

# McLennan C O M M U N I T Y C O L L E G E

WACO, TEXAS

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## **COURSE SYLLABUS AND INSTRUCTOR PLAN**

### **CRIMINALISTICS I CJSA 1308 H1**

**DR. SUZANNE BALDON**

**NOTE: This is a 16 Week Blended/Hybrid course.**

#### **COVID 19 Notice:**

McLennan Community College is committed to providing you with every resource you need to reach your academic goals. We are also concerned for your safety. We are working through COVID-19 guidelines to make sure we offer a safe environment for you and our faculty. This will include smaller class sizes to manage social distancing and proper cleaning techniques. You will have the advantage of a physical classroom experience but may also need to work part of the time online as we adjust to limited classroom capacity. This will also allow us the flexibility to move online if so directed by federal, state and/or local COVID 19 guidelines. Faculty and staff are preparing now to ensure that you have the best experience in the midst of these uncertain times.

# CRIMINALISTICS I

## CJSA 1308 H1

### **Course Description:**

Studies the use of scientific methods in the investigation of crime, including locating, identifying, and handling of evidence for scientific analysis. Semester Hours 3 (3 lec.)

### **Prerequisites and/or Corequisites:**

CRIJ 1301 with a grade of C or better or approval of the program director.

### **Course Notes and Instructor Recommendations:**

This course is designed to include an introductory hybrid lecture course to the topics noted in the course description, hands-on labs during the semester, and an outside project for observing, documenting, and reporting on the decomposition process of an animal(s). If any students are hunters or herders, the donation of a feral hog, deer, or goat, etc. would be appreciated. Please check first with your instructor about delivery of any animals. During labs, you must document activities by making lab notes with photographs/sketches/activity sheets and compile them into a folder due at the end of semester on April 30.

### **Instructor Information:**

Instructor Name: Suzanne Baldon  
MCC E-mail: sbaldon@mclennan.edu  
Office Phone Number: 254.299.6505  
Office Location: ESEC 216

Office/Teacher Conf. Hours: Instructor available through Brightspace, telephone and email.

Other Instruction Information: Please contact instructor to schedule additional conference time. Advising by appointment; call Glenda at 254.299.6502 to make an appointment for advising.

You may use Messages for non-emergency communications. If you need to reach me quickly, please email me at [sbaldon@mclennan.edu](mailto:sbaldon@mclennan.edu), or call or text my cell phone at 254-230-3595.

### **Required Text & Materials:**

Title: *Forensic Science, from the crime scene to the crime lab*  
Author: Saferstein  
Edition: 4th  
Publisher: Pearson  
ISBN: Student Ed, 978-0-13480372-2; Student Value Ed, 978-0-13-480611-2

**MCC Bookstore Website:** <http://www.mclennan.edu/bookstore/>

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### **Methods of Teaching and Learning:**

The course will be composed primarily of lecture materials online, online discussion boards and weekly quizzes, and participation in face to face labs, articles, news items from the media and professional publications, films, videos, and slides relating to the field of criminal justice, guest speakers when qualified and available, and an out of class project.

### **Course Objectives and/or Competencies:**

The student will develop competency in conducting criminal investigations by learning the meaning of a complete investigation, the proof required of various crimes, and the employment of technical methods and services available.

### **Course Outline or Schedule:**

Welcome to our class! We will use an online format for lecture information, discussion boards, quizzes, announcements, messages, and items of interest. Please check that venue regularly and after absences from our classroom.

The instructor reserves the right to make necessary changes to this document and schedule with appropriate notice given to students, for example, depending on events and guest speakers available. Please get to know study buddies in the class whom you can contact in order to find out what you may need to know in case you are absent for any reason and to form study groups for assignments. It is the student's responsibility to stay aware of class activities.

