

**FRSC 201-003: Intro to Forensic  
Science  
SPRING 2024  
M/W 10:00-11:20pm  
KUPF 204  
Course Syllabus**

**COURSE INFORMATION**

**Course Description:** Forensic Science is the application of science to the law. This course introduces students to the many disciplines of forensic science and how they are used in our criminal justice system. Students will be introduced to the science behind these disciplines and how forensic science techniques are used in crime laboratories throughout the United States and abroad. Guest lecturers and practitioners will offer insights into their day-to-day investigative work and how they face technological challenges and success. The scientific method will be emphasized throughout the course. Finally, a large portion of the course will include interactive learning during class including mock crime scenes searches, in-class discussions, student presentations, virtual labs, and more. **Number of Credits: 3 Prerequisites: none**

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

*Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found at:*

<http://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/academicintegrity-code.pdf>.

*Please note that my professional obligation and responsibility is to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. **Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university.** If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at [dos@njit.edu](mailto:dos@njit.edu)*

**Course-Section and Instructor**

Course-Section	Instructor
FRSC 201-002	Dr. Kevin Parmelee

M/W 10:00-11:20pm	Office: Tiernan Hall 323A
Office Hours: by appt.	
	Ph: 908-420-1102; email: <a href="mailto:parmelee@njit.edu">parmelee@njit.edu</a>

**Required Textbook:**

<b>Title</b>	Criminalistics: An Introduction to Forensic Science (13 <sup>th</sup> ed.)
<b>Author</b>	Richard Saferstein and Tiffany Roy
<b>Edition</b>	13
<b>Publisher</b>	Pearson
<b>ISBN #</b>	978-0-13-521831-0

and additional readings and videos as assigned. You must also have a computer with a reliable internet connection, webcam, and a microphone.

**University-wide Withdrawal Date:** The last day to withdraw with a **W** is Monday, April 1, 2024. It will be strictly enforced.

**Learning Outcomes:** Upon completion of this course, students will:

- Identify forensic science procedures and technologies used to examine and analyze physical evidence
- Evaluate the significance of physical evidence in a criminal investigation
- Identify applications of the scientific method when examining forensic evidence
- Communicate appropriate conclusions based on scientific data
- Apply critical thinking skills using methods of scientific inquiry by discussing recent high-profile cases
- Discriminate between generally accepted science and “junk science”
- Describe how science is used in the criminal justice system
- Understand how data influences legal decisions and shapes scientific reporting requirements
- Be able to identify cognitive bias and its impact on the forensic sciences

- Understand forensic science failures and ethical violations

## POLICIES

All CES students must familiarize themselves with, and adhere to, all official university-wide student policies. CES takes these policies very seriously and enforces them strictly.

**Grading Policy:** The final grade in this course will be determined as follows:

Attendance/Class Participation	5%
Assignments/Presentations	30%
Exams 1-3	30%
Final Exam	35%

Your final letter grade in this course will be based on the following:

A	90-100	C	70-76
B+	87-89	D	60-69
B	80-86	F	<60
C+	77-79		

**Attendance Policy:** Class attendance will be recorded and is **mandatory**. Each class is a learning experience that cannot be replicated through simply “getting the notes.” After one unexcused absence, each subsequent absence will result in your class participation score being lowered by one percentage point. (All excused absences need to go through the Dean of Students). You are expected to read the relevant chapters and/or reading assignments prior to the lecture. Two late arrivals (of more than 10 minutes) will count as one absence.

**Exams/Quizzes:** Exams and quizzes will be taken online through Canvas. Exams will cover the readings and lectures. You may need to download Lockdown Browser and Respondus Monitor as the exams may be given through these platforms. You will also need a computer, webcam, and good internet connection when taking the exams. The Final Exam will be comprehensive and will test your knowledge of all the course material taught in the entire course.

