

**Sul Ross State University
Crime Scene Processing
Semester: Fall 2024
CJ 5370 Syllabus**

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Class hours: Online
Classroom: Remote
Office hours: Virtual (Schedule for times)

REQUIRED TEXT(S)

Practical Crime Scene Processing and Investigation, Third Edition (Practical Aspects of Criminal and Forensic Investigations) by Ross M. Gardner and Donna Krouskup

Additional readings (e.g., articles, reports) will be posted on Blackboard.

SRSU LIBRARY SERVICES:

The Sul Ross Library offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, www.library.sulross.edu . Off-campus access requires your LoboID and password. Check out materials using your photo ID. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or phone (432-837-8123).

Once you logged in to your Sul Ross Account on Blackboard you should be automatically connected to the library webpage as well. Thus, you can browse the online databases of the University and reach the articles on the reading list.

Syllabus is subject to updates and changes always look to the course announcements and reminders for updates. The faculty member reserves the right to amend this syllabus as needed.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The goal of the course is to provide a general understanding of crime scene processing methods. The six fundamental steps of crime scene processing, together with their order, will be demonstrated to the student throughout the course. The student will learn assessment, observation, documentation, searching, and collection of evidence through the course.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

This course is designed to provide knowledge about various topics related to Crime Scene Process. Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

L01-Learn the six basic activities involved in crime scene processing and the general order of these activities.

L02-Describe the general categories of physical evidence, what a crime laboratory can do with this evidence, and accepted methods of recovery.

L03-Demonstrate knowledge of the critical aspects of assessing a crime scene, including scene containment, crime scene team composition considerations, choosing the most effective crime scene search technique, and scene hazard identification and mitigation.

L04-Describe the different scene mapping methods.

L05-Describe the three basic photographs utilized for crime scene documentation.

L06-Describe and demonstrate the basic elements of crime scene narratives.

L07-Understand basic bloodstain patterns.

L08-Discuss the function, theory, and application of an alternative light source in crime scene processing.

L09-Recognize the effect of effective crime scene documentation on crime scene analysis.

L10-Describe basic methodologies of crime scene analysis.

MARKETABLE SKILLS:

This course is designed also to help the students for building various marketable skills to use in their in careers Criminal Justice related professions. Specifically, in this course, the following marketable skills, which are some of the most important skills for such careers, will be emphasized during this course:

MS 1- Verbal and Written Communication Skills. Students will develop communication skills to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.

MS 2- Critical Thinking and Observation. Students will develop critical thinking skills to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.

MS 3- Multicultural Understanding.

MS 4- Accessing Resources with Crime Data and the most current updates of legal codes and procedures.

MS 5- Teamwork and Working Collaboratively

MS 6- Analyzing the Factors Contributing to Processing a Crime Scene

GENERAL CLASSROOM POLICIES:

Students are encouraged to attend the class, ask questions and express opinions, however, talking among students and disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. You may bring beverages to class with you, but not food. Reading outside materials such as newspapers or other course work is not permitted during class time. Students should be prepared to engage in discussion over the assigned readings, and for possible pop quizzes. Electronic devices are never allowed to use in class in a way to distract the instructor and other students. Keep your mobile phone in silent mode, otherwise switch it off. Violation of this crucial principal will be penalized. There will be one general rule in class which applies to all situations. This is also called “golden rule”. **TREAT OTHERS AS YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE TREATED.**

GRADING:

There will be 2 major exams (Midterm and Final) in the semester, with questions drawn from the readings and the supplemental materials posted on the blackboard. Those 2 exams will be worth 20% each. Those same exams will be 100 points each. There will be no makeup exams. There will assignments throughout the course. Those assignments will be 30% of the final grade. There will also be weekly discussion questions worth 30% of the overall grade. Each assignment and discussion question will worth 10 points each

Midterm exam	20%
Final exam	20%
Discussions	30%
Assignments	30%
Total	100%

Discussion Rubric:

The student will need to make initial post by Wednesday of the week the discussion is posted. The initial response should be a minimum of 500 words. Students will need to reply to at least two other students. All references should be cited in APA format. Discussions will be graded based on the rubric below.

Criteria	Excellent (10 points)	Meets Expectations (7 points)	Approaches Expectations (5 point)	Needs Improvement (0 points)
Invites contributions from others	Consistently engages others in discussion by inviting their comments.	Invites comments from others.	Sometimes invites comments from others	Does not invite comments from others
Acknowledges the statements of others	Consistently engages others in the discussion by acknowledging their contributions	Often acknowledges the contribution of others	Sometimes acknowledges the contribution of others	Does not acknowledge the contribution of others
Challenges the accuracy, logic, relevance, or clarity of statements	Constructively challenges the accuracy, clarity, relevance or logic of statements made	Responds in a civil manner to a statement made by someone else by challenging its accuracy, clarity, relevance or logic.	Attempts to challenge the accuracy, clarity, relevance of logic of statements	Does not challenge the accuracy, clarity, relevance, or logic of statements
Summarizes point of agreement and disagreement	Clearly summarizes points of agreement and disagreement	Summarizes points of agreement but does not clearly summarize points of disagreement	Attempts to summarize points of agreement or disagreement	Does not summarize points of agreement or disagreement

Adapted from Harris, D. (1996). Assessing discussion of public issues: A scoring guide. *Handbook on teaching social issues*, 289-297.

