources, special photography situations, and digital imaging.

DETAILED COURSE DESCRIPTION: This 3-credit hour course offers students an understanding of how to take proper crime scene photographs and handle various environments, evidence, and lighting situations. Students will learn the features of a DSLR camera and how to apply them to accurately and effectively photograph a crime scene. The students will be able to explain how to control the camera's settings to properly compose and expose a photograph to show a clear and accurate portrayal of a crime scene.

FSC 505 DEATH INVESTIGATIONS

CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION: Credits: 3. Fundamentals of death investigations and the role of the crime scene investigator at a death scene. Topics include: scene documentation, assessment of the body at the scene, searching the scene, natural diseases, traumatic injuries, identification methods, the medicolegal autopsy, and utilizing forensic science experts.

DETAILED COURSE DESCRIPTION: This 3-credit hour course offers students an understanding of death investigations, the role of the crime scene investigator at a death scene, and the intersection of forensic science specializations in death investigations, particularly in cases of legal importance. Students will learn scientific concepts through required readings and various media and apply these concepts on examinations. This course enables students to develop a basic understanding of death investigations and the forensic sciences at large, which prepares them for a career as a crime scene investigator.

FSC 506 RESEARCH IN FORENSIC SCIENCE

CATALOGUE AND DETAILED COURSE DESCRIPTION: Credits: 3. Develop aptitude in conducting research on the published literature on a focused forensic science topic specifically related to crime scene investigation, evidence collection, and or evidence preservation. Enhance critical thinking and writing intensive proficiency while also strengthening oral communication skills through the semester project involving the composition of a research paper and a presentation on the selected topic. This research-based course ensures CSI professionals learn how to keep abreast of new findings in the forensic science field and critically evaluate them.