



**Department of Justice Studies**  
**FS 169 Senior Seminar**  
**CRN 45724, Fall 2019**

<b>Instructor</b>	Dr. Jodie Warren
<b>Contact Information</b>	Email: <a href="mailto:jodie.warren@sjsu.edu">jodie.warren@sjsu.edu</a> Phone: 408-924-XXXX
<b>Office Location and Hours</b>	Health Building rm 214 Drop in: <i>M</i> 10:30a-11:30a <i>W</i> 10:30a-11:30a, <i>OR</i> by appointment
<b>Canvas Course Website</b>	<a href="https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1314980">https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1314980</a> Login using your Tower ID Card and Password → Courses → FS 169
<b>Lecture Days/Time</b>	Mondays/Wednesdays 12-1:15p, Rm SH 434
<b>Prerequisites</b>	FS or JS Major, Graduating Senior
<b>FS Library Liaison</b>	Nyles Monday, <a href="mailto:Nyles.Monday@sjsu.edu">Nyles.Monday@sjsu.edu</a>
<b>FS Lib Guide</b>	<a href="http://libguides.sjsu.edu/content.php?pid=57768&amp;sid=2450175">http://libguides.sjsu.edu/content.php?pid=57768&amp;sid=2450175</a>
<b>FS Program Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sjsu.edu/justicestudies/degrees/fs-program/">http://www.sjsu.edu/justicestudies/degrees/fs-program/</a>

### Course Description

This capstone course provides an in-depth study of a number of key issues facing the forensic science (FS) discipline. In particular, students will focus on identifying issues presented in various journal publications, formulate sound arguments using their critical thinking skills, and articulate their conceptualizations of subject matters in group-lead discussions and a major research paper on a topic of their choosing. Topics to be explored include understanding error and its meaning in forensic contexts, principles and concepts relating to quality in FS, quality assurance, accreditation and certification, expert witness testimony, ethical and professional issues encountered, and professional development skills.

Outlines will be provided or made accessible via Canvas for each lecture pertaining to the topic that will be discussed.

**Note** the following, detailed **prerequisites** for:

- **Justice Studies Majors:** JS 100W and JS 114 or instructor consent,
- **Forensic Science Majors:** JS 100W, FS 161, FS, 162, Biology 30, CHEM 1A and CHEM 1B
  - **Note-** *JS 114* is *waived* as a prerequisite for *forensic science majors*.
- **Both majors:** senior standing or by instructor consent, graduation application submitted and major form filled out and signed.

## Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives (LO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- **LO1** Identify and analyze sources of error in crime scene investigation and forensic science.
- **LO2** Identify and analyze professional resources for forensic scientists.
- **LO3** Evaluate quality assurance mechanisms in crime scene investigation and forensic science, and identify areas that require improvement.
- **LO4** Critique progress of NIJ and PCAST recommendations for improving forensic science; devise strategies for combatting error.
- **LO5** Prepare for a career in forensic science by creating a clear and mechanically correct resume and cover letter, and identifying jobsites and resources for networking.

## Required Texts/Readings

- Koen, W. C. & Bowers, M. (2017). *Forensic Science Reform*. Elsevier ISBN-13: 978-0128027196
- Gilpin, A. & Patchet-Golubev, P. (2000). *A guide to writing in the sciences*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. ISBN 9780802083661
- DOJ, National Academy of Sciences. (2009). *Strengthening Forensic Science: A Path Forward*. (pdf provided by instructor)
- President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology. (2016). *Forensic Science in Criminal Courts: Ensuring Scientific Validity of Feature Comparison Methods*. (pdf provided by instructor)
- LaPorte, G. (2018). *NIJ Report: Wrongful Convictions and DNA Exonerations: Understanding the Role of Forensic Science*. (pdf provided by instructor)
- Schweitzer, N. J. (2016). *NIJ Report: Communicating Forensic Science*. (pdf provided by instructor)
- Dror, I. E., Kassin, S. M., & Kuckucka, J. (2013). New application of psychology to law: Improving forensic evidence and expert witness contributions. *Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition* 2, 78-81. (pdf provided by instructor)
- Turvey, B. [http://www.corpus-delicti.com/forensic\\_fraud.html](http://www.corpus-delicti.com/forensic_fraud.html), [http://www.corpus-delicti.com/forensic\\_mis.html](http://www.corpus-delicti.com/forensic_mis.html)
- Weiss, D. & LaPorte, G. (2018). *NIJ Report: Uncertainty Ahead: A Shift in How Federal Scientific Experts Can Testify*. (pdf provided by instructor)
- Links to additional articles will be posted on Canvas. Check the site frequently!

