STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
CANTON, NEW YORK

COURSE OUTLINE
JUST 320 – MEDICOLEGAL INVESTIGATION OF DEATH

Prepared By: Liz Erickson

SCHOOL OF HEALTH, SCIENCE, AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE
CRIMINAL JUSTICE DEPARTMENT
JUST 320 – Medico-legal Investigation of Death

A. **TITLE:** Medico-legal Investigation of Death

B. **COURSE NUMBER:** JUST 320

C. **CREDIT HOURS:** 3

D. **WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE:** No

E. **COURSE LENGTH:** 15 weeks

F. **SEMESTER(S) OFFERED:** Fall or Spring

G. **HOURS OF LECTURE, LABORATORY, RECITATION, TUTORIAL, ACTIVITY:**
   3 hours lecture per week

H. **CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**
   This course provides an in-depth look into the medico-legal aspects of death investigation, including the manners, mechanisms, and causes of death, as well as the post mortem changes. The course also instructs the student on wound interpretation and the method to apply post mortem conditions to criminal investigations to confirm or refute evidence of wrongful deaths.

I. **PRE-REQUISITES/CO-COURSES:** Pre-requisite: 45 credit hours or permission of the instructor.

J. **GOALS (STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES):**
   By the end of this course, the student will be able to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Objective</th>
<th>Institutional SLO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Explain manner, mechanism, and cause of death</td>
<td>2. Crit. Thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Employ forensic methods to determine the time of</td>
<td>2. Crit. Thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>death</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Illustrate the importance of personal identification in death investigations</td>
<td>2. Crit. Thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Classify the various types of injuries</td>
<td>2. Crit. Thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

K. **TEXTS:**

L. **REFERENCES:** None

M. **EQUIPMENT:** Technology Enhanced Classroom
N. **GRADING METHOD:** A-F

N. **MEASUREMENT CRITERIA/METHODS:**

- Exams
- Quizzes
- Paper
- Participation / discussion boards

O. **DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE:**

I. The History of Forensic Pathology
   A. The coroner system in England
   B. The pathology system in the United States

II. Crime Scene
    A. Blood Stain Pattern Interpretation
    B. Biological evidence
    C. Trace evidence

III. Time of death and changes after death
    A. Anatomical considerations
    B. Chemical considerations
    C. Forensic entomology
    D. Exhumation

IV. Identification of Human Remains
    A. Diverse techniques
    B. DNA

V. Anthropology

VI. Forensic Odontology
    A. Bite mark identification
    B. Advanced techniques
    C. Photographic techniques
    D. Digital analysis

VII. Sudden and Unexpected Death from Natural Causes in Adults

VIII. Investigation of Deaths in Childhood
    A. Feticide and Neonaticide
    B. The abused child and adolescent
    C. Differential diagnosis of child abuse

IX. Trauma and Disease

X. Blunt Force Injury

XI. Sharp Force Injury

XII. Injury by Gunfire
    A. Gunshot Wounds
    B. Shotgun Wounds

XIV. Asphyxia

XV. Investigation of Bodies in Water

XVI. Electrical and Lightning Injuries

XVII. Road Traffic Victim

XVIII. Medicolegal Investigation of Mass Disasters

XIX. Investigation of Deaths from Drug Abuse

XX. The Medicolegal Autopsy Report