

**ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE**  
**Social Sciences Division**  
**CJI 203 – Principles of Investigation**  
**Course Outline**

**Course Number & Name:** CJI 203 Principles of Investigation

**Credit Hours:** 3.0      **Contact Hours:** 3.0      **Lecture:** 3.0      **Lab:** N/A      **Other:** N/A

**Prerequisites:** Grade of “C” or better in CJI 101

**Co-requisites:** None

**Concurrent Courses:** None

**Course Outline Revision Date:** Fall 2010

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**Course Description:** This course explores the fundamentals of investigation, crime scene search and recording, collection and preservation of evidence, scientific aid, interviews and interrogation, follow-up, and case preparation. This course is designed to provide students with the basic theoretical and philosophical understanding of the investigatory process. Analysis of problems encountered in interviewing, interrogating, evidence collection, and admissibility will be examined. Application of investigation theories to the administration of justice will also be developed.

**Course Goals:** Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to do the following:

1. explain the history, source and development of criminal laws;
2. evaluate what constitutes appropriate and admissible evidence in criminal investigation;
3. categorize the various types of evidence usually found at the scene of a crime and describe generally accepted methods of collection;
4. explain the methods employed in a thorough preliminary investigation;
5. describe the information gathering process;
6. explain how crimes against persons are investigated;
7. explain how crimes against property are investigated;
8. describe search and seizure cases that relate to criminal investigations;
9. demonstrate critical thinking skills within the context of evaluating the complexity of investigation issues; and
10. communicate effectively with accurate ‘criminal justice’ terminology in written and/or oral form.

**Measurable Course Performance Objectives (MPOs):** Upon successful completion of this course, students should specifically be able to do the following:

1. Explain the history, source and development of criminal laws:
  - 1.1 *describe what behaviors constitute crimes;*
  - 1.2 *explain the legislative process that defines a behavior as crime;*
  - 1.3 *explain the sources of criminal law;*
  - 1.4 *describe the classification of crimes by their severity;*
  - 1.5 *describe the development of criminal law; and*
  - 1.6 *explain the evolution of criminal law as a function of societal needs*
  
2. Evaluate what constitutes appropriate and admissible evidence in criminal investigation:
  - 2.1 *describe what types of evidence are present at a crime scene and how they are discovered;*
  - 2.2 *define physical evidence;*
  - 2.3 *discuss the responsibilities of the first police officer who arrives at a crime scene;*
  - 2.4 *explain the steps to be taken for thoroughly recording the crime scene (photography, sketches, notes);*
  - 2.5 *identify the procedures for processing a crime scene;*
  - 2.6 *describe proper procedures for conducting a systematic search of crime scenes for physical evidence (victims' clothing, trace, fingernail scrapings, hair, blood, bullets, etc.);*
  - 2.7 *describe proper techniques for packaging common types of physical evidence to avoid cross-contamination;*
  - 2.8 *define chain of custody;*
  - 2.9 *relate what steps are typically required to maintain appropriate health and safety standards at the crime scene;*
  - 2.10 *discuss the implications of the Mincey and Tyler cases;*
  - 2.11 *explain the reasons for isolating and protecting a crime scene from outside contamination;*
  - 2.12 *identify real evidence and the necessary prerequisites for admissibility of this kind of evidence;*
    - *explain the value of real evidence*
    - *demonstrate admitting real evidence using role play*
  - 2.13 *describe the relationship of forensics and the law;*
  - 2.14 *explain the relevance of specific court cases to current forensics practices;*
  - 2.15 *describe typical courtroom proceedings;*
  - 2.16 *describe how the development of technology is important to forensics;*
  - 2.17 *explain the importance of Locard's "Exchange Principle" of evidence;*
  - 2.18 *identify expert witnesses and the necessary prerequisites for admissibility of this kind of evidence; and*
    - *explain the nature of an expert*
    - *explain the admissibility of expert evidence*
    - *explain the term "ultimate issue doctrine"*
    - *describe the necessary qualifications of the expert*
    - *demonstrate preparing an expert for trial using role play*
    - *demonstrate the cross-examination and impeachment of an expert using role play*
  - 2.19 *describe how forensic experts use DNA fingerprinting to solve crimes*