**Weekly Schedule:** Class meetings every Friday 10:30-12:00 in ESEC 219 with online readings, discussion boards, and quizzes during each week **before** meetings. **Read the chapters, participate in the discussion boards, and take the quizzes before coming to class! In the event that we need to suspend face-to-face meetings, I'll give you instructions for participating via Online, Brightspace, Zoom, and Yuja.**

### **Weeks Beginning:**

### **Chapters and Labs:**

Jan 11, Meet Jan 15	Unit 1 Introductions in Class and Syllabus and Chapter #1 Introduction
Jan 18 (MLK), Meet Jan 22	Unit 2 Chapter #2 Securing and Searching the Crime Scene and Chapter #3 Recording the Crime Scene
Jan 25, Meet Jan 29	Unit 3 Crime Scene Sketches & Start Projects
Feb 1, Meet Feb 5	Unit 4 Chapter #4 Collection of Crime-Scene Evidence and Chapter #5 Physical Evidence

**Feb 4: Extra Credit Online: Thursday, February 4<sup>th</sup> from 6:00- 7:30pm: Forensic Linguistics Lecture with James R. Fitzgerald**

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**Feb 5: 10:00-11:30am: Meet Online with special program at Mayborn Museum. Forensic Identification Discussion Panel with Dr. Baldon, Mr.**

**Townsend, Mr. Huggins, and Mr. Fitzgerald.**

Feb 8, Meet Feb 12      Unit 5      Chapter #6 Death Investigation and Chapter #7  
Crime-Scene Reconstruction

Feb 15, Meet Feb 19      Unit 6 Chapter #8 Forensic Biometrics: Fingerprints and Facial  
Recognition

Feb 22, Meet Feb 26      Unit 7 Chapter #9 Firearms, Tool Marks, and Other Impressions

Mar 1, Meet Mar 5      Unit 8 Chapter #10 Bloodstain Pattern Analysis and  
Chapter #15 Biological Stain Analysis: DNA

**Mar 8 – Mar 12      Spring Break!**

Mar 15, Meet Mar 19      Unit 9 Chapter #11 Drugs and Chapter #12 Toxicology

Mar 22, Meet Mar 26      Unit 10 Chapter #13 Trace Evidence I: Hairs and Fibers

Mar 29, Meet Apr 9      Unit 11 Chapter #14 Trace Evidence II: Paint, Glass, and Soil

**Apr 2      Spring Holiday!**

Apr 12, Meet Apr 16      Unit 12 Chapter #16 Forensic Aspects of Fire and Explosion  
Investigation

Apr 19, Meet Apr 23      Unit 13 Chapter #17 Document Examination, Chapter #18  
Computer Forensics, and Chapter #19 Digital and Multimedia  
Forensics: Cell phones, Video, and Audio

Apr 26, Meet Apr 30      **Last Day of Classes! Projects, Presentations, and Lab Notes  
are due in class this week on Apr 30! (Or they will be due  
online and I'll give you instructions for posting them,  
depending on COVID-19.) There is no final exam because you  
took a Quiz every week.**

### **Course Grading Information:**

There will be a quiz given online prior to our meeting for every unit that will assess what you have learned during the previous week. In order to benefit from the face to face lab in the classroom, you must complete the quiz and discussion board by the Thursday/early Friday morning due date. Please complete the quiz and discussion board before coming to class! The average of these assessments will count for 25% of the final grade.

All students will be required to complete an out-of-class project for this class. The out-of-class project and class presentation will count 25% toward the student's final grade. The assignment start date and completion date will be given to students during the first few weeks of class. The possible projects to be assigned will be over decomposition and entomology and will include decomposition process, plants, weather, and environmental location. Each student will be

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required to furnish all supplies related to the project, which can be completed in an electronic or poster format. Each student will present her/his project to the class, including questions/answers, on the due date.

Your final grade will be comprised of 1) completion of online quizzes (25%), 2) discussion boards (25%), 3) weekly lab notes (25%), and 4) the project/presentation (25%).

If I decide it is necessary to curve the grade distribution, this will be done at the end of the course, after all the assessments have been taken. Your grade will never be lowered by curving; you will always receive your "straight-scale" grade or better.

### Course Grading:

100 - 90 = A

89 - 80 = B

79 - 70 = C

69 - 60 = D

59 - 0 = F

### **Discussion Boards**

After reviewing each week's material, you will be asked to respond to a prompt that the instructor will provide in the weekly discussion board. The initial response should be well thought out and substantial enough to indicate that you have a firm grasp on the week's materials. You must then respond to at least two (2) classmates with substantial posts. Simple responses like "I agree" or "good point" will not be counted. **Tell us why and give examples.**

### Discussion Board Grading

The following rubric illustrates how each discussion session will be graded. The number of posts represented in your posting history will be calculated. The quality of your posts is a subjective assessment by me of how much your posts add to the discussion.

