



**Department of Justice Studies**  
**FS 161 Crime Scene Investigation**  
**CRNs 23240 (Lecture) & 23241 (Practical), Spring 2020**

<b>Instructor</b>	Dr. Shawna Bolton
<b>Contact Information</b>	Email: <a href="mailto:shawna.bolton@sjsu.edu">shawna.bolton@sjsu.edu</a> Phone: 408-924-8974
<b>Office Location and Hours</b>	Health Building rm 210A Drop in: <b>M &amp; W</b> 11:30a-12:30p, <b>OR</b> by appointment
<b>Canvas Course Website</b>	<a href="https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1363105">https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1363105</a> Login using your Tower ID Card and Password → Courses → FS 161
<b>Lecture Days/Time</b>	Mondays/Wednesdays 9:00a-11:30a
<b>Practical Days, Time and Location</b>	Wednesdays 9:00a-11:30a Practicals will generally take place in the Health Building (C4 on SJSU Map) and the CSI Suite (Modular M2, located at 10 <sup>th</sup> and Humboldt Streets)
<b>Prerequisites</b>	<b>Upper division standing; FS 11</b> (FS major/minor) <b>OR JS 10</b> (JS major/minor)
<b>FS Library Liaison</b>	Nyle Monday <a href="mailto:nyle.monday@sjsu.edu">nyle.monday@sjsu.edu</a>
<b>FS Lib Guide</b>	<a href="http://libguides.sjsu.edu/content.php?pid=57768&amp;sid=2450175">http://libguides.sjsu.edu/content.php?pid=57768&amp;sid=2450175</a>
<b>FS Program Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sjsu.edu/justicestudies/degrees/fs-program/">http://www.sjsu.edu/justicestudies/degrees/fs-program/</a>

### Course Description

This is an introductory course to forensic science. It is intended to familiarize students with core concepts and principles, such as the scientific method, that govern the field and provide an overview of the various subfields within this discipline. Topics such as the following will be covered: the history of forensic science, its role within criminal justice, the handling of evidence, biological and chemical applications, and the use of trace and patterned evidence to assist with criminal investigations. Additional topics will include forensic anthropology, forensic scientists as expert witnesses, current practices and future prospects for the field.

**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

- <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 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

<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Percent</i>
A plus (A+)	97-100	C plus (C+)	77-79.9	F	<60
A	94-96.9	C	74-76.9		
A minus (A-)	90-93.9	C minus (C-)	70-73.9		
B plus (B+)	87-89.9	D plus (D+)	67-69.9		
B	84-86.9	D	64-66.9		
B minus (B-)	80-83.9	D minus (D-)	60-63.9		

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 Justice Studies major and minor coursework, and desirable for students enrolled in the Forensic Science majors and/or minor.**

## 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 **late**. 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](mailto: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 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Clark Hall and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

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

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/>

## **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/>

## **CHHS Student Success Center**

The Student Success Center in the College of Health and Human Sciences (CHHS) provides advising for undergraduate students majoring or wanting to major in programs offered in CHHS Departments and Schools. All CHHS students and students who would like to be in CHHS 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. If you are looking for academic advice or even tips about how to navigate your way around SJSU, check out the CHHS Student Success Center. Location: MacQuarrie Hall (MQH) 533. Contact information: [408.924.2910](tel:408.924.2910) Website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/chhs/ssc/>. The CHHS Student Success Center also provides study space and laptops for checkout.

## **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/Spring-2020.php>

**Jan 23-Feb 11:** Late Registration for Spring 2020. Registration via MySJSU starting after 7am

**Feb 4:** Last Day to Drop Without a "W" grade

**Feb 11:** Last Day to Add a Course, Submit Audit, Last Day to Request CR/NC

**Apr 23:** Last Day to Submit Late Drop/Withdrawal Request <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/forms/>

**May 11:** Last day of Instruction

**May 13-15, 18-19:** 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	01/27 & 01/29	<b>Introduction and class overview</b> - Handouts, Syllabus, Overview of Course <i>CSI Effect, FBI Effect Reality vs Fantasy, CSI as a Career</i>	CSI Episode (Mini Response Paper)
2	02/03 & 02/05	<b>Scientific Thinking, Logic &amp; Reason, Occam's Razor, Inductive/Deductive, Inferences</b> <i>Categories of Physical Evidence, Elements of a Crime</i>	Chapter 1
3	02/10 & 02/12	<b>Important Scene Considerations, Steps of CSI Search Methods, Evidence: Methods of Visual Enhancement</b>	Chapter 2 Chapter 6
4	*02/17 & *02/19	<b>Documentation: Notes/Reports and videography, CSE #1 Scene Description Documenting Scenes Using Diagrams/Sketches</b>	Chapter 3 Chapter 5

5	02/24 & 02/26	<b>Documenting Scenes Using Photography, CSE #2 &amp; 3 Diagrams &amp; Photos (and notes) Packaging and Preserving Evidence, Chain of Custody, Notes &amp; Reports (CSE #4)</b>	Chapter 4 Chapter 7
6	03/02 & 03/04	<b>Crime Scene Reconstruction Midterm 1</b>	Chapter 8
7	03/09 & 03/11	<b>Commonly Encountered Evidence: Fingerprints, CSE #5 Commonly Encountered Evidence: Blood, CSE #6</b>	TBA
8	03/16 & 03/18	<b>Commonly Encountered Evidence: Firearms, Impression Evidence, MAKE UP CSE Commonly Encountered Crime Scenes: Burglary, Robbery, Assault, Arson, Death</b>	TBA
9	03/23 & 03/25	<b>Technologies Currently Used to Assist with Crime Scene Investigations Probative Value and Challenges faced by Crime Scene Investigators</b>	Chapter 9 Chapter 10
10	03/30 & 04/01	<b>Spring Recess (March 30-April 3) March 31 – Cesar Chavez Day (Campus Closed)</b>	
11	04/06 & 04/08	<b>Digital Evidence &amp; Underwater Investigations Criminal Profiling &amp; Maintaining Mental Health</b>	TBA
12	04/13 & 04/15	<b>Study Session Midterm 2</b>	
13	04/20 & 04/22	<b>Mock Crime Scene Exercise 1 teams 1-3 Mock Crime Scene Exercise 1 teams 4-6</b>	
14	04/27 & 04/29	<b>Mock Crime Scene Exercise 2 teams 1-3 Mock Crime Scene Exercise 2 teams 4-6</b>	
15	05/04 & 05/06	<b>Mock Crime Scene Exercise 3 teams 1-3 Mock Crime Scene Exercise 3 teams 4-6</b>	
16	05/11 & 05/13	<b>Theory and Practical Review Sessions Study Period</b>	
<b>Final Exam</b>	05/18	<b>Final –Cumulative Exam (Theory and Practical) (7:15a-9:30a)</b> Refer to link below for exam dates and times. <a href="http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/final-exam-schedule-spring.html">http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/final-exam-schedule-spring.html</a>	

\* Topic(s) subject to change. Possible guest speaker(s). Students are responsible for taking detailed notes as they will be tested on the subject matter.