**Measurable Course Performance Objectives (MPOs) (continued):**

3. Categorize the various types of evidence usually found at the scene of a crime and describe generally accepted methods of collection:
  - 3.1 *describe the nature of real evidence;*
  - 3.2 *explain the conditions under which real evidence is relevant;*
  - 3.3 *explain the authentication procedure for real evidence;*
  - 3.4 *describe how the chain of custody is preserved;*
  - 3.5 *list the common types of physical evidence encountered at crime scenes;*
  - 3.6 *explain the difference between the identification and comparison of physical evidence;*
  - 3.7 *define individual and class characteristics;*
  - 3.8 *give examples of physical evidence possessing individual and class characteristics;*
  - 3.9 *discuss the value of class evidence to a criminal investigation;*
  - 3.10 *list the number and types of computerized databases relating to physical evidence that are currently in existence; and*
  - 3.11 *distinguish between the contributions the forensic pathologist, forensic anthropologist, and forensic entomologist can make to a death investigation*
  
4. Explain the methods employed in a thorough preliminary investigation:
  - 4.1 *explain the objectives of a criminal investigation;*
  - 4.2 *discuss the steps of conducting a preliminary investigation;*
  - 4.3 *explain the importance of preserving the crime scene;*
  - 4.4 *describe the importance of physical evidence at the crime scene;*
  - 4.5 *explain the use of criminal patterns to solve crimes;*
  - 4.6 *identify the elements of a successful criminal investigation;*
  - 4.7 *explain the use of inductive and deductive reasoning;*
  - 4.8 *list the steps taken to conduct a successful investigation; and*
  - 4.9 *define the major goals of a criminal investigation*
  
5. Describe the information gathering process:
  - 5.1 *identify the common sources of information;*
  - 5.2 *describe the types of witnesses commonly encountered in a criminal investigation;*
  - 5.3 *identify the key elements of conducting an interrogation;*
  - 5.4 *discuss guidelines for taking confessions and admissions;*
  - 5.5 *describe the nature of fingerprints and their identification;*
  - 5.6 *identify the key elements of conducting a surveillance;*
  - 5.7 *describe proper report writing guidelines used in criminal investigations;*
  - 5.8 *describe the key element of a cognitive witness interview;*
  - 5.9 *explain the legal issues encountered when interviewing juveniles; and*
  - 5.10 *identify types of surveillances used in criminal investigations*
  
6. Explain how crimes against persons are investigated:
  - 6.1 *describe the nature of homicide;*
  - 6.2 *describe the nature of robbery;*
  - 6.3 *describe the nature of assault;*
  - 6.4 *describe the nature of sexual offenses;*

**Measurable Course Performance Objectives (MPOs) (continued):**

- 6.5 *describe the nature of death and decomposition;*
  - 6.6 *explain how determining time of death relates to decomposition;*
  - 6.7 *explain how cause of death is determined;*
  - 6.8 *describe the detailed nature of an autopsy;*
  - 6.9 *explain how ballistic evidence is used in criminal cases;*
  - 6.10 *identify the four basic types of guns;*
  - 6.11 *describe the types and uses of different bullets;*
  - 6.12 *describe the use of serial numbers for guns and bullets;*
  - 6.13 *describe how powder burns are used to gauge the distance of the shooter from the victim;*
  - 6.14 *explain how blood and human material is related evidence is used in criminal cases;*
  - 6.15 *describe the various components of blood and the evidence each part contains;*
  - 6.16 *describe the nature of blood type and its relative importance as evidence;*
  - 6.17 *describe different blood stain patterns based on source, direction, and angle of trajectory;*
  - 6.18 *explain the method of chemically isolating old, invisible blood stains;*
  - 6.19 *describe the parts of a hair;*
  - 6.20 *explain the lack of evidentiary value in hair comparisons;*
  - 6.21 *describe the nature of introns and exons in the human genome;*
  - 6.22 *explain the importance of various DNA markers to criminal investigations; and*
  - 6.23 *describe the methods of DNA collection, amplification, and analysis*
7. Explain how crimes against property are investigated:
- 7.1 *describe the nature of burglary;*
  - 7.2 *identify common methods of investigating burglaries;*
  - 7.3 *describe the nature of larceny/theft;*
  - 7.4 *identify common methods of investigating larceny/theft;*
  - 7.5 *describe the nature of motor vehicle theft;*
  - 7.6 *identify common methods of investigating motor vehicle theft;*
  - 7.7 *describe the nature of arson; and*
  - 7.8 *identify common methods of investigating arson*
8. Describe search and seizure cases that relate to criminal investigations:
- 8.1 *identify landmark US Supreme Court cases that affect police in criminal investigations;*
  - 8.2 *explain the importance of ethics in criminal investigations; and*
  - 8.3 *describe the relationship between criminal investigators and human civil rights; discuss the evolution of search and seizure laws and their future direction in criminal investigations*
9. Demonstrate critical thinking skills within the context of evaluating the complexity of investigation issues:
- 9.1 *analyze a fact scenario and determine if the exclusionary rule applies;*
  - 9.2 *describe the significance of the "weight of evidence" for items obtained during a criminal investigation;*
  - 9.3 *evaluate admissibility of various types of evidence;*
  - 9.4 *evaluate the nature of forensics both with and without certain technologies;*
  - 9.5 *evaluate types of evidence law enforcement should search for in specific crimes;*
  - 9.6 *evaluate the use of certain types of evidence in court proceedings;*