## Assignments

1. **Notes and quiz** (15%): Weekly Reading notes including vocabulary quiz. (LO1-4)
2. **Group Presentation** (20%): Each group will create and upload a PowerPoint Presentation on one criminal case in which forensic evidence played a critical role in wrongful conviction and present it to the class. (LO1-4,)
3. **Individual Papers and Presentations** (50%): The purpose of performing laboratory experiments is to put into practice, and gain an understanding of, the principles that govern the scientific approach. Generally speaking, the scientific method is a series of steps that are followed in order to execute well-thought-out, and methodical investigations of various phenomena as they occur in the natural world. A question is asked about a particular circumstance or event, for which it is subjected to rigorous testing to generate a conclusion. (LO1, LO2, LO3 and LO4)
4. **Poster** (10%): Putting together a poster to present at a scientific conference is a conventional way to present your research (LO1, LO2, LO3 and LO4)
5. **Resume (C.V.) and cover letter building** (5%): For those next steps, whether it is applying for grad school, a career in the field you have worked so hard to get to, a resume and cover letter is used to present your strengths in the field. Often, this is the first impressions and so is a strength to have. (LO5)

## Grading Scale for All Assignments

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Percent</u>
A plus (+)	97-100	C plus (+)	77-79.9	F	<60
A	94-96.9	C	74-76.9		
<u>A minus (-)</u>	<u>90-93.9</u>	<u>C minus (-)</u>	<u>70-73.9</u>		
B plus (+)	87-89.9	D plus (+)	67-69.9		
B	84-86.9	D	64-66.9		
<u>B minus (-)</u>	<u>80-83.9</u>	<u>D minus (-)</u>	<u>60-63.9</u>		

All assignments are graded based on adherence to directions, thoroughness, thoughtfulness, clarity, and logic.

**Note: A grade of C or better is required for all Justice Studies major and minor coursework, and desirable for students enrolled in the Forensic Science majors and/or minor.**

## Extra Credit

Extra credit opportunities may be available throughout the semester and will be used to augment your final grade up to **3%**. You may submit up to three extra credit assignments of your choosing. Each extra credit opportunity is given a weighted value of **10 marks**.

1. Join a professional organization (CAC, AAFS, IAI, *etc.*) that is of specific interest to *you* and supply proof of membership before the end of the semester. A professional organization is one that holds conferences and/or produces a periodic journal. This is not

the same thing as an internship, job, or student organization; it is a professional *membership*.

2. Portfolio: Students may turn in a neat and organized 3-ring binder (portfolio) at the end of the semester containing all work completed in the class. Copies of group assignments are acceptable. This should be professional quality (for example, you would bring it to an interview to display your work).
3. Tour a crime lab and write a 2-page, typed, double-spaced synopsis of the experience. Santa Clara has monthly tours, and San Mateo has an annual tour in October.
4. Read and critique a current journal article from the forensic science disciplines. Discuss its relevance to forensic science and how it contributes to the advancement the field.

