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CJUS 125N.01: Fundamentals of Forensic Science

David Garrett Kerr

University of Montana, Missoula, garry.kerr@umontana.edu

Haley Nicole O'Brien

University of Montana, Missoula, haley.obrien@umontana.edu

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CJUS 125, Fall 2021

Fundamentals of Forensic Science

Instructor: Garry Kerr
Email: garry.kerr@umontana.edu
Office Hours & Zoom: TBD

Temporary Instructor: Haley O'Brien
Email: haley.obrien@umontana.edu
Available by Email & Appointment

Class Meeting Time: M/W/F 1-1:50pm, North Underground Lecture Hall- Room 101

Goals and Purpose:

Successful students in this class will:

- gain an appreciation for the scientific method as a way to learn about the world
- be introduced to the basics of a wide variety of sciences
- explore the breadth of forensic science as practiced in crime labs in the 21st century
- understand the roles of police, forensic scientists, attorneys, expert witnesses and others in the process of a criminal investigation and trial
- learn about careers in the forensic sciences and how to prepare for them

Texts, Readings and Class Materials: The required text for this class is Randall Skelton's "A Survey of Forensic Sciences". There will also be a required subscription to The Community Action Period, to be discussed upon Professor Kerr's return.

Exams and Assignments: Please refer to the schedule on this syllabus for the ***Tentative*** due dates of all assignments and exams. Directions for completing the Bonus paper will be available through Moodle and discussed in more detail in class upon Professor Kerr's return. All exams will be offered online through Moodle.

Grading: Your grade will be based on the following:

| | | | |
|-------------------------|------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 st Midterm | 80 points | A | 360 points and above |
| 2 nd Midterm | 100 points | B | 320 – 359 |
| Bonus Paper | 20 points | C | 280 – 319 |
| Action Period | 20 points | D | 240 – 279 |
| Final Exam | 200 points | F | Below 239 points |
| Total Possible | 420 points | Cr/No Cr cutoff | 260 points |

CODE OF ACADEMIC CONDUCT

This class has a zero-tolerance policy and will promptly deal with any acts of academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, or unauthorized help on assignments, etc.) according to university policy. For further information on what falls into these categories see:

http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact your professor.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you are a student with a disability and wish to request reasonable accommodations for this course, contact me privately to discuss the specific modifications. Please be advised, I may request that you provide a verification letter from the Office for Disability Equity (ODE). If you have not yet registered with ODE, located in Lommasson Center 154, please do so in order to coordinate your reasonable modifications. For more information, visit the Disability Services website at:

www.umt.edu/disability.

COVID POLICY

Your Instructor is fully aware of the ongoing, worldwide pandemic taking place. While this course is currently scheduled to be taught in-person this semester, there are personal concerns and responsibilities regarding your health. Please stay safe, wash your hands, and maintain social distancing whenever possible. Per UM guidelines: **MASKS ARE REQUIRED IN CLASSROOMS REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION STATUS**. Masks can be easily picked up for free at many offices across campus, including Student Success (Main Hall 022), deans' offices, the University Center, and the Curry Health Center.

*If you are unable to wear a mask, please contact your academic adviser or the Office for Disability Equity (if appropriate) to discuss alternative options immediately. Students who fail to wear masks will be dismissed from the class and may face a disciplinary hearing through the Office of Community Standards.

Additionally, please be sure to be mindful of your mental health—we are all struggling right now, so be as kind as possible and recognize that no one is in an ideal situation (this goes for your classmates, fellow UM students, and your professors!). Should you or someone in your household become sick, please alert your Instructor to ensure they are able to advise you regarding course materials and progress. Other extenuating circumstances are understandable, and indeed expected, but *prompt and active communication* is key to making sure your needs are taken care of.

If there is any cause for concern, please email or set up an appointment to talk with your instructor in order to ensure that your needs are being met. We are here to aid you in succeeding in this course, even if there is a lot going on in the world around us all!