**Measurable Course Performance Objectives (MPOs) (continued):**

- 9.7 *evaluate a case file and determine if probable cause exists and the probability of conviction;*
- 9.8 *prepare a police case file;*
- 9.9 *conduct a witness interview using role play;*
- 9.10 *conduct a suspect interrogation using role play;*
- 9.11 *determine the cause of death and injuries in given case studies; and*
- 9.12 *use critical thinking and problem solving, focusing on the criminal justice system and analyzing information from multiple sources, including print and video media*

10. Communicate effectively with accurate 'criminal justice' terminology in written and/or oral form:

- 10.1 *utilize effective and persuasive communication skills in written and/or oral form; and*
- 10.2 *use accurate 'criminal justice' terminology in writings and oral presentations*

**Methods of Instruction:** Instruction will consist of, but not be limited to, a combination of lectures, class discussions, multi-media presentations, group projects, the assignment of textbook readings and other resource material, case studies, demonstrations, and completion of various assessment instruments (a documented research paper, and both in-class and take-home tests and exams). Specific choice of instructional methods is left to the discretion of the instructor.

**Outcomes Assessment:** Quiz and exam questions (if applicable) are blueprinted to course objectives. Checklist rubrics are used to evaluate non-test type assessment instruments, such as case studies, presentations, logs, journals, and papers, for the presence of course objectives. Data collected will be analyzed to provide direction for the improvement of instruction, viability of class assignments, relevancy of assigned literature, and evaluation of instructional time spent on specific topics.

**Course Requirements:** All students are required to:

1. Maintain regular attendance.
2. Actively participate in class discussions and workshops.
3. Read the recommended textbook and any other assigned resource materials.
4. Complete all assigned homework on time.
5. Complete all written assignments, including a research paper based on multiple source research gleaned from appropriate library sources and previously published internet sources.
6. Complete an in-class midterm and final examination.
7. Take all quizzes and exams when scheduled.
8. Follow any specific class requirements mandated by the instructor.

**Methods of Evaluation:** Final course grades will be computed as follows:

<b>Grading Components</b>	<b>% of final course grade</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Attendance/Class Participation</b> Attendance points will be computed based on the ratio of the number of days attending the course during a regular semester (i.e., 28 contact days). A similar procedure will be used to determine participation points.</li></ul>	<b>5 – 15%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Logs/Journals</b> Logs/Journals are written exercises designed to heighten student’s awareness of various events related to criminal justice that is experienced, observed, read, or viewed on television. Student must relate experiences to chapters either discussed/not discussed throughout the semester.</li></ul>	<b>10 – 15%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Reaction Papers</b> Reaction papers are 3 – 5 page written exercises in which students read outside sources or statements supplied by the professor and discuss their “intellectual and emotional” reaction to the issue or author’s point of view, yet use critical thinking guidelines to take a position and support that position using scholarly literature, interviews and polling.</li></ul>	<b>15 – 20%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Theme Papers</b> Theme papers are 3 – 5 page written exercises in which students discuss how taking the course has been personally meaningful, beneficial, and relevant to their future professional aspirations. References can be cited using scholarly journals, criminalistic, legal and law enforcement sources, or internet sites.</li></ul>	<b>20 – 25%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Literature Reviews/Research Papers</b> Literature reviews/research papers are written exercise in which students must investigate a particular topic either in the textbook or assigned by the instructor that is related to the course objectives and conduct a review of the criminalistic literature, case law, or statutes. Based on the literature review, students are required to develop a thesis/theme and draw conclusions on the topic researched.</li></ul>	<b>10 – 20%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Introspective Theme Paper/Case Study Analysis</b> The introspective theme paper/case study analysis is a 7 – 10 page written exercise in which students integrate and synthesize concepts to perform an in-depth analysis and demonstrate principles of investigation. The students must analyze, synthesize, integrate, and demonstrate relevance of concepts to course objectives.</li></ul>	<b>30 – 40%</b>

