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American Public University System

The Ultimate Advantage is an Educated Mind

**School of Security & Global Services
CMRJ498
Forensic Law Enforcement Capstone
4 Credit Hours
16 Weeks**

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Instructor Information

Instructor: See information provided in the Syllabus link in the classroom

Email: Please use internal classroom messaging system

Course Description (Catalog)

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This course is designed to be the final class taken in the B.S. in Criminal Justice with a concentration in Forensics program. The class will be a 16 week course during which students will be required to complete work which will demonstrate a mastery of their program. It is designed to be a meaningful culmination of their learning and to assess their level of mastery of the stated outcomes of their degree requirements. Topics covered during the capstone will allow students to review, analyze, and integrate the work the student has completed towards their degree. NOTE: All required, core, and major courses must be completed prior to enrollment in this course. SENIOR standing is required.

Course Scope

Integrates various techniques used in the study of Forensic Science and applies them to the interpretation of facts and the reconstruction of the sequence of events at violent crime scenes. The Forensic Science discipline encompasses medical, scientific, sociological, and legal methodology as it applies to death investigations and these approaches will be reviewed using a variety of forensic literature and text resources. In the course we will discuss currently used techniques as well as emerging technology used to solve crime and evaluate new and cold case crimes.

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Course Objectives (CO)

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

- CO1: Demonstrate mastery of the basic scientific principles that are fundamental to the analysis of the following types of evidence: Fingerprints, Firearms/Tool marks, Biological Fluids, Trace Evidence, and Digital Photography.
- CO2: Create a crime scene sketch using computer technology.
- CO3: Debate the legal and ethical issues involved in the admissibility of digital photography.

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- CO4: Construct a diagram indicating identifying characteristics of a fingerprint used in the comparison process as well as entry into the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS).
- CO5: Critique peer reviewed literature specific to the Forensic Field.
- CO6: Differentiate the Daubert standard of admissibility and the Frye Ruling.
- CO7: Illustrate how you would present forensic evidence as an expert witness in a court of law.
- CO8: Interpret the meaning of stare decisis in relation to Forensic Science.
- CO9: Examine unsolved criminal cases to identify new techniques in the Forensic Field that may assist in solving the crime.
- CO10: Differentiate between internal, external, and terminal ballistics.
- CO11: Assess the purposes and limitations of voice stress analysis.
- CO12: Explain the justifications of the exclusionary rule.

Course Delivery Method

This course delivered via distance learning will enable students to complete academic work in a flexible manner, completely online. Course materials and access to an online learning management system will be made available to each student. Online assignments are due by Sunday evening of the week as noted and include Forum questions (accomplished in groups through a threaded forum), examination, and individual assignments submitted for review by the Faculty Member). Assigned faculty will support the students throughout this sixteen-week course.

Course Resources

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See your Lessons for a weekly list of assigned textbook excerpts and website readings, and power point presentations.

Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.). (2010). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Software Requirements

Microsoft Office (MS Word)

Evaluation Procedures

There are a total of 100 points for this course broken down as follows:

<u>Grade Instruments</u>	<u>% of Final Grade</u>
Introduction	1%
Forums (7)	14%
Projects (4)	40%
Midterm Exam	10%
Article Review	10%
Research Paper	10%
Final Exam	10%
Peregrine Testing	5%
Total	100%

Forums

Original responses to the forum questions each week need to be substantial (350-500 words per question) and significantly supported by the course textbook and at least one other scholarly source. The citation and references will be in APA Style. Sources used for studies or statistical information should be less than 10 years old. Direct quoting should be limited. Interpretation in your own words is expected.

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The Forum is our life link for this course. I expect the Forum to be read frequently by all and I expect everyone to invest significant time and energy in creating high-quality interactions and excellent dialogues. This is where ideas are bounced off of each other and discussions are to be generated about our topic of the week. Response postings are required to be a minimum of 150 words.

Forum Grading Criteria:

Your forum/assignment grade will be encompassing both your original posting and your responses to others work. Work will be graded when the student has completed the entire assignment.

Online assignments submitted for grading are due by the last day of each. All Forum main postings are to be posted no later than Thursday evening at 2359 hours each week. This allows time for others to respond to your posting.

