**Syllabus: Fall 2017**

Northern Virginia Community College

Course Name: Principles of Criminal Investigations

Course Number: ADJ 236

Section Number: 001A (#19853)

Meeting Times: Thursday 9:30am – 12:10pm

Meeting Location: Bisdorf/AA-442

Instructor Name: **Tim Dickinson**

Telephone Number: **703-933-8083**

E-mail Address: [tdickinson@nvcc.edu](mailto:tdickinson@nvcc.edu)

[http://blogs.nvcc.edu/tdickinson/](https://mail.nvcc.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=e4af37c7e13742b589970494af58d20f&URL=http%3a%2f%2fblogs.nvcc.edu%2ftdickinson%2f)

**This syllabus is a guide. The instructor reserves the right to make changes as needed.**

**Course Materials:**

**Lyman, Michael D. 2017. Criminal Investigation-The Art and the Science. Eighth Edition.** Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Surveys the fundamentals of criminal investigation procedures and techniques. Examines crime scene, search, collecting, handling and preserving of evidence. Lecture 3 hours per week.

**GENERAL COURSE PURPOSE**

The purpose of this course is to provide the student with an introduction to the investigation steps that should be followed during the investigation of crimes. Also, the methods of properly obtaining the gathering evidence so that it can be used in the solution of crimes and be admissible at the time of trial.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

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

A. understand the duties, responsibilities, and methods of the first officer to arrive at the scene of a crime

B. obtain insights as to the investigative responsibility and techniques in obtaining evidence during the follow-up investigation

C. be an effective witness in court

**MAJOR TOPICS TO BE INCLUDED**

A. History of criminal investigation

B. Investigative techniques

1. Surveillance   
2. Informants   
3. Crime scene recording   
4. Interviews and interrogations

C. Specific investigations

1. Death   
2 .Sex offenses   
3. Robbery

**Course Requirements and Grading**

* Three Examinations (300 points total)
* Written Assignment (100 points)
* Attendance (50 points)
* Extra Credit – Complete Course Evaluation (10 points)
* **If a class cancelled, check Blackboard for assignment/grading information.**

**Grading Scale**

100%-90% - A 69%-60% - D

89%-80 – B Below 60 - F

79%-70% - C

**Description of Course Requirements**

**Examinations**

There will be four examinations. **I will drop the lowest test grade.** Examinations may consist of true/false, multiple choice, fill-in the blank and essay questions. There will be a maximum of 50 questions per examination and the examination will cover materials presented during lectures and from the textbook. **Study guides will be provided.**

There will be absolutely no make–up or early exams. Failure to take the exam when scheduled will result in the grade of “0” for the missed exam. That missed exam will constitute the “dropped” exam.

***There will be no opportunity for extra credit assignments so it is important that you satisfy the stated requirements.***

**Attendance**

Attendance for each class is required. However, I will “give” each student one absence without penalty. Fifty points ofyour final grade is based on your attendance and participation in the class. Each missed class will result in a four (4) point deduction from the attendance grade (50 points).

Attendance for each class is required. I take attendance at the beginning and end of each class. Each half of class is worth 2 points. If you are late, or leave early you will lose 2 points. I will make a determination for any attendance/participation points earned each class.

Read the textbook before class, and be prepared to ask and answer questions. If you attend class (don’t miss more than 2 classes) and participate, there is good chance the 89 (B) will become a 90 (A).

**Any student not attending the first 3 classes will be dropped from the course by the instructor. Any student who misses more than 5 classes will be dropped by the instructor. Please notify the instructor with any special circumstances.**

**Policies and Procedures**

**Late Assignments – I will deduct 5 points each day the assignment is late.**

Classroom civility – students are expected to respect each other and the instructor. Students should not disrupt class by arriving late, leaving early and/or by unnecessary talking or use of electronic devices. Students may be asked to leave class for any disruptions.

