



Department of Justice Studies
FS 161 Crime Scene Investigation
CRN 50317 (Lecture) & 50318 (Practical), FA 2020

Instructor	Dr. Shawna Bolton
Contact Information	Email: shawna.bolton@sjsu.edu Phone: 408-924-8974
Office Location and Hours	Online: Zoom Link Office: Health Building 210A – NOTE: There will be <u>NO IN-PERSON</u> meetings Drop in: M & W 10:30a-11:30a, OR by appointment
Canvas Course Website	https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1371895 Login using your Tower ID Card and Password → Courses → FS 161
Lecture Days/Time	Mondays/Wednesdays 12:00p-2:00p
Practical Days, Time and Location	Monday/Wednesdays 12:00p-2:00p Practicals generally take place in the Health Building (C4 on SJSU Map), Modular 2 (M2 - Near S. 10th St. and Humboldt St.) and other possible locations. However, due to CV-19 majority/all labs will be done remotely.
Prerequisites	Upper division standing; FS 11 (FS major/minor) OR JS 10 (JS major/minor)
FS Library Liaison	Nyle Monday – nyle.monday@sjsu.edu
FS Lib Guide	http://libguides.sjsu.edu/content.php?pid=57768&sid=2450175
FS Program Website	https://www.sjsu.edu/justicestudies/degrees/forensic_science/index.html

Course Description

Fundamental theories of physical evidence practically applied and the legal considerations involved in its recognition, collection, preservation and presentation in court. Topics include securing and recording the crime scene, collecting evidence, maintaining the chain of custody and scene reconstruction.

***Disclaimer:** This class is intended for mature students and may cover graphic content, such as criminal cases, discussions, and/or topics. Most of the material presented will NOT be censored. Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES are students permitted to take photos of the lecture slides and/or photos. Failure to comply with these guidelines may result in academic penalty.*

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

Note: FS 161 is *required* for the fulfillment of the FS biology major, as well as the FS minor. It is *recommended* for JS majors. However, it is open to any student with a general interest in subject.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives (LO)

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

- **LO1** Document crime scenes using reports, photography, and diagrams, and demonstrate this knowledge in practical exercises.
- **LO2** Demonstrate practical knowledge in processing specific types of evidence including fingerprints, blood spatter, firearms, glass, impression, and trace evidence.
- **LO3** Demonstrate understanding of crime scene hazards and corresponding safety measures, search warrants and the 4th Amendment, chain of custody, court testimony, the Locard Exchange Principle, and other critical terms and concepts.
- **LO4** Recognize, collect, handle, package and preserve physical evidence using safe and appropriate methods, and demonstrate and articulate this knowledge.
- **LO5** Reconstruct crime scenes using the scientific method and evidence-based logic.

Required Texts/Readings

Miller, M. & Massey, P. (2018). *The Crime Scene: A Visual Guide, 2/E*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press. ISBN-13: 9780128129609

- <http://www.forensicsciencesimplified.org/>
- Additional required readings, tutorials, videos, and links will be posted on Canvas.
 - NOTE: It is your responsibility to come to class prepared. Therefore, frequently check for new material posted, and download and/or print documents uploaded to Canvas.

Assignments

1. **Crime Scene Labs/Exercises (40%)**: Practical lab exercises in searching, scene diagrams, photography, report writing, developing and lifting latent fingerprints, blood spatter interpretation, and impression evidence. (LO1)
2. **Exams (40%)**: There will be two or three in-term exams, one final, and pop-quizzes on course material throughout the semester. Format may include the following: multiple choice questions, fill-in-the-blanks, true/false, short answers, short essays, and diagrams. (LO2)
3. **Chapter Review/Discussion Questions (20%)**: Chapter review questions can be found at the end of each chapter. Upload your responses to Canvas by the due date. Worksheets on videos, or other topics may also be distributed. (LO2-4)

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 (A+)	97-100	C plus (C+)	77-79.9	F	<60
A	94-96.9	C	74-76.9		
<u>A minus (A-)</u>	<u>90-93.9</u>	<u>C minus (C-)</u>	<u>70-73.9</u>		
B plus (B+)	87-89.9	D plus (D+)	67-69.9		
B	84-86.9	D	64-66.9		
<u>B minus (B-)</u>	<u>80-83.9</u>	<u>D minus (D-)</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 Forensic Science and Justice Studies major and minor coursework.**

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. **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.
3. **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).
4. **Read and critique a current journal article** from the forensic science discipline. 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 practical. **Late work MAY NOT** be submitted. 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 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 lecturer. 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 lecturer 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 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 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd 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.

