

# Skyline College

## Official Course Outline

Date: August 2008

1. **TITLE:**

**ADMJ 120 – Criminal Investigation**

3.0 units. Three lecture hours per week

Recommended: Eligibility for ENGL 836

2. **COURSE CLASSIFICATION:**

Credit course applicable to the Associate Degree, and to the Criminal Justice Certificate

3. **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:**

**Catalog Description:**

A course designed for introductory and in-service Administration of Justice students to provide orientation to general and specific aspects of crimes and detection. The course also covers crime scene searches and suspect apprehension. *Also listed as LEGL 320.*

**Schedule of Classes Description:**

A study of the general and specific aspects of crime and detection, including crime scene searches, and suspect apprehension.

4. **COURSE JUSTIFICATION:**

This is a transfer course to fulfill General Education requirements of the Associate Degree (F3), and is transferable as follows: CSU. This course is an elective course in the Administration of Justice Program curriculum for students seeking a Criminal Justice Certificate.

5. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLO'S):**

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate their knowledge of the fundamental aspects of criminal investigation, including familiarity with preliminary investigative methods of the first responder at a crime scene, processing and preserving the crime scene, handling evidence, and other crime scene duties.
- Reconstruct a crime by employing critical thinking, reasoning, and investigative skills and techniques, including determining how, when and why a crime was committed, what type of crime was committed, and who committed the crime.
- Apply effective interview and interrogation skills, and intuitive investigation skills, to obtain valuable information from crime victims, witnesses, informants, and suspects, to solve crimes.

6. **SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:**

To assist students in reaching the goals outlined in the course SLO's, this course will include:

- Study of the methods for successfully conducting criminal and non-criminal investigations, including preliminary, in-depth, closing investigations, and preparation of reports and diagrams.
- Exploration of the basic techniques of investigation, including interviews and interrogations, crime scene examination, searching for and handling physical evidence, and arrests of suspects.

- Analysis of the routine and emergency duties and responsibilities of first responder police officers and investigators at crime scenes.
- Discussion of criminal patterns, motive and modus operandi, criminal profiling, and police records, files, and automated databases.
- Explanation of the importance of, and investigative techniques relating to, physical evidence in solving crimes, such as fingerprints, DNA, blood, hairs and fibers, bullet holes and ballistics, and other forms of physical and trace evidence, and the value of the crime laboratory in detection.
- Examination and evaluation of specific types of crimes and techniques relating to their detection and investigation.

## **7. COURSE CONTENT:**

- a. Basic Grounding and Overview of Criminal Investigation
- b. Preliminary Investigation
- c. Preserving the Crime Scene
- d. Physical Evidence
- e. Criminal Patterns
- f. Interviews and Interrogations
- g. Fingerprints
- h. Surveillance, Records, and Files
- i. Report Writing
- j. Robbery Investigation
- k. Assault Investigation
- l. Sexual Assault Investigation
- m. Kidnapping and Extortion Investigation
- n. Homicide Investigation
- o. Burglary Investigation
- p. Larceny-Theft Investigation
- q. Motor Vehicle Theft Investigation
- r. Arson and Bombing Investigation
- s. Organized Crime Investigation
- t. White Collar Crime Investigation
- u. Narcotics and Drugs Investigations
- v. Terrorism and Cyber (Computer) Crime

## **8. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:**

Methods of instruction will include:

- Lectures on course lessons, text readings (25-50 pages assigned per week), and related topics, combined with class discussions to stimulate critical thinking and provide students with opportunities to demonstrate understanding of course material. Students are expected to take notes and engage in class and group discussions to maximize retention of the course material.
- Reviews of course related handouts, articles, illustrations, and current events to enhance the students' experience by exploring and applying material to a contemporary real-world setting.
- Audiovisual presentations which illustrate and enhance the concepts of topics covered in class.
- Tests, quizzes, research papers, and writing assignments to demonstrate comprehension of the course material through hands-on applications and written examinations.

Methods of instruction may also be augmented by:

- Practical demonstrations, displays, and in-class role-playing exercises, as applicable to the topic.
- Student interviews of criminal justice professionals and preparing a written report on the results.
- Guest speakers with expertise in various areas of criminal justice, to provide diverse and unique perspectives on a variety of controversial issues in their field.
- Field trips to law enforcement and other criminal justice agencies, courts, jails, and prisons.
- Individual student consultations, as necessary, to ensure that student learning is taking place.
- Practical work experience such as ride-alongs or other applicable site work to enhance learning.

## **9. ASSIGNMENTS:**

Typical assignments:

- a. Research and Writing or Oral assignments about course related topics which demonstrate student knowledge, comprehension, and application skills, may include:
  - term papers, short papers, research papers, essay papers, and oral presentation reports.
  - reports on field interviews, site visits, observations, work performed, or film critiques.
- b. Case Study assignments to develop critical thinking and concept application, may include:
  - reviewing and critiquing Supreme Court, appellate court, and trial court cases.
  - responding to the questions, scenarios, or case studies included in text chapters.
- c. Tests and Quizzes, consisting of the written, oral, and/or practical application variety to assess comprehension of assigned readings, course content, and other related course activities.

## **10. EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE:**

Typical methods of evaluation of student performance may include the following:

- a. Written examinations, such as quizzes, midterm exams, and final exams to demonstrate student understanding and proficiency skills concerning the material presented in the course.
- b. In-class and out of class assignments to demonstrate student ability to apply course concepts to assigned tasks utilizing comprehension, application, analysis, and critical thinking skills.
- c. Case study exercises to demonstrate student ability to integrate multiple concepts to solve realistic situations.
- d. Class discussions of course material to permit the exchange of ideas involving a variety of course related issues and concerns.
- e. Attendance and promptness, class citizenship and conduct, and participation and cooperation.
- f. Grading Method: Letter Grade.

## **11. RECOMMENDED or REQUIRED TEXT(S):**

The recommended or required course textbook, selected at the discretion of the course instructor, may include (but is not limited to) the following suggested current editions on the subject matter:

- *Criminal Investigation*, by Bruce L. Berg; published by McGraw-Hill.
- *Criminal Investigation – The Art and Science*, by Michael D. Lyman; published by Prentice-Hall.
- *Criminal Investigation – Basic Perspectives*, by Charles A. Lushbaugh and Paul B. Weston; published by Prentice-Hall.
- *Criminal Investigation*, by Charles R. Swanson, Neil C. Chamelin, Leonard Territo, and Robert W. Taylor; published by McGraw-Hill.