CRJ-141
Forensic and Investigative Writing

Course Description

CRJ – 141 Forensic and Investigative Writing 3 Cr.
This course is a study of the proper investigative and crime lab documentation through focused
observational and writing skills. Effective techniques in the development of a criminal case file
are examined, as well as the ethical and legal pitfalls encountered through poorly written
documentation. Prerequisite: CRJ 101, CRJ 140, RDG 100.
3 Cr (3 lect/pres, 0 lab, 0 other)

Course Focus

Students will be provided with an introduction to scientific investigative report writing, while
using examples of the complicated legal issues surrounding digital evidence within the area
of Criminal Investigation and Forensic Studies.

Text and References – Required

   Inc., 10: 0-13-213280-X (note: earlier editions may be used with Instructor permission)

Supplemental Readings

Course supplemental readings will be posted on our learning management
system Blackboard and announced on line. Readings will be posted at least two weeks prior to
the relevant class. Many readings will be available in portable document format (PDF) for your
individual, educational use only (in accordance with copyright law). If you don’t already have
the PDF reader software you can download this for free at www.adobe.com. I may also ask you
to locate a specific article using your web browser.

Course Goals

The following list of course goals will be addressed in the course. These goals are directly related to the
performance objectives.

1. Become aware of scientific library building (case repertoires)
2. Understand common problems which occur in investigative reports
3. Understand the Socratic Writing method
4. Differentiate among facts, inferences, and opinions (Social Media Phenomenon)
5. Distinguish between well written statements and poorly written statements
6. Evaluate Scientific Process
7. Categorize steps to take in validating scientific evidence
8. Define using authorities (Sources of information & Importance of Citations)
9. Prepare thought provoking questions of focus
10. Identify what type of words are preferred in scientific reports
11. Identify what is expected in peer review
12. Determine how to eliminate unnecessary words
13. Discover techniques to reduce wordiness
14. Identify subject and verbs agreement
15. Punctuate two sentences which are joined together
16. Combine several ideals into one sentence (Without interfering with paragraph structure)
17. Explain the Federal Rules of Evidence (FRE)
18. Compare Daubert and Frey (FRE Tests)
19. Describe the qualities of a report
20. Change a closed-ended question into the open-ended form (Investigative Journalism)
21. List ways in which forensic evidence might identify a potential suspect
22. List ways to minimizing the contamination of a crime scene
23. Explain primary objectives of Investigative Report Writing
24. Describe characteristics of relevant evidence
25. Explain statement analysis approach
26. Identify categorizing sources of information
27. Articulate sequence of bibliographic composition
28. Incorporate cognitive techniques into explaining scientific process
29. Define Exclusionary Rule
30. State conditions that must be met for expert opinion
31. Explain problems in applying technical jargon
32. Describe what is meant by “Fact”
33. Explain difference between inquisitorial and accusatorial writing
34. Explain difference between various types of evidence
35. Describe complementary research strategy (Transforming Information into Intelligence)
36. Explain Suspending Judgement
37. Explain Dialogic Notetaking (notetaking facilitates learning / teaching reader of report)
38. Describe developing focused science
39. Explain “reading like an outsider”
40. Explain Boolean search strategies

**Student Contributions**

Each student will spend at least 6 hours per week preparing for class. As a Web based class (80%) with some supplemental Saturday lectures (20%), attendance on-line and in-class is critical. *It is the responsibility of the student to take quizzes, exams, and complete activities within the specified due dates.* The syllabus is subject to change. All changes will be discussed and students will be accountable for such changes. You will be required to complete the following:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module Lessons:</th>
<th>7 (Discussion board) (Online/In class)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignments:</td>
<td>5 Major Assignment Case Reports (Online/In class (3 to 4 pages))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Midterm Exam:</td>
<td>1 (Online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Final Exam:</td>
<td>1 (Online)</td>
</tr>
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**STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The Technical College of the Lowcountry is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all qualified applicants for admissions or employment without regard to race, gender, national origin, age, religion, marital status, veteran status, disability, or political affiliation or belief.

**ADA STATEMENT**

The Technical College of the Lowcountry provides access, equal opportunity and reasonable accommodation in its services, programs, activities, education and employment for individuals with disabilities. To request disability accommodation, contact the counselor for students with disabilities at (843) 525-8228 during the first ten business days of the academic term.

**ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

There is no tolerance at TCL for academic dishonesty and misconduct. The College expects all students to conduct themselves with dignity and to maintain high standards of responsible citizenship.

It is the student’s responsibility to address any questions regarding what might constitute academic misconduct to the course instructor for further clarification.