Students will also be required to respond to at least two (2) other students posting with significant comments that have substance. Comments such as, "Good job!" or "I agree" do not earn you any participation points. Your responses to another's work should be posted as a sub-thread to the student's original posting whom you are commenting. All responses are due no later than Sunday at 2359 hours.

Projects:

The student will complete four (4) projects during the course of this class. See specific instructions for each assignment in the lessons section of the classroom.

Article Review:

The student will complete a detailed forensic journal article review. An article review provides an analysis of another's publication. When you review an article you are giving your opinion on whether the information is factually correct and whether it is explained adequately to the reader. The review should describe the item's content and argument(s) and discuss its strengths and weaknesses. The article review should include a minimum of 3 scholarly

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research sources to support the accuracy or inaccuracy of the article. Length requirements are 2-3 pages.

For further information, please check out the following website:

http://twp.duke.edu/uploads/media_items/scientificarticlereview.original.pdf

Example of an article review:

<http://www.slideshare.net/dawndrake/article-reviewwriting-sample>

The article you review should cover one of the Forensic Science disciplines covered in your degree program.

You will then pick an article from the following Journals and/or Publications:

- American Journal of Criminal Justice
- Forensic Examiner
- Journal of Forensic Identification
- Journal of Forensic Sciences
- Law & Order
- Narcotics Enforcement & Prevention Digest

If you would like to use a Journal or Publication not listed here, you must receive approval from the instructor. Do not wait to turn in the review and then ask if it's okay!

Article Reviews contain three parts:

- ♣ Start the review with a background on the article you chose and, if applicable, provide the bibliographic information.
- ♣ Summarize the article, making sure to analyze strengths and weaknesses and report briefly on purpose and overall argument.
- ♣ End the paper with your critique and discuss whether the information presented in the article is factually correct and what it has to offer to the forensic science community.
- ♣ You may paraphrase the article but no direct quotes are permitted.

The review shall be written using American Psychological Association (APA) style. For general guidance, see the Publication Manual of the American

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Psychological Association, sixth Edition, 2010. Information is also available at web links:

<http://library.csus.edu/guides/rogenmoserd/general/apa.html>.

http://library.nmu.edu/guides/userguides/style_apa.htm.

Research Paper:

This assignment is to write a scholarly research paper that is to be based on a forensic discipline or new forensic field that is using fairly new technology to investigate crime. Some examples would be:

- Computer Forensics
- Forensic Nursing
- Serology/Biology (CODIS database)
- Fingerprint Analysis (AFIS and IAFIS database)
- Touch DNA Analysis
- Ballistics (NIBIN database)
- Digital Photography
- Video Analysis

The paper is to be in APA format and the body of the paper is to be 8-10 pages in length. The body of the paper does not include the title page or references. A minimum of five scholarly peer reviewed sources should be used. Be aware that this is the minimum and a typical research paper should extend beyond the five page minimum.

Reference lists from texts and articles related to topic of the Research Review Paper are good sources for references. Use of newspapers, news magazines, and similar periodicals must be kept to a minimum, and will be acceptable only as sources for supplementary information. References like "Wikipedia," "Psychology Today," and "Court TV" are not primary sources, are not peer reviewed (reviewed for empirical integrity, accuracy, and authenticity), and are not appropriate references for scholarly writing (with the possible exception of use for anecdotal background information).

This Research Paper will demonstrate the student's ability to research and reason, incorporating the cognitive skills of analysis, synthesis, evaluation, defense of logic, and conclusions.

Final and Midterm Examinations

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The Exams will be administered during the final week and will comprise 20% of your final grade.

The exams will consist of 4 essay questions. It is open book/open note. You will have 4 hours to complete the exam. Referencing the essay questions is a requirement.

