

CMRJ402

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

Course Summary

Course : CMRJ402 **Title :** The Pathology of Death Investigations

Length of Course : 8

Prerequisites : CMRJ306 **Credit Hours :** 3

Description

Course Description: This course will examine contemporary practices for investigating sudden, unexpected and violent death. Two major topics will be explored: the first focusing on the manner of death (the social circumstances under which the death occurs), the second focusing on the cause of death (the particular material actions which result in death). The following types of deaths will be considered: asphyxial, blunt and sharp force, firearms, natural causes, mass disaster, child abuse, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and suicide. Estimating the postmortem interval and identification of human remains will also be considered. It is recommended that students take CMRJ306 before enrolling in this course.

Course Scope:

Identifying the truth in death investigations takes time, skill, and attention to detail. Being prepared for investigating death enables us to identify the truth of the matter and ensure justice is served. Conducting any investigation is an important undertaking. People's lives and reputations are affected by what we do... or do not do. This is especially important in death investigations since the primary witness, the victim is not able to tell us in their own words what happened and why. Therefore, we have a duty to determine the facts and report them accurately, without bias and in a timely fashion. The medicolegal death investigation process draws on three areas of expertise: 1) forensic pathology, 2) criminal investigations, and 3) the judicial process. This is an interdependent effort; if one area is lacking, the other two will not succeed.

This course will examine forensic pathology and the criminal investigation processes as they relate to the effective administration of justice. We begin our study by a consideration of what forensic pathology is and is not. Natural causes of death are then studied to provide a fundamental grasp of the manner by which most persons die; natural disease processes. The postmortem interval and identification of human remains are then examined. Determining as precisely as possible when death takes place, as well as the identification of the decedent, are fundamental to the process. The various modes of death are then examined for differentiation between the various kinds of sudden and violent deaths.

Objectives

At the conclusion of the course students will be able to:

CO1: Explain the documentation and procedural aspects of an autopsy.

CO2: Assess the purpose and limitations of postmortem interval.

CO3: Differentiate the manner, cause, and mechanism of death.

CO4: Describe the challenges associated with blunt force trauma injuries.

CO5: Illustrate the significant factors involved in identifying firearm and sharp force injuries.

CO6: Validate critical thinking and problem solving skills in the death investigation process.

CO7: Explain the injuries characteristic of a traffic fatality.

CO8: Interpret present and past medicolegal indications of child abuse.

CO9: Summarize the relevance of forensic anthropology in death investigations.

Outline

Week 1: Introduction to Pathology of Death

Learning Objective(s)

Weekly content will address specific learning objectives for each course. Learning objectives covered each week are specified in the course site.

Reading(s)

Weekly lesson and assigned readings are available in the course site.

Week 2: Time of Death and Causes

Learning Objective(s)

Weekly content will address specific learning objectives for each course. Learning objectives covered each week are specified in the course site.

Reading(s)

Weekly lesson and assigned readings are available in the course site.

Week 3: Examining the Remains of Injuries I

Learning Objective(s)

Weekly content will address specific learning objectives for each course. Learning objectives covered each week are specified in the course site.

Reading(s)

Weekly lesson and assigned readings are available in the course site.

Week 4: Examining the Remains of Injuries II

Learning Objective(s)

Weekly content will address specific learning objectives for each course. Learning objectives covered each week are specified in the course site.

Reading(s)

Weekly lesson and assigned readings are available in the course site.

Midterm Exam

Week 5: Other Causes of Death

Learning Objective(s)

Weekly content will address specific learning objectives for each course. Learning objectives covered each week are specified in the course site.

Reading(s)

Weekly lesson and assigned readings are available in the course site.

Week 6: Mass Disasters and Toxicology

Learning Objective(s)

Weekly content will address specific learning objectives for each course. Learning objectives covered each week are specified in the course site.

Reading(s)

Weekly lesson and assigned readings are available in the course site.

Week 7: Brain Injuries and Child Abuse

Learning Objective(s)

Weekly content will address specific learning objectives for each course. Learning objectives covered each week are specified in the course site.

Reading(s)

Weekly lesson and assigned readings are available in the course site.

Week 8: Conclusion of Pathology of Death

Learning Objective(s)

Weekly content will address specific learning objectives for each course. Learning objectives covered each week are specified in the course site.

Reading(s)

Weekly lesson and assigned readings are available in the course site.

Evaluation

Forums

Instructions and grading expectations for all forums will appear in the Forums section of the course site.

Assignment(s)

Instructions and grading expectations for all assignments will appear in the Assignments section of the course site.

Exam(s)

Instructions and grading expectations for all exams will appear in the Tests & Quizzes section of the course site.

Grading:

Name	Grade %
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Materials

Book Title: Forensic Medicolegal Injury and Death Investigation - e-book available in the APUS Online Library; link also provided in the classroom Lessons section

Author:

Publication Info: CRC Press

ISBN: 9781498734882

Weekly lessons and assigned readings are available in the course site.

Course Guidelines

University Policies

[Student Handbook](#)

- [Drop/Withdrawal policy](#)
- [Extension Requests](#)
- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Appeals](#)
- [Disability Accommodations](#)

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