

San José State University
Department of Justice Studies
49636, Survey of Forensic Science, FS11-60, Fall, 2022

Course and Contact Information

Instructor(s): Jodie Warren, Ph.D.

Office Location: HB 214

Telephone: 408-924-8451

Email: jodie.warren@sjsu.edu

Office Hours: Following class plus Thursdays 1- 2 pm (zoom) or by appointment (in person/zoom)

OH zoom: <https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/2744634778>

Class Days/Time: Mondays 12:00- 2:45 pm

Classroom: MQH520

Course Description

3 units

This survey course introduces students to the profession of forensic science. Topics include the field's history and sub-disciplines, the CSI Effect, the application of the scientific method to physical evidence analysis.

Virtual labs may be used to augment readings.

Course Format

This course is a mandatory in class course with some online components offered through the Course Canvas page. Familiarize yourself with the canvas course system. Reliable access to a computer and the internet will be required. Students are required to have an electronic device (laptop, desktop or tablet) with a camera and built-in microphone. SJSU has a free equipment loan program available for students. Students are responsible for ensuring that they have access to reliable Wi-Fi during class and tests. If students are unable to have reliable Wi-Fi, they must inform the instructor, as soon as possible. All written assignments will be submitted via Canvas, and must be in Microsoft Word (*.doc or *.docx) or pdf formats. If you do not currently own Microsoft Word, the software (both PC and Mac) is available for free to students:

<http://its.sjsu.edu/services/software/microsoft-students/index.html>

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to [LO1-5]:

- 1. critically analyze the forensic sciences used in today's criminal justice system and explain issues that arise in our courts due to the CSI effect**
- 2. Differentiate and explain the roles of forensic and investigative personnel, their separate duties and how they work together, and articulate a realistic perspective of the forensic sciences.**
- 3. Summarize the history of forensic science, the structure and organization of crime labs, and the sub-disciplines and contributing sciences of forensic science.**
- 4. Explain the fundamental principles and concepts of forensic science**
- 5. Describe the rules of evidence**

Required Texts/Readings (Required - Delete the word “Required” in final draft)

Textbook

Required Readings (ISBN: 9780135268407 (rental version)) Saferstein, R. and Roy, T. (2020). Criminalistics: An introduction to forensic science (13th Ed.). New York: Pearson pp.558

Students can rent an electronic copy of the textbook via <https://www.vitalsource.com/products/criminalistics-richard-saferstein-tiffany-v9780135268407>

Any Additional Readings will be posted on Canvas

Library Liaison (Delete if not applicable)

Monday, Nyle Email: Nyle.Monday@sjsu.edu

Course Requirements and Assignments

- 1. MIDTERM – This will be held in the lecture time. It will be only 1.5 hours long and will be worth 25% of the total grade. It will be based on the seminars and readings and will be in the form of short answers/multiple choice/true or false. The exam will happen in class on Canvas*
- 2. FINAL – This will be held during the final exam period and will cover the second part of the course and will include all seminars and readings following the midterm. It will be 2 hrs&15mins and worth 25% of your total grade. It will occur on Canvas*
- 3. SEMINAR EXERCISES and PARTICIPATION will be assigned in class and will be worth 25% of your final grade. These exercises can range from weekly assignments to in class activities. Due to this, regular attendance is required for successful completion of this course.*
- 4. One two-page OUTLINE and one five-page LITERATURE REVIEW paper is also required. This paper should be 5 pages long – no shorter and not much longer (before references), double spaced. Your paper should be on a forensic science of your choice (suggestions will be offered in class) and should focus on explaining the science (not too much on techniques). The paper is worth 15% and is due (week 14). An outline must be submitted (week 11) and is worth 10% of your mark so that combined, they are worth 25% of your final grade.*

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

Final Examination or Evaluation

The culminating evaluation in this course is a final examination that will take place through the Canvas platform during the final exam schedule. It is a 2hr & 15 min exam that is scheduled in the final exam period by the university.

Grading Information

- One extra credit option will be available this semester that can increase your final grade by a maximum of 3%.
- Policies regarding late or missed work- All assignments/exams are expected to be completed in the course and submitted on time. Exams must be completed during scheduled times unless permission by the instructor is given ahead of the exam. Medical notes are required for extensions and should be provided to the instructor at the earliest possible moment. Late assignments are penalized 5%/day.