The Final Exam will be comprehensive and will include information from the capstone course as well as basic information from the following core classes:

CMRJ402 -The Pathology of Death Investigations

LSTD302- Criminal Law

CRMJ341 - Criminalistics

CMRJ331 - Fingerprint Analysis

CMRJ332 - Bloodspatter Pattern Analysis

CMRJ333 - Firearms Forensics Investigation

CMRJ334 - Voice Stress Analysis

Recommendations for examination preparation:

- 1) Complete all assigned reading and outline the information.
- 2) When writing your essays, step back from time to time and ask yourself whether you are indeed answering the question or whether you have gone off course. I have been surprised in the past by students misreading questions designed to be as straightforward as possible.
- 3) You must assume a naïve reader, and write as though the reader knows nothing about the subject. Remember, the purpose of an essay is not whether the reader can guess what you mean, but whether you can demonstrate that you know what you are talking about and can communicate it appropriately.
- 4) Review quizzes and exams from your core coursework.

Please see the [Student Handbook](#) to reference the University's [grading scale](#)

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Peregrine Testing:

Complete the Peregrine Assessment due in Week 16

During week 16 you will be required to take an academic programmatic assessment through Peregrine Academic Services. For your convenience, a link titled "Peregrine Testing" can be found in the left hand navigation bar, which will take you through the registration and testing process.

As one of the final assessments of your program, your score on this nationally normed, summative assessment will affect your completion of this course and ultimately your graduation. Your exam score, once sent back to the classroom, will be recalculated (see score conversion chart below) within hours of the score being returned to help determine your final score for the course. If you have any questions about your final score, please reach out to your professor as soon as possible.

The test will include approximately 100 multiple-choice questions. You will have 3 minutes to complete each question and will be allowed three 15 minute breaks. You can exit and resume the test, but you will only be able to do so 3 times over a 48 hour period.

When you are ready to begin, click on "Peregrine Testing" in the left navigation bar. You will be taken to the registration page for the exam. The majority of your student information will be automatically filled in. Review to ensure the information is correct and click "Confirm" to start the exam. Read all information on the following pages carefully. The timer will start when you click "Begin Exam".

For Technical Assistance regarding taking the Peregrine assessment, please contact Peregrine Academic Services directly by visiting <http://www.peregrineacademics.com/support>.

Score Conversion Chart:

Peregrine Score	Relative Interpretation of Student Competency	Outbound Exam Grade/Points
80-100%	Very High	Pass with Distinction/100pts
70-79%	High	Pass/90pts
60-69%	Above Average	Pass/80pts
40-59%	Average	Pass/70pts
30-39%	Below Average	Fail/50pts
20-29%	Low	Fail/40pts
0-19%	Very Low	Fail/20pts

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Course Outline

<u>Weeks</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Learning Objectives</u>	<u>Readings</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
1	Documenting the Crime Scene: Sketch	<p>Demonstrate mastery of the basic scientific principles that are fundamental to the analysis of the following types of evidence: Fingerprints/Impressions, Firearms/Tool marks, Biological Fluids, Controlled Substances, Trace Evidence, and Digital Photography.</p> <p>Create a crime scene sketch using computer technology.</p>	See electronic source listing in Lessons	<p>Mandatory Introduction Assignment</p> <p>Begin Project 1</p>
2	Documenting the Crime Scene: Sketch	<p>Demonstrate mastery of the basic scientific principles that are fundamental to the analysis of the following types of evidence: Fingerprints/Impressions, Firearms/Tool marks, Biological Fluids, Controlled Substances, Trace Evidence, and Digital Photography.</p> <p>Create a crime scene sketch using computer technology.</p>	See electronic source listing in Lessons	<p>Forum 1</p> <p>Project 1 Due</p>

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3	Documenting the Crime Scene: Digital Photography	<p>Demonstrate mastery of the basic scientific principles that are fundamental to the analysis of the following types of evidence: Fingerprints/Impressions, Firearms/Toolmarks, Biological Fluids, Controlled Substances, Trace Evidence, and Digital Photography.</p> <p>Debate the legal and ethical issues involved in the admissibility of digital photography.</p>	See electronic source listing in Lessons	Forum 2
4	Identifying Characteristics crucial to the Methodology of Fingerprints	Construct a diagram indicating identifying characteristics of a fingerprint used in the comparison process as well as entry into the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS).	See electronic source listing in Lessons	Forum 3 Project 2 Due
5	Forensic Literature Review	<p>Demonstrate mastery of the basic scientific principles that are fundamental to the analysis of the following types of evidence: Fingerprints, Firearms/Tool marks, Biological Fluids, Trace Evidence, and Digital Photography.</p> <p>Critique peer reviewed literature specific to the Forensic Field.</p>	See electronic source listing in Lessons	Forum 4 Article Review Due
6	Daubert Standard of	Demonstrate mastery of the basic scientific principles that are	See electronic source listing	Forum 5

