

**JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
The City University of New York**

Forensic Science 108 Syllabus

City University of New York- John Jay College of Criminal Justice

524 West 59th Street, New York, NY, 10019

Forensic Science 108 Sections 5-8

Contact hours: MW By Appointment Only

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Course description

This course provides the non-science major with an introduction to forensic science. The lecture portion of the course establishes a foundation for understanding many of the concepts and techniques on which forensic science is built, such as those associated with crimes scene processing, physical evidence, microscopy, fingerprints, firearms and DNA. The laboratory portion of the course provides an opportunity to learn “hands-on” by using common analytical techniques.

Learning Outcomes: Consist of Reasoning, Knowledge, Practical Skills, and Communication Skills

Reasoning:

- Determine appropriate conclusions based on scientific evidence. Be able propose a prediction of results and then test predictions.
- Students will be able to recognize that identifying specific unknown samples can be accomplished through the use of different scientific techniques and testing.
- Apply critical thinking skills in solving justice problems of a specific nature by discussing relevant court cases and the impact of science within.
- Discriminate between generally accepted science and science fiction.

Knowledge:

- Take a skeptic approach to general scientific information and legal decisions.
- Describe how data influences legal decisions and shapes methods of analysis.
- Gain an introduction to physical sciences necessary for forensic science.
- Students will learn aspects of general chemistry, analytical chemistry (chromatography), and biology (serology).

Practical Skills:

- Write scientific reports, and follow scientific procedures to obtain standardized replicable results.
- Identify unknown samples in double blind studies.
- Describe how science is used in the criminal justice system

Communication:

- Report on importance/impact, relevancy and accuracy of forensic science methods.
- Use scientific vocabulary in defending results and active discussions about science.

Course pre-requisites or co-requisites

Prerequisite: Natural science 107. Unless you have fulfilled certain high school science requirements, you will not be permitted to take this course without having taken natural science 107.

Requirements and Course Policies

- **Quizzes** may be given at any point during the semester and may be unannounced. Quizzes will be given during the first ten minutes of the lecture/lab session. If you are late you will not be allowed to take the quiz. There are no make up quizzes.
- **Attendance** is required for both lecture and laboratory sections. A total of four or more unexcused absences will adversely affect your grade. Students are responsible for **legibly** signing the attendance sheet and will be considered absent if they do not. Students are required to observe **all** safety rules, including wearing safety glasses during lab work and cleanup. Students without safety glasses will be barred from the lab for that period and will be marked absent. Whoever has not arrived within the first 15 min or arrives later will be counted as late. **Two** lateness marks will equal **one** absence. **Three** absences will incur a deduction from lab participation. Students arriving late must contact the instructor at the end of the session **before** leaving the lab.
- **Cell/Smart phone usage is not permitted in lab or lecture** and must be turned off or placed on silent (not vibrate). Texting or messaging during class is strictly forbidden. During an exam the usage of a cell phone or texting will result in a zero for that exam. If the student needs to use the phone they can leave the room. If caught using the phone in the room the student will be asked to leave to room and upon multiple infractions may be barred from the lab and marked absent. (We would not have this rule if it were not needed)
- Labs and exams will NOT be made up unless there is written, valid documentation. This is at the discretion of the lab instructor and professor, only.
- Proper laboratory attire is mandatory. Deviation from the guidelines presented in the safety list will lead to a dismissal from the period and a mark of absent.
- **Failure to possess and wear lab goggles is inexcusable. Goggles are mandatory for all lab sessions including recitations! The minimum penalty for not having or wearing your goggles is a zero for the lab and dismissal from the period with a marked absence**
- **Enhanced lab reports:** During the course of the semester you are required to prepare one lab report on one of the labs in the class. The report must be typed. The report must be at least one page but may not exceed three and must be handed in on time. If the paper is not handed in one time, it is at the discretion of the lab instructor to allow the acceptance of the report, and/or point penalization.
- **Lecture Exams:** There are 4 lecture exams, three during the semester and one final. You are required to present a valid ID card in order to take each exam. If you arrive more than 15 minutes after the exam has started; you cannot be guaranteed permission to take the exam. If you arrive after a student has handed in their exam, you cannot be guaranteed permission to take that exam. **Bring a #2 pencil, an eraser and a pen to each exam.**
- **Cheating:** Any student caught cheating on an exam will receive a grade of zero for the class grade. The event will be communicated to the department and the university who may in turn decide if further punishment is needed.

- **Extra Credit:** There is none. Do not ask for it, because the answer will be no. If you attend lecture, work well in lab, and follow the rules – you will be able to pass the course.
- **Turnitin.com** is used by your professors and lab instructors to check your papers for plagiarism. You will be given specific instructions before the due date of the paper in order to submit your work to the site. Any student found plagiarizing will be given a zero for the paper, and the school policy for plagiarism will be followed.
- Students are required to address their professors and each other with respect. This applies to in and outside of the classroom and also in electronic communications.