ACCESS (Academic Counseling Center for Excellence in the Social Sciences)

The Peer Connections main office is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It provides assistance to 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://peerconnections.sjsu.edu/>

ACCESS (Academic Counseling Center for Excellence in the Social Sciences)

The Academic Counseling Center for Excellence in the Social Sciences (ACCESS) provides advising for undergraduate students majoring or wanting to major in programs offered in CoSS

Departments. The center provides support services, such as advising for freshman, general education, and probation; planning for academic success and graduation; tutoring; and career counseling. The main office is located in Clark Hall, room CH 240. Typically, all CoSS students and students who would like to be in CoSS 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. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions, office hours are limited to virtual meetings (Monday to Thursdays 9:00am - 4:00pm) until further notice. Contact information: 408.924.5363 Website: <https://www.sjsu.edu/access/>

Peer Connection (formerly known as LARC – The Learning Assistance Resource Center)

The Peer Connections main office is located in room SSC 600/CH 240 in the Student Services Center. It provides assistance to 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://peerconnections.sjsu.edu/>

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/>

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](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

Important Dates This Semester

University Calendar: * <https://www.sjsu.edu/registrar/calendar/Fall-2020.php>

Aug 19-Sep 8: Late Registration for Fall 2020. Registration via [One.SJSU](#) starting after 7am

Aug 31: Last Day to Drop Without a “W” grade. See [AARS's petition page](#)

Sep 8: Last Day to Add a Course (without Petition & Late fee), Last Day to Request CR/NC

Nov 13: Last Day to Submit Late Drop/Withdrawal Request <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/forms/>

Dec 7: Last day of Instruction

Dec 9-15, 16: Final Exams (see [Exam Schedule](#))

*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. Shawna Bolton first attended the University of Toronto where she obtained her BA in Anthropology (major) and double minored in French and English. She then went on to complete an MSc in Criminal Justice with an advanced forensic anthropology interdiscipline at Radford University before earning her PhD in Forensic Sciences at the University of Wolverhampton in the UK. There, Dr. Bolton conducted preliminary research investigating the post mortem molecular properties of cartilage and its potential use as a forensic tool. Upon the completion of her doctorate, she has worked in partnership with Global Forensics and the University of Wolverhampton to prepare and provide academic and laboratory training to Rwandan National Police officers enrolled in an intensive forensic DNA and toxicology module. To date, she is teaching FS and JS courses while continuing her research into cartilage degradation.

Tentative Course Schedule

Important Dates - *The schedule is subject to change at the lecturer's discretion. If ahead of schedule, further lectures may include topics such as underwater investigations, behavioral forensic science, and forensic nursing.*

Week	Date	Discussion Topic(s)	Reading & Assignments
1	08/19	<i>Introduction and class overview</i> - Handouts, Syllabus, Overview of Course <i>Intro to CSI, CSI as a Career</i>	
2	08/24 & 08/26	<i>CSI Effect, FBI Effect Reality vs Fantasy</i> <i>Scientific Thinking, Logic & Reason, Occam's Razor, Inductive/Deductive, Inferences</i>	CSI Episode (Mini Response Paper)
3	08/31 & 09/02	<i>Categories of Physical Evidence, Elements of a Crime</i> <i>Important Scene Considerations – The Laws of Search and Seizure, Steps of CSI</i>	Chapter 1 Chapter 2
4	09/07 & 09/09	<i>Monday September 7 → Labor Day – Campus Closed</i> <i>CSI Personnel Specialists and Safety Considerations</i>	Chapter TBA

5	09/14 & 09/16	Search Methods, Evidence: Methods of Visual Enhancement Documentation: Notes/Reports and videography – Mini-Lab #1 Scene Description and Videographs	Chapter 6 Chapter 3
6	09/21 & 09/23	Documenting Scenes Using Diagrams/Sketches – Mini-Lab #2 Scene Sketches Documenting Scenes Using Photography – Mini-Lab #3 Scene Photographs	Chapter 5 Chapter 4
7	09/28 & 09/30	Packaging and Preserving Evidence, Chain of Custody, Notes → Reports – Mini-Lab #4 Packaging Evidence Crime Scene Reconstruction	Chapter 7 Chapter 8
8	10/05 & 10/07	Midterm 1 Commonly Encountered Evidence: Fingerprints – Mini-Lab #5 Henry's Classification and Print Identification	Chapter 7 & Assigned Questions
9	10/12 & 10/14	Commonly Encountered Evidence: Blood Commonly Encountered Evidence: Firearms, Impression Evidence	Chapter 7 & Assigned Questions TBA
10	10/19 & 10/21	Commonly Encountered Crime Scenes: Burglary, Robbery, Assault, Arson, Death Technologies Currently Used to Assist with Crime Scene Investigations	TBA Chapter 9
11	10/26 & 10/28	Probative Value and Challenges Faced by Crime Scene Investigators Criminal Profiling	Chapter 10 TBA
12	11/02 & 11/04	Maintaining Mental Health/Mock Crime Scene Prep Theory and Practical Review Sessions	
13	11/09 & 11/11	Midterm 2 Wednesday November 11 → Veteran's Day – Campus Closed	
14	11/16 & 11/18	Mock Crime Scene Exercise 1 teams 1-3 Mock Crime Scene Exercise 1 teams 4-6	TBA
15	11/23 & 11/25	Mock Crime Scene Exercise 2 teams 1-3 Mock Crime Scene Exercise 2 teams 4-6 Thursday - Friday, November 26 - 27 Thanksgiving Holiday - campus closed	
16	11/30 & 12/02	Mock Crime Scene Exercise 3 teams 1-3 Mock Crime Scene Exercise 3 teams 4-6	
Final Exam	12/09	Final –Cumulative Exam (Theory and Practical) (9:45a-12:00p) Refer to link below for exam dates and times. https://www.sjsu.edu/classes/final-exam-schedule/fall-2020.php	