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	Admissibility	<p>fundamental to the analysis of the following types of evidence: Fingerprints/Impressions, Firearms/Tool marks, Biological Fluids, Controlled Substances, Trace Evidence, and Digital Photography.</p> <p>Differentiate the Daubert standard of admissibility and the Frye Ruling.</p>	in Lessons	
7	Forensic Expert Testimony	<p>Demonstrate mastery of the basic scientific principles that are fundamental to the analysis of the following types of evidence: Fingerprints/Impressions, Firearms/Tool marks, Biological Fluids, Controlled Substances, Trace Evidence., and Digital Photography.</p> <p>Illustrate how you would present forensic evidence as an expert witness in a court of law.</p>	See electronic source listing in Lessons	<p>Forum 6</p> <p>Project 3 Due</p>
8	Review of Forensic Documentation and Presentation	<p>Demonstrate mastery of the basic scientific principles that are fundamental to the analysis of the following types of evidence: Fingerprints/Impressions, Firearms/Tool marks, Biological Fluids, Controlled Substances, Trace Evidence, and Digital Photography.</p>	See electronic source listing in Lessons	<p>Forum 7</p> <p>Midterm Exam</p>
9	Practice of Stare Decisis	Interpret the meaning of stare decisis in relation to Forensic	See electronic source listing	Forum 8

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		Science.	in Lessons	
10	Cold Case Evaluation	<p>Demonstrate mastery of the basic scientific principles that are fundamental to the analysis of the following types of evidence: Fingerprints/Impressions, Firearms/Tool marks, Biological Fluids, Controlled Substances, Trace Evidence, and Digital Photography.</p> <p>Examine unsolved criminal cases to identify new techniques in the Forensic Field that may assist in solving the crime.</p>	See electronic source listing in Lessons	<p>Forum 9 Begin Project 4</p>
11	Cold Case Evaluation	<p>Demonstrate mastery of the basic scientific principles that are fundamental to the analysis of the following types of evidence: Fingerprints/Impressions, Firearms/Tool marks, Biological Fluids, Controlled Substances, Trace Evidence, and Digital Photography.</p> <p>Examine unsolved criminal cases to identify new techniques in the Forensic Field that may assist in solving the crime.</p>	See electronic source listing in Lessons	<p>Forum 10 Project 4 Due</p>
12	Ballistics Evidence Review	<p>Demonstrate mastery of the basic scientific principles that are fundamental to the analysis of the following types of evidence: Fingerprints/Impressions, Firearms/Tool marks, Biological Fluids, Controlled Substances.</p>	See electronic source listing in Lessons	<p>Forum 11</p>

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		Trace Evidence, and Digital Photography.		
13	Voice stress Analysis Review	Assess the purposes and limitations of voice stress analysis.	See electronic source listing in Lessons	Forum 12
14	Exploring Cutting Edge Forensic Technology	Demonstrate mastery of the basic scientific principles that are fundamental to the analysis of the following types of evidence: Fingerprints/Impressions, Firearms/Tool marks, Biological Fluids, Controlled Substances, Trace Evidence, and Digital Photography.	See electronic source listing in Lessons	Forum 13 Research Paper Due
15	Exploring Cutting Edge Forensic Technology II	Demonstrate mastery of the basic scientific principles that are fundamental to the analysis of the following types of evidence: Fingerprints/Impressions, Firearms/Tool marks, Biological Fluids, Controlled Substances, Trace Evidence, and Digital Photography.	See electronic source listing in Lessons	Forum 14 Final Exam Review
16	Final Forensic Science Overview	Demonstrate mastery of the basic scientific principles that are fundamental to the analysis of the following types of evidence: Fingerprints/Impressions, Firearms/Tool marks, Biological Fluids, Controlled Substances, Trace Evidence, and Digital Photography. Explain the justifications of the	See electronic source listing in Lessons	Forum 15 Final Exam Due Peregrine Testing Due

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		exclusionary rule.		
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Policies

Please see the [Student Handbook](#) to reference all University policies. Quick links to frequently asked question about policies are listed below.