### **Class Protocol and Policies**

- All assignments are to be completed a week after their assignment or completion of a lab practical. Late work may be submitted **up to 2 days without penalty**. Subsequently, a **late penalty of 5% per day** for a **maximum of 5 days**, weekends included will apply. Assignments submitted thereafter will NOT be accepted and results in an automatic fail unless extraordinary, documented circumstances exist or a doctor's note is presented. Avoid missing lab practicals. Make-up sessions may not be available. Should you know in advance of any extenuating circumstances that conflict with such sessions, it is your responsibility to inform your professor. The possibility for submitting an alternative assignment may be granted at discretion, but be advised that such undertaking will be quite demanding. If there is any doubt about the requirements for an assignment, or due dates/times, re-read the directions of the assignment and/or schedule. If your question(s) remains unanswered, contact your professor for clarification.
- Attendance and class participation is expected. It is essential that you come to class prepared. Therefore, it is your responsibility to stay on top of your readings, complete assignments on time, and participate in class discussions. Lack of adequate participation *will* result in pop quizzes, which *will* count toward your final grade.
- The use of cell phones is NOT PERMITTED during class. Students caught using their phone will be asked to surrender it for the remainder of the lecture or excused from the class. Laptops are permitted for note-taking only.

### **Student Resources**

#### **Forensic Science Student Group (FSS)**

Forensic Science Students is a campus group open to all students interested in forensic science. The group meets biweekly during the semester and offers friendship, forensic science-related activities, networking opportunities, and mentorship. Members of the FSS participate and assist at conferences, CSI camps, guest speaking events, and other extra-curricular activities. FSS Peer Mentors assist forensic science students in navigating the major, understanding requirements and prerequisites, and making wise choices in their college careers. Mentors may also offer limited tutoring, and facilitate educational and professional opportunities. Contact [sjsu.fss@gmail.com](mailto:sjsu.fss@gmail.com) for more information, or to get an application for membership.

## **Student Technology Resources**

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Clark Hall and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

## **Learning Assistance Resource Center**

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center assists students in the development of their full academic potential and motivates them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skill assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. <http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/>

## **SJSU Writing Center**

The SJSU Writing Center located in Room 126 in Clark Hall offers a variety of resources to help students become better writers, including one-on-one tutoring sessions and numerous writing workshops. All services are free for SJSU students. <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/>

## **CASA Student Success Center**

The Student Success Center in the College of Applied Sciences and Arts (CASA) provides advising for undergraduate students majoring or wanting to major in programs offered in CASA Departments and Schools. All CASA students and students who would like to be in CASA are invited to stop by the Center for general education advising, help with changing majors, academic policy related questions, meeting with peer advisors, and/or attending various regularly scheduled presentations and workshops. If you are looking for academic advice or even tips about how to navigate your way around SJSU, check out the CASA Student Success Center. Location: MacQuarrie Hall (MQH) 533. Contact information: [408.924.2910](tel:408.924.2910) Website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/casa/ssc/>. The CASA Student Success Center also provides study space and laptops for checkout.

## **University Policies**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

## **Important Dates This Semester**

**University Calendar:** \* <http://www.sjsu.edu/registrar4/index.html>

**Aug 21-Sept 10:** Late Registration for Spring 2019. Registration via MySJSU starting after 7am

**Sept 3:** Last Day to Drop Without a “W” grade

**Sept 10:** Last Day to Add a Course, Last Day to Request CR/NC

**Nov 11:** Veterans Day

**Nov 15:** Last Day to Submit Late Drop/Withdrawal Request <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/forms/>

**Dec 9:** Last day of Instruction

\*Late add fees apply. See above website.

## **Justice Studies Reading and Writing Philosophy**

The Department of Justice Studies is committed to scholarly excellence. Therefore, the Department promotes academic, critical, and creative engagement with language (i.e., reading and writing) throughout its curriculum. A sustained and intensive exploration of language prepares students to think critically and to act meaningfully in interrelated areas of their lives—personal, professional, economic, social, political, ethical, and cultural. Graduates of the Department of Justice Studies leave San José State University prepared to enter a range of careers and for advanced study in a variety of fields; they are prepared to more effectively identify and ameliorate injustice in their personal, professional and civic lives. Indeed, the impact of literacy is evident not only within the span of a specific course, semester, or academic program but also over the span of a lifetime.