Exams 1, 2, 3	
Final Exam	Final Exam Week (Date TBD)

**Makeup Quiz/Exam Policy:** There will normally be **NO MAKE-UP QUIZ or EXAMS** during the semester. In the event that a student has a legitimate reason for missing an quiz or exam, the student should contact the Dean of Students office and present written verifiable proof of the reason for missing the exam, e.g., a doctor's note, police report, court notice, etc. clearly stating the date AND time of the problem. The student must also notify the instructor that the exam will be missed. Subsequent exams will then count double for the missed exam or quiz.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**Accommodation of Disabilities:** Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (**formerly known as Disability Support Services**) offers long-term and temporary accommodations for undergraduate, graduate, and visiting students at NJIT.

If you are in need of accommodations due to a disability please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services at **973-596-5417** or via email at [oars@njit.edu](mailto:oars@njit.edu). The office is located in Fenster Hall Room 260. A Letter of Accommodation Eligibility from the Office of Accessibility Resources Services office authorizing your accommodations will be required.

For further information regarding self-identification, the submission of medical documentation and additional support services provided please visit the Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) website at:

<https://www.njit.edu/studentsuccess/accessibility>

Important Dates (See [2024 academic calendar](#))

Date	Event
Sept 4	First Day of Classes
Sept 9	Last day to add/drop a class
Nov 26	Thursday classes meet

Nov 28-30	Thanksgiving Recess
Dec 11	Last day of classes
Dec 12-13	Reading Days
Dec 15-21	Final Exams

## Course Outline

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment
1	Sept 4	Introduction; Professional Practice	Read Ch1
	Sept 9	A Brief History of Forensics ( <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7fF2wXgYd8o">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7fF2wXgYd8o</a> )	Watch Netflix " <a href="#">How to Fix a Drug Scandal</a> " series
2	Sept 11	Quality Assurance; Ethics	Read <a href="#">ABC Code of Ethics</a>
	Sept 16	Ethics Presentations (in class prep) (National Forensic Science Week)	
3	Sept 18	Ethics Presentations (National Forensic Science Week)	
	Sept 23	Ethics Presentations	Read Ch2
4	Sept 25	The Crime Scene	Read Ch3; <a href="#">Federal Rules of Evidence</a>
	Sept 30	Physical Evidence, Identification, Collection & Processing	
5	Oct 2	<b>EXAM #1</b>	Read Ch
	Oct 7	<b>No Class (View "<a href="#">I am Evidence</a>" Documentary Film)</b>	Read Ch Response Paper
6	Oct 9	Crime Scene Reconstruction; Bloodstain Pattern Analysis(BPA)	Read Ch
	Oct 14	Death Investigation; The Autopsy	
7	Oct 16	Fingerprints	Read Ch
	Oct 21	<a href="#">NEAFS Meeting</a> (Atlantic City, NJ) Class will not meet	Read Ch
8	Oct 23	<a href="#">NEAFS Meeting</a> (Atlantic City, NJ) Class will not meet	Read Ch
	Oct 28	Microscopes, Firearms and Toolmarks	
9	Oct 30	<b>EXAM #2</b>	
10	Nov 4	Drugs	
	Nov 6	Serology	
11	Nov 11	DNA and Forensic Genetic Genealogy	Read Ch
	Nov 13	Fire Investigation In class fire scene: Arson or Accidental?	
12	Nov 18	Forensic Document Examination	Read Ch
	Nov 20	<b>EXAM #3</b>	Read Ch
13	Nov 25	Digital Forensics	Read Ch
	Nov 27	(Friday's Schedule no classes)	
14	Dec 2	Bias: Are we guilty of it?	
	Dec 4	Introduction to Law	
15	Dec 9	Courtroom Testimony	
	Dec 11	Review for Final; Last Day of class	
16	Dec 15-21		
	TBA	<b>Final Exam</b>	

Updated by Kevin Parmelee - August 5, 2024  
 Department of Chemistry & Environmental Sciences  
 Course Syllabus, Fall 2024