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM:

Students are expected to do their own work on all tests and papers. Cheating on tests and plagiarism on assignments will result in a grade of “F” on that part of the course, a possible grade of “F” for the entire course, and possible recommendation for suspension from the university.

Plagiarism consists of presenting the work of another as one’s own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source) and submitting examinations or other work in whole or in part as one’s own when such work has been prepared by another person or copied from another person (see the Student Handbook).

IN-CLASS and ON-LINE ATTENDANCE:

The Department of Criminal Justice feels very strongly that class attendance is a direct predictor of student classroom success. Therefore, the faculty of the CJ department as a group will enforce the following student attendance policy. This policy does not supersede the SRSU policy on student attendance; it simply reinforces those stated goals. Criminal justice faculty will take class attendance. In accordance with current SRSU policy, when a student misses a total of 9 hours of class, the presumption is that the student will be dropped from that class with an “F”.

Students who violate the SRSU attendance policy may also find that they are ineligible for any extra credit or any discretionary grading curve applied to any or all exams for that course/semester. It should also be noted that it is the student’s responsibility to inform the instructor prior to any University event that would cause an absence. Failure of the student to inform the instructor will result in that absence being recorded as unexcused. Attendance is important! Attendance demonstrates maturity, responsibility and a serious attitude toward education. Additionally, instructors seldom teach only from the book. Missing a class (even an excused absence) will put you at a disadvantage for all of the materials covered when you were absent such as films, presentations, and guest lectures which cannot be made up. Attendance will be taken daily and absences cannot be made up. Students should be in class on time and should be prepared to stay for the entire class period. Students who are late will not be counted as attending if attendance has already been taken.

SERVICE STATEMENT:

I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, socioeconomic class, age, nationality, etc.). I also understand that the crisis of COVID, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events could impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create an inclusive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Family. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES AND BLACKBOARD HELP DESK:

Sul Ross State University has established a variety of programs to help students meet the challenges of college life. Support to students includes advising, counseling, mentoring, tutoring, supplemental instruction, and writing assistance. For a complete list of academic support services, visit the Student Support Services <https://www.sulross.edu/section/311/student-support-services>. For more information, students are encouraged to contact SSS at (432) 837-9118 or visit Ferguson Hall Room 105. For Blackboard help visit <https://www.sulross.edu/bb> or call 432-837-8523 (M-F 09:00 am-06:00 pm). You can get The Distance Education Handbook at <https://tvpb.sulross.edu/start/index.html>

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:

SRSU Accessibility Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mrs. Mary Schwartz Grisham, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director at 432-837-8203 or email mschwartz@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine. Texas, 79832.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR FALL 2024

W	DATES	TOPICS	READINGS
1	08/26-09/01	Introduction	Garner, R. Chapter 1
2	09/02-09/08	Understanding the Nature of Physical Evidence	Garner, R. Chapter 2
3	09/09-09/15	Actions of the Initial Responding Officer/Processing Methodology	Garner, R. Chapter 3 and 4
4	09/16-09/22	Assessing the Scene	Garner, R. Chapter 5
5	09/23-09/29	Crime Scene Photography	Garner, R. Chapter 6
6	09/30-10/06	Crime Scene Sketching and Mapping	Garner, R. Chapter 7
7	10/07-10/13	Narrative Descriptions/Basic Skills for Crime Scene Processing: Lighting	Garner, R. Chapter 8 and 9
8	10/14-10/20	Finger Print Evidence/ Impression Evidence	Garner, R. Chapter 10 and 11
9	10/21-10/27	MIDTERM	
10	10/28-11/03	Shooting Scene Documentation and Reconstruction	Garner, R. Chapter 12
11	11/04-11/10	Applying Bloodstain Pattern Analysis in the Crime Scene	Garner, R. Chapter 13
12	11/11-11/17	Special Scene Considerations	Garner, R. Chapter 14
13	11/18-11/24	The Body as a Crime Scene	Garner, R. Chapter 15
14	11/25-12/04	The Role of a Crime Scene Analysis and Reconstruction	Garner, R. Chapter 16
15	12/06, 9-11	FINAL	

END OF COURSE EVALUATIONS:

Student evaluations of faculty are administered online at the end of each term/session for all courses with five or more students. Students will receive an email containing a link to a survey for each course in which they are enrolled. All responses are anonymous.