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>A plus</i>	<i>96 to 100%</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>93 to 95%</i>
<i>A minus</i>	<i>90 to 92%</i>
<i>B plus</i>	<i>86 to 89 %</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>83 to 85%</i>
<i>B minus</i>	<i>80 to 82%</i>
<i>C plus</i>	<i>76 to 79%</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>73 to 75%</i>
<i>C minus</i>	<i>70 to 72%</i>
<i>D plus</i>	<i>66 to 69%</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>63 to 65%</i>
<i>D minus</i>	<i>60 to 62%</i>

This course must be passed with a C or better as a Forensic science graduation requirement.

Classroom Protocol

Participation and Attendance is required for this course. Participation is not the same as attendance and will be assessed primarily through seminar exercises. Aim to be on time. The first week of classes is difficult as parking lots are traffic nightmares so arrive early.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](#), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Additional Information

Instructor

Dr. Jodie Warren obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in biology at Simon Fraser University (SFU) and volunteered in this institution's cutting-edge forensic entomology laboratory where she first began taking forensic cases on-call. While attending autopsies and crime scenes as the forensic entomologist, Dr. Warren completed an Advanced Specialty Certificate in Forensic Science and Technology with honors at British Columbia Institute of Technology. She then went on to complete a M.A. in Criminology at SFU where she

specialized in constant and fluctuating temperature effects in forensic entomology. During her Ph.D. studies, also at SFU, Dr. Warren developed innovative techniques to advance current techniques used at crime scenes to age developing insects on decomposing remains. For this research, she was awarded the prestigious Dean's Convocation Gold Medal.

FS 11-60 / Survey of Forensic Science, Fall 2022, Course Schedule

Tentative Course Schedule_ Subject to change

Week	Date	Topics, Assignments, Deadlines	Readings (have readings done before class)
1	Aug 22	Course and instructor introduction	Examine syllabus and canvas
2	Aug 29	Introduction to Forensic Sciences and the NAS report	Saferstein, R. 2020. Criminalistics. Prentice-Hall, New Jersey. Ch. 3. Physical Evidence Skim The National Academy of Sciences (NAS report (2009) Strengthening Forensic Science the United States: A Path Forward (Canvas)
3	Sep 05	Labor day	
4	Sep 12	Identification of human remains	Saferstein, R. 2020. Criminalistics. Prentice-Hall, New Jersey. Ch5 (pgs 115-123) Forensic Anthropology Wayne Williams (Canvas)
5	Sep 19	Individualization- Confirmation of Identity	Saferstein, R. 2020. Ch. 6 Fingerprints
6	Sep 26	Time Since Death	Saferstein, R. 2020. Ch. 5 Death investigation
7	Oct 03	Coroner/Medical examiner death investigation	TBA on Canvas
8	Oct 10	Midterm Exam	No readings
9	Oct 17	Firearms/ Tool Marks	Saferstein, R. 2020. Criminalistics. Prentice-Hall, New Jersey. Ch. 9 Firearms, toolmarks and other impressions
10	Oct 24	Questioned Documents	Saferstein, R. 2020. Criminalistics. Prentice-Hall, New Jersey. Ch. 18. Document examination.
11	Oct 31	Crime Scene/Crime Scene Officer/ blood spatter <i>Lit review outline due at 11:59 pm</i>	Saferstein, R. 2020. Criminalistics. Prentice-Hall, New Jersey. Ch. 2. The Crime Scene, Ch.4. Crime Scene Reconstruction: Bloodstain Pattern Analysis

Week	Date	Topics, Assignments, Deadlines	Readings (have readings done before class)
12	Nov 7	Forensic Biology	Saferstein, R. 2020. Criminalistics. Prentice-Hall, New Jersey. Ch. 11. Hair and Fibers, on up to Fibers, Ch. 16: DNA: The Indispensable Forensic Science Tool.
13	Nov 14	Forensic Chemistry	Ch. 11. Hair and Fibers, from Fibers onward Ch. 17, Forensic Aspects of Fire and Explosive investigation
14	Nov 21	Forensic Toxicology <i>Lit review paper is due at 11 :59 pm</i>	Saferstein, R. 2020. Criminalistics. Prentice-Hall, New Jersey Ch 12 Drugs and Ch 13 Forensic Toxicology.
15	Nov 28	Digital Forensics	Saferstein, R. 2020. Criminalistics. Prentice-Hall, New Jersey Ch. 19. Computer Forensics and Ch 20. Mobile Device Forensics.
16	Dec 05	Forensic Entomology/Final exam Review	TBA on canvas
Final Exam	Wednesday Dec 14 th 9:45am- 12 pm On Canvas		