

Updated 07/18/2023



WACO, TEXAS

**COURSE SYLLABUS
AND
INSTRUCTOR PLAN**

CRIMINALISTICS I

CJSA 1308 B075

DR. SUZANNE BALDON

NOTE: This is a Blended/Hybrid course.

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 deceased 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 December 1.

Instructor Information:

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 Heather 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, or call or text my cell phone at 254-230-3595.

Required Text & Materials:

SkyePack Custom Digital Access for course: <https://www.skyepack.com/launch>

You will get an email from the SkyePack publisher with further instructions.

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

CRIMINALISTICS I

CJSA 1308 H1

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 Attendance/Participation Guidelines:

If a student is not in attendance in accordance with the policies/guidelines of the class as outlined in the course syllabus as of the course census date, faculty are required to drop students from their class roster prior to certifying the respective class roster. A student's financial aid will be re-evaluated accordingly and the student will only receive funding for those courses attended as of the course census date.

Regular and punctual attendance is expected of all students. Any student failing to attend classes the first two weeks of the semester or failing to participate in online courses and activities the first two weeks will be subject to being dropped by the professor. Students, whether present or absent, are responsible for all material presented or assigned for a course and will be held accountable for such materials in the determination of course grades.

Before the 60% point of the semester, a student who is absent for 25% or more of a face-to-face or blended course or who misses 25% or more of assigned work for an online course will be withdrawn from the course with a grade of W. A student may also request to be withdrawn with a grade of W before the 60% point of the semester. After the 60% point of the semester, the student may request to be withdrawn if the student is passing. If the student is not passing, they will be assigned the final grade earned at the end of the semester after grades have been updated to reflect missing work.

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

CRIMINALISTICS I

CJSA 1308 H1

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!**

Weeks Beginning:

Chapters and Labs:

Jan 8, Meet Jan 12

Module 1 Introductions in Class for Students, Syllabus, and Beginning the Class

Jan 15, Jan 19

Module 2 Securing and Searching the Crime Scene and Recording the Crime Scene

Jan 15, Martin Luther King Jr Day

Jan 22, Meet Jan 26
Jan 29, Feb 2

Module 3 Crime Scene Sketches & Start Decomp Projects
Module 4 Collection of Crime-Scene Evidence and Physical Evidence

Feb 5, Meet Feb 9

Module 5 Death Investigation and Crime-Scene Reconstruction

Feb 12, Meet Feb 16
Feb 19, Meet Feb 23
Feb 26, Meet Mar 1

Module 6 Forensic Biometrics: Fingerprints and Facial Recognition
Module 7 Firearms, Tool Marks, and Other Impressions
Module 8 Bloodstain Pattern Analysis and Biological Stain Analysis: DNA

Mar 4-8, Spring Break!

Mar 11, Meet Mar 15
Mar 18, Meet Mar 22
Mar 25, Meet Apr 5

Module 9 Drugs and Toxicology
Module 10 Trace Evidence I: Hairs and Fibers
Module 11 Trace Evidence II: Paint, Glass, and Soil

Mar 29, Spring Holiday!

Apr 8, Meet Apr 12
Apr 15, Meet Apr 19

Module 12 Forensic Aspects of Fire and Explosion Investigation
Module 13 Document Examination, Computer Forensics, and Digital and Multimedia Forensics: Cell phones, Video, and Audio. **You may make your Presentation today, earlier than due, if you like.**

Apr 22, Meet Apr 26

Last Day of Classes! Projects, Presentations, and Lab Notes Are due in class this week on Apr 26! There is no final exam because you took a Quiz every week.

CRIMINALISTICS I

CJSA 1308 H1

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 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 from the class, 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

CRIMINALISTICS I

CJSA 1308 H1

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 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.

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.

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.

Late Work 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.

CRIMINALISTICS I

CJSA 1308 H1

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 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.