Metrics	Original Post 1 Entered	Responses 1 & 2 Entered	Quality of the Original Post	Quality of Your Responses 1 & 2
Points earned	1/4 credit	1/4 credit	1/4 credit	1/4 credit

**Quizzes:** Questions will be graded by your instructor or auto-graded by Brightspace.

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**Lab Notes:** Portfolios will be graded by your instructor.

**Projects and Presentations:** Will be graded by your instructor. Part of your grade is presenting your report to the class. If you need to post these to Brightspace, I'll give instructions.

**Plagiarism** the unacknowledged borrowing of information, wording, organization, or ideas. Whether the original source is public (e.g., a newspaper, book, journal article, the Web) or private (e.g., a classmate's paper), you need to indicate your indebtedness to it. Where you repeat the exact language of your source, you must treat the borrowed material as a quotation and place it within quotation marks. However, by *merely changing a few words or the word order or by paraphrasing, you do not avoid plagiarism*. In the case of plagiarism, the instructor has the right to give the student a "zero" for the assignment. In the case of cheating during the course of a test or unauthorized collaboration on a writing project, the instructor reserves the right to give the student a "zero" for the test or assignment. Citation style guides are available at the Purdue Online Writing Lab: [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue\\_owl.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html).

### **Late Work, Attendance, and Make Up Work Policies:**

A student who is unable to do the scheduled work on the scheduled date must contact the instructor as soon as possible. The type, format, and schedule of any make-up assessment will be at the discretion of the instructor. Failure to take the make-up assessment or complete assignment criteria will result in an automatic "F" for that particular assessment. If you wish to drop the course, please contact your instructor and do not assume that you have been dropped as a result of absences.

### **Student Behavioral Expectations or Conduct Policy:**

Behavior guidelines are outlined in the "Conduct Policy" portion of the Highlander Student Guide. Any behavior which disrupts the learning process will be grounds for dismissal from the class. Cell phones and laptops are permitted if the student is using those resources for the purposes of our class. If child care is a problem, please confer with Student Services for alternatives to avoid bringing children to class. Students are expected to follow the General Conduct Policy in the Highlander Student Guide.

**\* Click Here for the MCC Academic Integrity Statement**  
([www.mclennan.edu/academic-integrity](http://www.mclennan.edu/academic-integrity))

The link above will provide you with information about academic integrity, dishonesty, and cheating.

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\* [Click Here for the MCC Attendance/Absences Policy](https://www.mclennan.edu/highlander-guide/policies.html)

(<https://www.mclennan.edu/highlander-guide/policies.html>)

Click on the link above for the college policies on attendance and absences. Your instructor may have additional guidelines specific to this course.

\* *You will need to access each link separately through your Web browser (for example: Mozilla Firefox, Chrome, Microsoft Edge or Safari) to print each link's information.*

# McLennan

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# COLLEGE

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## ACADEMIC RESOURCES/POLICIES

### **Student Support/Resources:**

MCC provides a variety of services to support student success in the classroom and in your academic pursuits to include counseling, tutors, technology help desk, advising, financial aid, etc. A listing of these and the many other services available to our students is available at <http://www.mclennan.edu/campus-resource-guide/>

College personnel recognize that food, housing, and transportation are essential for student success. If you are having trouble securing these resources or want to explore strategies for balancing life and school, we encourage you to contact a success coach by calling (254) 299-8226. Students can visit the Completion Center Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. to schedule a meeting with a success coach and receive additional resources and support to help reach academic and personal goals. Paulanne's Pantry (MCC's food pantry) provides free food by appointment to students, faculty and staff based on household size. Text (254) 870-7573 to schedule a pantry appointment. The Completion Center and pantry are located on the Second Floor of the Student Services Center (SSC).