Suggested Texts

Criminalistics-An Introduction to Forensic Science, 9th Edition.

By Richard Saferstein, Prince Hall, Inc, New Jersey.

Custom edition for John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Marble notebook needed for lab

Available at bookstore

Grading

- Your lecture grade is worth 60% of your course grade and laboratory is worth 35%. Quizzes, exams, attendance and participation all take part of your grade.
- The laboratory grade consists of attendance, participation, labs and accuracy on unknown of labs (20%), exams (20%) and correctness on general unknowns (40%).
- Attendance, participation and congeniality together are worth 5%

Course Calendar: This is the schedule for the course. You are responsible for reading the material for both lab and lecture AHEAD of time. If you have a problem with a specific date, you must let your lab instructor and lecturer know as soon as possible.

Weekday	Date	Lecture Topics	Lab
Monday	27-Aug-12	Introduction To FOS	Introduction/ Documentation
Wednesday	29-Aug-12	Law	Documentation/Chemistry Recitation
Monday	3-Sep-12	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
Wednesday	5-Sep-12	Crime Scene	Identification/Individualization
Monday	10-Sep-12	Physical Evidence	Identification/Individualization Chromatography Recitation
Wednesday	12-Sep-12	Chromatography	Chromatography Lab
Monday	17-Sep-12	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
Wednesday	19-Sep-12	Microscopy	Chromatography Lab
Monday	24-Sep-12	REVIEW	Chromatography Lab/Microscopy Recitation
Wednesday	26-Sep-12	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
Monday	1-Oct-12	EXAM 1	Microscopy Lab
Wednesday	3-Oct-12	Hairs and Fibers	Microscopy Lab/Hairs and Fibers Recitation
Monday	8-Oct-12	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
Wednesday	10-Oct-12	Drugs	Hairs and Fibers Lab
Monday	15-Oct-12	Toxicology	Hairs and Fibers Lab
Wednesday	17-Oct-12	Autopsy	Hairs and Fibers Lab
Monday	22-Oct-12	Entomology	Trace Lab
Wednesday	24-Oct-12	Serology	Serology Recitation & Lab
Monday	29-Oct-12	Fingerprints	Serology Lab
Wednesday	31-Oct-12	REVIEW	Fingerprint Recitation & Lab
Monday	5-Nov-12	EXAM 2	Fingerprint Lab
Wednesday	7-Nov-12	Questioned Documents	Fingerprint Lab
Monday	12-Nov-12	Firearms and Ballistics I	Forgery Detection Recitation & Lab
Wednesday	14-Nov-12	Firearms and Ballistics II	Ballistics Recitation & Lab
Monday	19-Nov-12	Bloodspatter	Odontology Lab
Wednesday*	21-Nov-12	DNA I	Crime Scene
Monday	26-Nov-12	DNA II	Crime Scene
Wednesday	28-Nov-12	REVIEW	LAB FINAL EXAM
Monday	3-Dec-12	EXAM 3	General Unknowns
Wednesday	5-Dec-12	Anthropology	General Unknowns
Monday	10-Dec-12	Arson	General Unknowns
Wednesday	12-Dec-12	Glass and Soil	General Unknowns
Monday	17-Dec-12	Finals Week	Finals Week
Wednesday	19-Dec-12	Finals Week	Finals Week

- A. **Incomplete Grade Policy**
- B. **Extra Work During the Semester**
- C. **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policies**

Sample syllabus statement: “Qualified students with disabilities will be provided reasonable academic accommodations if determined eligible by the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS). Prior to granting disability accommodations in this course, the instructor must receive written verification of a student’s eligibility from the OAS which is located at L66 in the new building (212-237-8031). It is the student’s responsibility to initiate contact with the office and to follow the established procedures for having the accommodation notice sent to the instructor.”

Source: *Reasonable Accommodations: A Faculty Guide to Teaching College Students with Disabilities*, 4th ed., City University of New York, p.3.
(http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/studentlife/Reasonable_Accommodations.pdf)

Statement of the College Policy on Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else’s ideas, words, or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one’s own creation. Using the ideas or work of another is permissible only when the original author is identified. Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations require citations to the original source.

Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism.

It is the student’s responsibility to recognize the difference between statements that are common knowledge (which do not require documentation) and restatements of the ideas of others. Paraphrase, summary, and direct quotation are acceptable forms of restatement, as long as the source is cited.

Students who are unsure of how and when to provide documentation are advised to consult with their instructors. The Library has free guides designed to help students with problems of documentation. (*John Jay College of Criminal Justice Undergraduate Bulletin*, <http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/academics/654.php> , see Chapter IV Academic Standards)