[Drop/Withdrawal Policy](#)
[Plagiarism Policy](#)
[Extension Process and Policy](#)
[Disability Accommodations](#)

WRITING EXPECTATIONS

All written submissions should be submitted in a font and page set-up that is readable and neat. It is recommended that students try to adhere to a consistent format, which is described below.

- Typewritten in double-spaced format with a readable style and font and submitted inside the electronic classroom (unless classroom access is not possible and other arrangements have been approved by the professor).
- Arial 11 or 12-point font or Times New Roman styles.
- Page margins Top, Bottom, Left Side and Right Side = 1 inch, with reasonable accommodation being made for special situations and online submission variances.

CITATION AND REFERENCE STYLE

This course will require students to use the citation and reference style established by the American Psychological Association (APA), in which case students should follow the guidelines set forth in *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). (2010). Washington, D.C.:

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American Psychological Association. For general guidance see Course Materials, Research Sources and Writing Comments, and for specific writing style guidance, see the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, sixth edition, 2010. Information is also available at web links:

<http://www.apastyle.org/>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/24/>

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals, I understand you must manage competing demands on your time. Should you need additional time to complete an assignment, please contact me before the due date so we can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution. Routine submission of late assignments is unacceptable and may result in points deducted from your final course grade. The instructor has discretion as to whether late work will be accepted.

NETIQUETTE

Online universities promote the advance of knowledge through positive and constructive debate--both inside and outside the classroom. Discussions on the Internet, however, can occasionally degenerate into needless insults and "flaming." Such activity and the loss of good manners are not acceptable in a university setting--basic academic rules of good behavior and proper "Netiquette" must persist. Remember that you are in a place for the fun and excitement of learning that does not include descent to personal attacks, or student attempts to stifle the discussion of others.

- **Technology Limitations:** While you should feel free to explore the full-range of creative composition in your formal papers, keep e-mail layouts simple. The Educator classroom may not fully support MIME or HTML encoded messages, which means that bold face, italics, underlining, and a variety of color-coding or other visual effects will not translate in your e-mail messages.
- **Humor Note:** Despite the best of intentions, jokes and--especially--satire can easily get lost or taken seriously. If you feel

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the need for humor, you may wish to add “emoticons” to help alert your readers: ;-), :), ☺

[Disclaimer Statement](#)

Course content may vary from the outline to meet the needs of this particular group.

Online Library

The Online Library is available to enrolled students and faculty from inside the electronic campus. This is your starting point for access to online books, subscription periodicals, and Web resources that are designed to support your classes and generally not available through search engines on the open Web. In addition, the Online Library provides access to special learning resources, which the University has contracted to assist with your studies. Questions can be directed to librarian@apus.edu.

- ***Charles Town Library and Inter Library Loan:*** The University maintains a special library with a limited number of supporting volumes, collection of our professors' publication, and services to search and borrow research books and articles from other libraries.
- ***Electronic Books:*** You can use the online library to uncover and download over 50,000 titles, which have been scanned and made available in electronic format.
- ***Electronic Journals:*** The University provides access to over 12,000 journals, which are available in electronic form and only through limited subscription services.
- ***Tutor.com:*** AMU and APU Civilian & Coast Guard students are eligible for 10 free hours of tutoring provided by APUS. Tutor.com connects you with a professional tutor online 24/7 to provide help with assignments, studying, test prep, resume writing, and more. Tutor.com is tutoring the way it was meant to be. You get expert tutoring whenever you need help, and you work one-to-one with your tutor in your online classroom on your specific problem until it is done.

Request a Library Guide for your course
(<http://apus.libguides.com/index.php>)

The AMU/APU Library Guides provide access to collections of trusted sites on the Open Web and licensed resources on the Deep Web. These are

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specially tailored for academic research at APUS:

- Program Portals contain topical and methodological resources to help launch general research in the degree program. To locate, search by department name or navigate by school.
- Course Lib-Guides narrow the focus to relevant resources for the corresponding course. To locate, search by class code (e.g., SOCI111) or class name.

If a guide you need isn't available yet, let us know by emailing the APUS Library: librarian@apus.edu

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