Criminal Justice Dept Policy: Regular and punctual attendance is expected of all students. Any student failing to attend classes the first two weeks of the semester or failing to participate in online courses and activities the first two weeks will be subject to being dropped by the professor. Students, whether present or absent, are responsible for all material presented or assigned for a course and will be held accountable for such materials in the determination of course grades.

Before the 60% point of the semester, a student who is absent for 25% or more of a face-to-face or blended course or who misses 25% or more of assigned work for an online course will be withdrawn from the course with a grade of W. A student may also request to be withdrawn with a grade of W before the 60% point of the semester. After the 60% point of the semester, the student may request to be withdrawn if the student is passing. If the student is not passing, they will be assigned the final grade earned at the end of the semester after grades have been updated to reflect missing work.

10/09/2023



ACADEMIC RESOURCES/POLICIES

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. For additional information, please visit www.mclennan.edu/disability

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

disabilities@mclennan.edu (254)299-8122
Room 319, Student Services Center

Title IX:

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 titleix@mclennan.edu or by calling, Dr. Claudette Jackson, (Accommodations/Title IX) at (254) 299-8465. MCC employees are mandatory reporters and must report incidents immediately to the Title IX Coordinator. Individuals may also contact the MCC Police Department at (254) 299-8911 or the MCC Student Counseling Center at (254) 299-8210. The MCC Student Counseling Center is a confidential resource for students. Any student may report sexual harassment anonymously by visiting <http://www.lighthouse-services.com/mclennan/>

Additionally, Title IX provides rights and protections for pregnant and newly parenting students. Go to McLennan's Title IX webpage at www.mclennan.edu/titleix/. It 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.

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/>

Academic Support and Tutoring is here to help students with all their course-related needs. Specializing in one-on-one tutoring, developing study skills, and effectively writing essays. Academic Support and Tutoring can be found in the Library and main floor of the Learning Commons. This service is available to students in person or through Zoom. You can contact the Academic Support and Tutoring team via Zoom or email (ast@mclennan.edu) by going to our website (<https://www.mclennan.edu/academic-support-and-tutoring/>)

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 either MCC CREW – Campus Resources Education Web by calling (254) 299-8561 or by emailing crew@mclennan.edu or a Success Coach by calling (254) 299-8226 or emailing success@mclennan.edu.

Paulanne's Pantry (MCC's food pantry) provides free food by appointment to students, faculty and staff. To schedule an appointment, go to <https://calendly.com/paulannespantry-mcc/15min>.

The CREW, Success Coaches, and Paulanne's Pantry are all located on the second floor of the Student Services building in Success Coaching Services.

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

MCC Academic Integrity Statement:

Please view our [Academic integrity statement](#) for more information about academic integrity, dishonesty, and cheating. The unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI) for classwork can be a violation of the College's General Conduct Policy. Whether AI is authorized in a course and the parameters in which AI can be used in a course will be outlined by each instructor.

Minimum System Requirements to Utilize MCC's D2L|Brightspace:

Go to <https://www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning/Faculty-and-Staff-Commons/requirements.html> for information on the minimum system requirements needed to reliably access your courses in MCC's D2L|Brightspace learning management system.

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 notified via 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.

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. For more information about your student email account, go to www.mclennan.edu/studentemail.

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 their 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. If you need assistance with set-up, you may email Helpdesk@mclennan.edu for help.

You can find help on the McLennan website about connecting your McLennan email account to your mobile device:

- [Email Setup for iPhones and iPads](#)
- [Email Setup for Androids](#)

Forwarding Emails:

You may forward 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 be lost or placed in junk or spam filters.

For more helpful information about technology at MCC, go to [MCC's Tech Support](#) or email helpdesk@mclennan.edu.

Disclaimer:

The resources and policies listed above are merely for informational purposes and are subject to change without notice or obligation. The College reserves the right to change policies and other requirements in compliance with State and Federal laws. The provisions of this document do not constitute a contract.