**Should you choose to bring a laptop/tablet/smart phone to class it must only be used for course activities.**

When in class **please do not sleep**, write notes to each other, read newspapers, do homework for any class, listen to music, or engage in activity that may disturb others.

*Please turn your phone on vibrate!!*

**Academic Dishonesty:** Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class. Cheating includes dishonesty of any kind on tests or assignments. Plagiarism includes the failure to give credit to another’s work. Giving and taking unauthorized help on tests or assignments are both considered cheating. NOVA and I regard these as serious offenses. The minimum sanction for such behavior is an F on the assignment; the maximum sanction is dismissal from college. You may read the full policy on academic dishonesty in the Student Handbook.

**Fire/Emergency Evacuation Procedures**: The evacuation route is located on the wall next to the classroom door. Please familiarize yourself with this route.

**Inclement Weather and Other Closing Information**: Please check NOVA’s website (www.nvcc.edu) for information about weather closings and if class is cancelled, check Blackboard for assignment information. Students are strongly encouraged to sign up for NOVA Alert: <https://alert.nvcc.edu/index.php?CCheck=1>.

Please check Blackboard for course continuation instructions for longer term class cancellations (multiple classes). For example, a flood might close the building for the remainder of the semester and force us to move to a new location.

**Special Accommodations**: Any student who thinks that he or she might need an accommodation based on a disability should make an appointment to see a Counselor for Disability Services (Bisdorf Room 193). You can also call 703-933-1840. Additional information can be found here: <http://www.nvcc.edu/current-students/disability-services/index.html>.

**\* Students are urged to contact the instructor with any special circumstances.**

**Office Hours:**

**Room - Bisdorf #427**

Monday 10:00 am – 12:00 pm and 3:35pm – 5:05 pm

Tuesday 3:30pm – 4:30pm

Thursday 5:30pm – 6pm

By Appointment only:

Thursday 12:30 pm – 5:30 pm

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| 16-Week Session | |
| **Description** | **Date** |
| Last day to join class wait lists | August 8 |
| **Classes begin** | **August 21** |
| Last day to drop with a tuition refund or change to audit (census date)[\*\*](http://www.nvcc.edu/calendars/academic/fall17.html#note2) | September 7 |
| Last day to withdraw without grade penalty[\*\*\*](http://www.nvcc.edu/calendars/academic/fall17.html#note3) | October 31 |
| Examinations end | December 17 |

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| Labor Day holiday. College closed. | September 4 |
| Last day to apply for Fall graduation.[\*](https://www.nvcc.edu/calendars/academic/fall17.html#note1) | October 1 |
| Professional development days for faculty. No classes for students. College offices open. | October 9-10 |
| No classes. College offices close at noon. | November 22 |
| Thanksgiving holiday. College closed. | November 23-24 |
| No classes. College offices closed. | November 25-26 |

**Class Schedule: Course of Study**  TOPIC /READINGS

August 24 Course Orientation

August 31 Foundations/History of Criminal Investigation Chapter 1

Identifying Criminal Suspects Chapter 4

September 7 Crime Scene: ID and Collecting Evidence Chapter 2

September 14 Crime Scene: Reporting Chapter 3

September 21 Exam 1 Chapters 1-4 Legal Issues Chapter 5

September 28 Interviewing and Interrogation Chapter 6

Written Assignment Distributed

October 5 Criminal Intelligence and Surveillance Ops Chapter 7

Management of Informants Chapter 8

October 12 Exam 2 Chapter 5-8

Robbery Chapter 10

October 19 Death Investigations Chapter 9

October 26 Assault and Related Offenses Chapter 11

November 2 Missing and Abducted Persons Chapter 12

November 9 Exam 3 Chapters 9-12

Crimes Against Children Chapter 13

November 16 Theft offenses Chapter 14

Written Assignment Due in Class

November 23 Thanksgiving Holiday No Class

November 30 Arson and Terrorism Chapter 15

December 7 Drugs and Gangs Chapter 16 Prep for Court Chapter 18

December 14 Exam 4 Chapters 13-16,18

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