## **Instructor**

Dr. Jodie Warren obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in biology at Simon Fraser University (SFU) and volunteered in this institution’s cutting-edge forensic entomology laboratory where she first began taking forensic cases on-call. While attending autopsies and crime scenes as the forensic entomologist, Dr. Warren completed an Advanced Specialty Certificate in Forensic Science and Technology with honors at British Columbia Institute of Technology. She then went on to complete a M.A. in Criminology at SFU where she specialized in constant and fluctuating temperature effects in forensic entomology. During her Ph.D. studies, also at SFU, Dr. Warren developed innovative techniques to advance current techniques used at crime scenes to age developing insects on decomposing remains. For this research, she was awarded the prestigious Dean’s Convocation Gold Medal.

## Tentative Course Schedule

Week	Date	In-Class Topics	Assignments & Readings
1	08/21	Introductions, course overview,	Read “A Time of Transformation” <b>Take notes as you read (article is posted on canvas)</b>
2	08/26 & 08/28	form groups, brainstorm types & sources of error in CSI & FS Primary research, variables, testing hypotheses, Writing mechanics review  research project format APA format <i>Discussion of readings</i>	Read NAS Report, Preface and Ch 1 Introduction (skip “Summary”), read to p. 53, <b>Take notes as you read</b>  <i>Develop research topics and questions</i> Read NAS Report Ch 2, 3, & 4 (p. 55-125) <b>Take notes as you read</b>
3	09/02 & 09/04	Labor day Holiday  academic and scientific writing <i>Discussion of readings</i>	Read NAS Report Ch 5 (p. 126-182) Read “Confirmation Bias” Read “New Application of Psychology to Forensic Science” <b>Take notes as you read</b>
4	09/09 & 09/11	Preliminary research topic and questions due, workshop Discussion of readings <b>Group presentations Round 1</b>	Read NAS Report Ch 6 & 7 (p. 183-215), Read “Adopting a Research Culture” <b>Take notes as you read</b>
5	09/16 & 09/18	Research workshop: Intro, lit review, and annotated bibliography  Research Methodology (bring laptops)	Read NAS Report Ch 8, 9, 10 & 11 (p. 216-286) <b>Take notes as you read</b>
6	09/23 & 09/25	<b>Group presentations Round 2</b>  <b>APA Quiz</b>	Read “Uncertainty Ahead: A Shift in How Federal Experts Testify” & “Communicating Forensic Science” <b>Take notes as you read</b>
7	09/30 & 10/02	Individual Methodology meetings	Read FSR Preface, Forward, Ch 1&2 Read “Not Guilty, Probably” <b>Take notes as you read</b>
8	10/07 & 10/09	<b>Annotated bib due</b> , Lit Review  Methodology due, workshop	Read FSR Ch 3,4,5 <b>Take notes as you read</b>
9	10/14 & 10/16	Individual meetings	
10	10/21 & 10/23	<b>Lit review due</b>	Read FSR Ch 6,7,8  <b>Take notes as you read</b>

11	10/28 & 10/30	Poster preparation	Read FSR Ch 9,10,11 <b>Take notes as you read</b>
12	11/04 & 11/06	Discussion of readings Getting a job Workshops Letters/Resumes/Interviews	Read “Wrongful Convictions and DNA Exonerations: Understanding the Role of Forensic Science” <b>Take notes as you read</b>
13	11/11 & 11/13	Veterans Day Holiday Swap CV and coverletter for comment and then submit Prepare Research Presentations	Read 2014 Progress Report
14	11/18 & 11/20	Research presentations	Read PCAST report to p. 122 <b>Take notes as you read</b> Internship/job lab, continued Read PCAST report p. 123-end <b>Take notes as you read</b>
15	11/25 & 11/27	<b>Research presentations</b> <b>Work on posters</b> <b>Finish up posters ( no need to print)</b>	
16	12/04 & 12/06	Final completed Papers and posters are due Finish up semester	
17	12/09	<b>Extra credit assignments due</b> (if you chose to do one)	