The College adheres to the Student Code for the South Carolina Technical College System. Copies of the Student Code and Grievance Procedure are provided in the TCL Student Handbook, the Division Office, and the Learning Resources Center.

**ATTENDANCE**

The College’s statement of policy indicates that students must attend **ninety percent of total class hours** or they will be in violation of the attendance policy.

- Students not physically attending class during the first ten calendar days from the start of the semester must be dropped from the class for NOT ATTENDING.
- Students taking an online/internet class must sign in and communicate with the instructor within the first ten calendar days from the start of the semester to indicate attendance in the class. Students not attending class during the first ten calendar days from the start of the semester must be dropped from the class for NOT ATTENDING.
- Reinstatement requires the signature of the division dean.

In the event it becomes necessary for a student to withdraw from the course OR if a student stops attending class, it is the student’s responsibility to initiate and complete the necessary paperwork. Withdrawing from class may have consequences associated with financial aid and time to completion.
When a student exceeds the allowed absences, the student is in violation of the attendance policy. The instructor MUST withdraw the student with a grade of “W”, “WP”, or “WF” depending on the date the student exceeded the allowed absences and the student’s progress up to the last date of attendance or under extenuating circumstances and at the discretion of the faculty member teaching the class, allow the student to continue in the class and make-up the work. This exception must be documented at the time the allowed absences are exceeded.

Absences are counted from the first day of class. There are no "excused" absences. All absences are counted, regardless of the reason for the absence.

A student must take the final exam or be excused from the final exam in order to earn a non-withdrawal grade.

A copy of TCL’s STATEMENT OF POLICY NUMBER: 3-1-307 CLASS ATTENDANCE (WITHDRAWAL) is on file in the Division Office and in the Learning Resources Center.

ONLINE ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

For all online courses, students must complete an assignment designated by the instructor during the first week of classes. The instructor will drop the student from the course if the initial assignment is not completed.

Instructors will withdraw students from the class when 90% attendance is not maintained. Attendance in an online course is defined by regular course access and by timely completion of assignments as required by the instructor. Each student will be expected to access the web class at least once a week and complete 90% of assignments on time. Additional access is encouraged and may be necessary for successful completion of classes.

Failure to log in and complete assignments will result in the student being withdrawn from the course. The instructor will assign a grade of “W,” “WP,” or “WF” based upon the student’s academic standing as the last date of attendance, which is the last login. Students are responsible for any financial matters associated with an administrative withdrawal. If a fails to email the instructor (using the my.tcl.edu email account) requesting to be dropped from the course and has not submitted the initial assignment required during the first week of class, the instructor will assign a “Never Attended” code in the student information system (web-advisor) no later than ten calendar days after the first day of the class. Students who are dropped as a result of never attending the course are still responsible for all fees associated with the course.

HAZARDOUS WEATHER

In case weather conditions are so severe that operation of the College may clearly pose a hardship on students and staff traveling to the College, notification of closing will be made through the following radio and television stations: WYKZ 98.7, WGCO 98.3, WGZO 103.1, WFXH 106.1, WWVV 106.9, WLOW 107.9, WGZR 104.9, WFXH 1130 AM, WLVH 101.1, WSOK 1230 AM, WAEV 97.3, WTOC TV, WTGS TV, WJWJ TV, and WSAV TV. Students, faculty and staff are highly encouraged to opt in to the Emergency Text Message Alert System. http://www.tcl.edu/current-students/text-alert

EMERGENCY TEXT MESSAGE ALERT
Students, faculty and staff are highly encouraged to opt in to the Emergency Text Message Alert System. Participants receive immediate notification of emergency events and weather cancelations via text messaging on their cell phones. Participants can also opt in to receive non-emergency news and announcements. Go to www.tcl.edu. On the homepage, click on “emergency TextAlert at TCL” and fill out the form or go to http://www.tcl.edu/current-students/text-alert

Course Evaluation

Your performance objective and exams will be translated to points and the points to grades. There are 100 possible points and grades will be earned as follows:

A = 90-100
B = 80-89
C = 70-79
D = 60-69

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graded Assessment</th>
<th>Weights (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Boards</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Assignments, Web Research, Analysis Exercises, Article Reviews, Research Paper, and Presentations</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary of Scientific Terms</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Course Structure:

- This course is designed as Blended Web based class setting.
- There will be self-paced and group activities using Blackboard and other Web sites. Activities will consist of Investigative report writing and data warehousing of investigative and class images, notes and reports.
- Classes will be held On-Line and selected Saturdays which will require you to participate with your class mates within Blackboard.
Course Participation

Students are expected to participate in all class discussion boards. I expect you to contribute to discussions and offer your comments and insights. Sharing your individual perspectives on the complex issues we discuss is essential to making this class an enjoyable experience. I will often pose questions to the class and ask for reflection on a specific study area or investigative procedure or process. I will take note of the level and quality of your participation throughout the class. Your answers should reflect constructive thought and intellectual honesty. To receive a high grade you will need to enter our classroom motivated and participate actively and consistently throughout the term.

