

University of Arkansas – Fort Smith 5210 Grand
Avenue
P.O. Box 3649
Fort Smith, AR 72913

General Syllabus

CRJU 35073 Criminalistics

Credit Hours: 3

Lecture Hours: 3

Laboratory Hours: 0

Prerequisite or corequisite: ENGL 1213/ENGL 10203 Composition II or RHET 2863/ENGL 24103 Advanced Composition
Effective Catalog: 2025-2026

I. Course Information

A. Catalog Description:

This course covers forensic methods for collecting and analyzing evidence, including fingerprints, firearms, biological samples, and drugs. It also explores legal standards for evidence storage, analysis, and presentation, emphasizing the intersection of science and law in forensic practice.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

A. Subject Matter

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

1. **Review** foundational concepts and theories in the field of forensics to evaluate their application in real-world scenarios.
2. **Distinguish** between physical evidence and artifacts, demonstrating a clear understanding of their relevance in forensic investigations
3. **Evaluate** proper protocols and best practices to effectively process a crime scene
4. **Analyze** the role of physical evidence in crime scene reconstruction, determining its significance in establishing timelines and narratives while exploring how different types of evidence contribute to a cohesive understanding of events.
5. **Evaluate** legal standards governing the storage, analysis, and presentation of forensic evidence, assessing their implications for the integrity of the criminal justice process and the admissibility of evidence in court.

B. University Learning Outcomes

This course enhances student abilities in the following areas:

Analytical Skills: Students will identify problems/issues and develop solutions/analysis.

Communication Skills (written and oral)

Students will communicate proficiently. Students will use essay format for written presentation of research projects and discuss particular aspects of various topics.

Ethical Decision Making

Students will model ethical decision-making processes. Students will examine ethical dilemmas within the law enforcement investigation and arrests and develop ethical frameworks to resolve specific ethical issues.

Global and Cultural Perspectives

Students will reflect upon cultural differences and their implications for interacting with people from cultures other than their own

III. Major Course Topics

- A. The history and evolution of criminalistics
- B. The significance of physical evidence in forensic investigations
- C. Types of evidence and best practices for recognition, collection, and preservation
- D. Legal standards governing criminalistics and the admissibility of evidence