Keep up to date on UM's COVID-19 information here:

<https://www.umt.edu/coronavirus/>

BASIC NEEDS STATEMENT

Any student who faces challenges securing food or housing and believes that this could affect their performance in this course is urged to contact any or all of the following campus resources. If you are comfortable, please feel free to email your Professor as well; I will do my best to help connect you with additional resources.

→Food Pantry Program: UM offers a food pantry that students can access for emergency food. The pantry is open on Tuesdays from 9 to 2, on Fridays from 10-5. The pantry is located in UC 119. Pantry staff operate several satellite food cupboards on campus (including one at Missoula College). For more information about this program, email umpantry@mso.umt.edu, visit the pantry's website:

<https://www.umt.edu/asum/agencies/food-pantry/default.php>

Or contact the pantry on social media: @pantryUm on twitter, @UMPantry on Facebook, um_pantry on Instagram.

→ASUM Renter Center: The Renter Center has compiled a list of resources for UM students at risk of homelessness or food insecurity here:

<https://www.umt.edu/asum/agencies/renter-center/default.php>.

Students can schedule an appointment with Renter Center staff to discuss their situation and receive information, support, and referrals.

→TRiO Student Support Services: TRiO serves UM students who are low-income, first-generation college students, or have documented disabilities. TRiO services include a textbook loan program, scholarships and financial aid help, academic advising, coaching, and tutoring. Students can check their eligibility for TRiO services online here:

<http://www.umt.edu/trioss/apply.php#Eligibility>

LECTURE AND READING SCHEDULE Fall 2021

Subject to Change

| Week | Date | Topic | Readings & Assignments |
|-------------|-------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | 8/30 | Introduction & Syllabus | |
| | 9/1 | About Forensic Science | Ch 1 & 3 |
| | 9/3 | & Scientific Method | |
| 2 | 9/6 | Labor Day! (No Classes) | |
| | 9/8 | The Criminal Investigation | Ch 2 & 4 |
| | 9/10 | | |
| 3 | 9/13 | Crime Scenes | Ch 6 |
| | 9/15 | | |
| | 9/17 | | |
| 4 | 9/20 | Evidence & The Comparative Method | Ch 8 |
| | 9/22 | | |
| | 9/24 | Trace & Transfer Evidence | Ch 9 & 10 |
| 5 | 9/27 | Exam Review | |
| | 9/29 | | |
| | 10/1 | | |
| 6 | 10/4 | Log in to Action Period; Arson Video | Ch 31 |
| | 10/6 | Arson Investigation | Ch 11 & 30 |
| | 10/8 | Fingerprints | Ch 9 & 10 |
| 7 | 10/11 | Fingerprints | Begin Action Period(?) Ch 15 |
| | 10/13 | Forensic Anthropology | Ch 27 |
| | 10/15 | Methods & Techniques (publicanthropology.net) | Ch 18 |
| 8 | 10/18 | Methods & Techniques | |

| | | | |
|-----------|-------|--|------------------|
| | 10/20 | Evidence | Ch 19 |
| | 10/22 | Blood | Ch 20 |
| 9 | 10/25 | Body Fluids | |
| | 10/27 | Forensic Toxicology | Ch 23 |
| | 10/29 | Forensic Toxicology | |
| 10 | 11/1 | Video | |
| | 11/3 | Fibers & Hair | |
| | 11/5 | Fibers & Hair | |
| 11 | 11/8 | Fibers & Hair | |
| | 11/10 | Human Rights Violations Excavations Video Review | |
| | 11/12 | 2 nd MIDTERM | |
| 12 | 11/15 | Glass & Soil | Ch 29 |
| | 11/17 | Glass & Soil | |
| | 11/19 | Glass & Soil | |
| 13 | 11/22 | TBD | |
| | 11/24 | Thanksgiving Break | |
| | 11/26 | | |
| 14 | 11/29 | DNA | Ch 21 |
| | 12/1 | DNA | |
| | 12/3 | DNA | BONUS PAPERS DUE |
| 15 | 12/6 | Firearms | |
| | 12/8 | Video | Ch 12 & 13 |
| | 12/10 | *Last Day of Class* Physical Patterns | Ch 14 |
| | 12/15 | FINAL EXAM 1:10 – 3:10 | |