

**STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY**



CANTON, NEW YORK

COURSE OUTLINE

JUST 203 – Criminal Investigations

Prepared By: Susan Buckley

**SCHOOL OF SCIENCE, HEALTH, AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Department of Criminal Justice
May 2015**

JUST 203 – Criminal Investigations

- A. **TITLE:** Criminal Investigations
- B. **COURSE NUMBER:** JUST 203
- C. **CREDIT HOURS:** 3
- D. **WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE:** No
- E. **COURSE LENGTH:** 15 weeks
- F. **SEMESTER(S) OFFERED:** Fall and Spring
- G. **HOURS OF LECTURE, LABORATORY, RECITATION, TUTORIAL, ACTIVITY:** 3 hours per week
- H. **CATALOG DESCRIPTION:** This course is designed to provide the skills and knowledge necessary to conduct a thorough preliminary investigation of crimes. Techniques used to investigate common categories of crimes will be discussed. A major emphasis in this course will be the preparation and execution of investigative plans as they relate to a team approach. Other skills will include interviewing, crime scene processing, and basic forensic examination of evidence.
- I. **PRE-REQUISITES/CO-COURSES:** Pre-requisite: JUST 101, Introduction to Criminal Justice or permission of instructor
- J. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**
By the end of this course, the student will be able to:

| <i>Course Objective</i> | <i>Institutional SLO</i> |
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| 1. Extend the legal authorities and limitations of statutory law to police procedures. | 1. Communication 2. Critical Thinking |
| 2. Recognize and communicate viable investigative steps necessary for the successful conclusion of a criminal investigation. | 1. Communication 2. Critical Thinking |
| 3. Distinguish appropriate investigative methods pertaining to various categories of crime. | 1. Communication 2. Critical Thinking |
| 4. Interpret the rules of search and seizure as they pertain to the collection of evidence. | 2. Critical Thinking 3. Professional Competence |

- K. **TEXTS:**

Hess, K. M., & Orthmann, C.H. (2013). *Criminal investigation* (10th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
Sweetman, A., & Sweetman, T. (2001). *Investigating a homicide*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth

L. REFERENCES: None

M. EQUIPMENT: Technology Enhanced Classroom

N. GRADING METHOD: A-F

O. MEASUREMENT CRITERIA/METHODS:

- Exams
- Quizzes
- Assignments

P. DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE:

I Criminal Investigation: An Overview

- A. Definition of criminal investigation.
- B. Basic functions of an investigator.
- C. Characteristics of an investigator.
- D. The response of the first responder at a crime scene.
- E. Arrest and interview of crime scene suspects
- F. Crime scene/evidence protection and security.
- G. Meaning/importance of *res gestae* statements.
- H. Determining if a crime has been committed.
- I. Responsibility for solving crime.
- J. Investigator interactions with other personnel/agencies.
- K. Avoiding civil lawsuits.

II. Documenting the Scene

- A. Characteristics and importance of note taking.
- B. Filing notes.
- C. Use of notes in court.
- D. Purposes of crime scene photography
- E. Purposes of crime scene sketching.
- F. Types of crime scene sketches.
- G. Types of photographic equipment.

III. Writing Effective Reports

- A. Importance of Reports
- B. Uses of Reports
- C. The Audience
- D. Common Problems with Many Police Reports
- E. Recording and Dictating Reports

- F. Computerized Report Writing
- G. Evaluating your Report
- H. Citizen Online Report Writing
- I. The Final Report

IV. Search and Seizure

- A. Fourth Amendment
- B. Exclusionary Rule
- C. Legal Justification
- D. Search warrants.
- E. Consent searches
- F. Stop and frisk
- G. Incident to arrest
- H. Investigatory Searches
- I. Expectation of privacy

V. Physical Evidence

- A. Collection evidence
- B. Preserving evidence
- C. Examination of evidence
- D. Reconstruction of scenes
- E. Admissibility of evidence in court

VI. Obtaining Information

- A. Source of information
- B. Interview and interrogation
- C. Juvenile interviews

VII. Identifying Suspects

- A. Developing suspects
- B. Locating and arresting suspects
- C. Surveillance

VIII. Death Investigations

- A. Classifications of homicide
- B. Elements of the crime
- C. Manners of death
- D. Causes of death
- E. Mechanism of death
- F. Preliminary investigation
- G. Autopsy

IX. Victimization

- A. Assault
- B. Elements of crime
- C. Domestic violence

- D. Stalking
- E. Elder abuse

X. Sex Offenses

- A. Classifications of sex offenses
- B. Sexual offenders
- C. Interviewing victims
- D. Medical Examinations
- E. Collection of Evidence

- H.
- I. Suspects

XI. Crimes Against Children

- A. Extent of the problem
- B. Types of abuse
- C. Offenders
- D. Victims
- E. Preliminary investigation
- F. Interviewing children
- G. Court testimony

XII. Robbery

- A. Elements of the crime
- B. Preliminary investigation
- C. Investigative tactics

XIII. Burglary

- A. Elements of the crime
- B. Preliminary investigations
- C. Crime scenes
- D. Evidence
- E. Fencing property
- F. Recovering stolen property
- G. Suspect identification

XIV. Larceny

- A. Elements of the crime
- B. Types of larceny
- C. Fraud
- D. White collar crime

XV. Motor Vehicle Theft

- A. Types of vehicle theft
- B. Elements of crime

C. Preventing vehicle theft

XVI. Arson and explosions

- A. Elements of the crime
- B. Types of arson
- C. Types of explosives
- D. Preliminary investigations
- E. Crime scenes
- F. Safety considerations
- G. Special tactics

XVII. Computer Crime

- A. Elements of the crime
- B. Viruses
- C. Search warrants
- D. Seizure of computers
- E. Recovery of data

XVIII. Drugs and Organized Crime

- A. Drug categories
- B. Possession or use of controlled substances
- C. Sale of controlled substances
- D. Clandestine drug labs
- E. Marihuana possession and grows
- F. Activities of organized crimes
- G. Organized crime groups
- H. Methods of investigation

XIX. Gangs

- A. Gangs defined
- B. Types of gangs
- C. Gang activities
- D. Investigating gang activity
- E. Hate crimes
- F. Ritualistic crimes

XX. Terrorism and Homeland Security

- A. Classification of terrorist acts
- B. Groups in US
- C. Methods
- D. Federal response to terrorism
- E. Civil rights in the fight against terrorism

XXI. Preparing for and Presenting Cases in Court

- A. Writing the final report
- B. Preparing a case for prosecution

C. Cross examination v direct examination

Q. LABORATORY OUTLINE: N/A