### **MCC Foundation Emergency Grant Fund:**

Unanticipated expenses, such as car repairs, medical bills, housing, or job loss can affect us all. Should an unexpected expense arise, the MCC Foundation has an emergency grant fund that may be able to assist you. Please go to <https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/scholarships-and-resources/emergencygrant.html> to find out more about the emergency grant. The application can be found at [https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/docs/Emergency\\_Grant\\_Application.pdf](https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/docs/Emergency_Grant_Application.pdf).

### **Minimum Technical Skills:**

Students should have basic computer skills, knowledge of word processing software, and a basic understanding of how to use search engines and common web browsers.

### **Backup Plan for Technology:**

In the event MCC's technology systems are down, you will be contacted/notified through your MCC student email address. Please note that all assignments and activities will be due on the date specified in the Instructor Plan, unless otherwise noted by the instructor.

\* [Click Here for the Minimum System Requirements to Utilize MCC's D2L|Brightspace](https://www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning/Faculty%20and%20Staff%20Commons/requirements.html)  
(<https://www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning/Faculty%20and%20Staff%20Commons/requirements.html>)

Click on the link above for information on the minimum system requirements needed to reliably access your courses in MCC's D2L|Brightspace learning management system.



**Email Policy:**

McLennan Community College would like to remind you of the policy (<http://www.mclennan.edu/employees/policy-manual/docs/E-XXXI-B.pdf>) regarding college email. All students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to use their McLennan email addresses when conducting college business.

A student's McLennan email address is the preferred email address that college employees should use for official college information or business. Students are expected to read and, if needed, respond in a timely manner to college emails.

**Instructional Uses of Email:**

Faculty members can determine classroom use of email or electronic communications. Faculty should expect and encourage students to check the college email on a regular basis. Faculty should inform students in the course syllabus if another communication method is to be used and of any special or unusual expectations for electronic communications.

If a faculty member prefers not to communicate by email with her/his students, it should be reflected in the course syllabus and information should be provided for the preferred form of communication.

**Email on Mobile Devices:**

The College recommends that you set up your mobile device to receive McLennan emails.

**Forwarding Emails:**

You may forward the emails that come to your McLennan address to alternate email addresses; however, the College will not be held responsible for emails forwarded to an alternate address that may become lost or placed in junk or spam filters.

**Accommodations/ADA Statement**

Any student who is a qualified individual with a disability may request reasonable accommodations to assist with providing equal access to educational opportunities. Students should contact the Accommodations Coordinator as soon as possible to provide documentation and make necessary arrangements. Once that process is completed, appropriate verification will be provided to the student and instructor. Please note that instructors are not required to provide classroom accommodations to students until appropriate verification has been provided by the Accommodations Coordinator. Instructors should not provide accommodations unless approved by the Accommodations Coordinator. For additional information, please visit [mclennan.edu/disability](http://mclennan.edu/disability).

Students with questions or who require assistance with disabilities involving physical, classroom, or testing accommodations should contact:

[disabilities@mclennan.edu](mailto:disabilities@mclennan.edu)

254-299-8122

Room 319, Student Services Center

\* [Click Here for more information about Title IX](http://www.mclennan.edu/titleix)  
([www.mclennan.edu/titleix](http://www.mclennan.edu/titleix))

We care about your safety, and value an environment where students and instructors can successfully teach and learn together. If you or someone you know experiences unwelcomed behavior, we are here to help. Individuals who would like to report an incident of sexual misconduct are encouraged to immediately contact the Title IX Coordinator at

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[titleix@mclennan.edu](mailto:titleix@mclennan.edu) or by calling Dr. Drew Canham (Chief of Staff for Equity & Inclusion/Title IX) at 299-8645. Individuals also may contact the MCC Police Department at 299-8911 or the MCC Student Counseling Center at MCC by calling 299-8210. The MCC Student Counseling Center is a confidential resource for students. Any student or employee may report sexual harassment anonymously by visiting the following website: <http://www.lighthouse-services.com/mclennan/>.

McLennan's Title IX webpage (<http://www.mclennan.edu/titleix/>) contains more information about definitions, reporting, confidentiality, resources, and what to do if you or someone you know is a victim of sexual misconduct, gender-based violence or the crimes of rape, acquaintance rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, dating violence, or domestic violence.

*\* You will need to access each link separately through your web browser (for example Mozilla Firefox, Chrome, Microsoft Edge, or Safari) to print each link's information.*