**Methods of Evaluation (continued)**

<b>Grading Components</b>	<b>% of final course grade</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Written/Oral Presentation Interview of Law Enforcement Agency or Professional in the Field</b> The written/oral presentation of the interview of the agency representative or legal professional requires the student to gather information and to determine its relevance to concepts and theories presented in class which are related to course objectives.</li></ul>	<b>15 – 25%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Oral Presentations</b> Oral presentations are based on a topic either discussed/not discussed during the semester that is relevant to the study of criminal law or evidence and related to course objectives. The instructor may require a written outline to augment the oral presentation.</li></ul>	<b>15 – 20%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Quizzes</b> Quizzes will provide evidence of the extent to which students have met course objectives.</li></ul>	<b>10 – 15%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Exams, including Midterm and Final Exams</b> (number of exams and dates specified by the instructor) Exams will provide evidence of the extent to which students have mastered and synthesized course material and have met course objectives.</li></ul>	<b>20 – 30%</b>

**NOTE:** The instructor will determine (as appropriate) the specific components for the course and provide specific weights which lie in the above given ranges at the beginning of the semester.

**Academic Integrity:** Dishonesty disrupts the search for truth that is inherent in the learning process and so devalues the purpose and the mission of the College. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- plagiarism – the failure to acknowledge another writer’s words or ideas or to give proper credit to sources of information;
- cheating – knowingly obtaining or giving unauthorized information on any test/exam or any other academic assignment;
- interference – any interruption of the academic process that prevents others from the proper engagement in learning or teaching; and
- fraud – any act or instance of willful deceit or trickery.

Violations of academic integrity will be dealt with by imposing appropriate sanctions. Sanctions for acts of academic dishonesty could include the resubmission of an assignment, failure of the test/exam, failure in the course, probation, suspension from the College, and even expulsion from the College.

**Student Code of Conduct:** All students are expected to conduct themselves as responsible and considerate adults who respect the rights of others. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. All students are also expected to attend and be on time for all class meetings. No cell phones or similar electronic devices are permitted in class. Please refer to the Essex County College student handbook, *Lifeline*, for more specific information about the College's Code of Conduct and attendance requirements.



**Course Content Outline:** based on the text by Kären M Hess & Christine Hess Orthmann (2010). *Criminal Investigation* (9<sup>th</sup> edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, a division of Thomson.

Additional Resources:

Saferstein, Richard (2011). *Criminalistics: An Introduction to Forensic Science* (10<sup>th</sup> edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall.

Gardner, Thomas & Anderson, Terry (2009). *Criminal Evidence: Principles and Cases* (7<sup>th</sup> edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, a division of Thomson.

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Topic/Content</b>	<b>Readings</b>
1	Criminal Investigation: An Overview	ch 1
2	Documenting the Crime Scene: Note Taking, Photographing, and Sketching	ch 2
3	Writing Effective Reports	ch 3
4	Searches	ch 4
5	Forensics/Physical Evidence	ch 5
6	Obtaining Information and Intelligence	ch 6
7	Identifying and Arresting Suspects	ch 7
8	Death Investigations	ch 8
9	Assault, Domestic Violence, Stalking, and Elder Abuse	ch 9
10	Sex Offenses	ch 10
11	Crimes against Children	ch 11
12	Burglary	ch 12
13	Larceny/Theft, Fraud, and White-Collar Crime	ch 13
14	Motor Vehicle Theft	ch 14
15	Arson, Bombs, and Explosives	ch 15
16	Computer Crime	ch 16
17	A Dual Threat: Drug-Related Crime and Organized Crime	ch 17

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Topic/Content</b>	<b>Readings</b>
18	Criminal Activities of Gangs and Other Dangerous Groups	ch 18
19	Terrorism and Homeland Security	ch 19
20	Preparing for and Presenting Cases in Court	N/A

NOTE: In CJI 203, the instructor must cover the 20 units listed above minimally in any reasonable order throughout the duration of the semester/term. Also, the instructor may include additional areas based on his/her expertise and/or interest.