This class values diversity and stresses the importance of listening to others with respect.

Unlike a traditional classroom-based courses, your participation grade in an asynchronous Web based course requires that you read the Discussion Board Posts for each assignment/Module and respond to at least two of your class mates. These responses are to be complete sentences and are to focus on the spirit of the discussion at hand. A simple yes, no, cool, will not due. Be cognizant that some assignments will require you to attach a file should you forget to attach your file your assignment is not complete and will be graded accordingly. You need to complete the online lesson presentations, assignments, quizzes, and discussions by the due dates specified. Although some of your activities will be ungraded, I will keep track of whether you have completed them and will assign you a course participation grade based on your completion of these assignments. With regard to submitting your work, I expect you will turn in your assignments, on time, in the proper Word Docx format. I will expect you to keep a Flash Drive / mass storage device (or at minimum an emailed back-up) copy of your work in the event something happens to the copy you submit. Do not wait to the last minute to complete your work (Assignments) and pay close attention to your assignment submission requirements.

Online Etiquette

The objective in an online discussion is to be collaborative, not combative. Please, proofread your responses carefully before you post them to make sure that they will not be offensive to others. Use discussions to develop your skills in collaboration and teamwork. Treat the discussion areas as a creative environment where you and your classmates can ask questions, express opinions, revise opinions, and take positions just as you would in a more traditional classroom setting.

SAFETY ADDENDUM

Purpose.
The purpose of this safety addendum is to provide each student with safety guidelines during an incident, emergency, or disaster at TCL. In addition, it provides students guidelines for lockdown procedures, evacuation procedures, and active shooter.

Definitions
An incident is any event, potential or actual, that may impact normal operations but has no immediate health or life threatening consideration or serious effect on the overall functional capacity of the College. An event of this nature should be reported to the Office of the Vice President for Administrative Services. Also notify the off-site campus administrator if applicable.
An emergency is any incident, potential or actual, which may endanger life or health or which affects an entire building or buildings, and will disrupt the overall operations of the College. Outside emergency services will probably be required, as well as major efforts from campus support services. Major policy considerations and decisions will usually be required from the college administration during times of crises. An emergency should be reported immediately by directly using 911 if life or health/injury considerations exist and then to the Office of the President or Vice President for Administrative Services as quickly as possible. Also notify the off-site campus administrator if applicable.

A disaster is any event or occurrence that has taken place and has seriously impaired or halted the operations of the College. In some cases, mass personnel casualties and severe property damage may be sustained. A coordinated effort of all campus-wide resources is required to effectively control the situation. Outside emergency services will be essential. In all cases of disaster, an Emergency Control Center will be activated, and the appropriate support and operational plans will be executed. The disaster should be immediately reported, first by calling 911 and then to the Office of the President or Vice President for Administrative Services. Also notify the off-site campus administrator if applicable.

Types of Emergencies
- Hurricane
- Tornado
- Fire
- Biochemical or Radiation Spill
- Explosion/Bomb
- Downed Aircraft (crash which directly impacts campus operations)
- Utility Failures
- Violent or criminal behavior
- Psychological Crisis

Procedures

Active Shooter

Building Evacuation
1. Building evacuations occur when an alarm sounds and/or upon notification by Security or the Emergency Director.
2. When the building evacuation alarm is activated during an emergency, individuals should exit according to the building evacuation plan and alert others to do the same.
3. Once outside, individuals should proceed to a clear area that is at least 500 feet away from the affected building. Streets, fire lanes, hydrant areas and walkways should be kept clear for emergency vehicles and personnel.
4. Individuals should not return to an evacuated building unless told to do so by Security or the Emergency Director.
5. Individuals should assist persons with disabilities in exiting the building. Elevators are reserved for disabled persons

Campus Evacuation
1. A uniformed Security Guard, the Emergency Director, or an Emergency Resource Team member will announce evacuation of all or part of the campus grounds.
2. All persons (students and staff) are to immediately vacate the campus, or in the case of a partial evacuation relocate to another part of the campus grounds as directed.

Lockdown
1. Clear the halls
2. Report to the nearest classroom/office
3. Assist those needing special assistance
4. Ensure classroom/office doors are closed and locked
5. Turn off lights
6. Stay away from doors and windows (out of the line of sight)
7. BE QUIET and follow instructor’s directions
8. Silence cell phones
9. Wait for the “All Clear” before leaving

Course Calendar: