**Syllabus: Spring 2014**

Northern Virginia Community College

Course Name: Principles of Criminal Investigations

Course Number: ADJ 236

Section Number: 002A-#15443

Meeting Times: Thursday 12:30 am – 3:15 pm

Meeting Location: Bisdorf/AA-341

Instructor Name: **Tim Dickinson**

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

E-mail Address: 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:**

**Charles A. Lusbaugh and Paul B. Weston. 2012. Criminal Investigation Basic Principles Twelfth 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**

* Four Examinations (300 points total – lowest exam grade dropped)
* Attendance and Participation (100 points)

**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 and Participation**

Attendance for each class is required. One-hundred points ofyour final grade is based on your attendance and participation in the class. Each missed class will result in a seven (6) point deduction from the attendance grade (100 points).

Attendance for each class is required. I usually take attendance at the beginning and end of each class. Each half of class is worth 3 points. If you are late, or leave early you will lose 3 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 attended class and participate, there is good chance the 89 (B) will become a 90 (A).

**Policies and Procedures**

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!!*

**Fire/Emergency Evacuation Procedures**: The evacuation route is located on the wall next to the classroom door. Please familiarize yourself with this route. In case of an emergency, take all of your belongings with you when/if possible.

**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>.

In the event of a canceled class, each student must complete - in writing - the questions for review located at the end of the chapter. Students not completing the assignment will not receive attendance/participation credit for that class.

Please check Blackboard for course continuation instructions for longer term class cancellations (multiple classes). For example, a flood might closed 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). 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 #352

Wednesday: 12:30 pm – 4:30 pm and 7:30 pm – 8:30 pm

By Appointment: Tuesday 9:30 am – Noon and 3:30 pm – 6 pm

or see me before or after class for an appointment.

**Class Schedule:**

**Course of Study**  TOPIC /READINGS

Jan 16 Course Orientation

Jan 23 Evolution of Policing and Investigation Chapter 1

Jan 30 Rules of Evidence and Arrest Chapter 2

February 6 The Crime Scene Chapter 3

Feb 13 Exam 1 Chapters 1-3

Circumstantial Evidence Chapter 4

Feb 20 Basic Investigative Leads and Informants Chapter 6

Feb 27 Interviewing and Interrogation Chapter 7

March 6 Exam 2 Chapters 4,6,7

 Crimes of Violence Chapter 8

March 13 **Spring Break No Class**

March 20 Sexual Assaults Chapter 9

March 27 Robbery Chapter 10

April 3 Arson, Bombing and Hate Crimes Chapter 11

April 10 Exam 3 Chapters 8-11

 Property Crimes Chapter 12

April 17 Drugs Chapter 13

April 24 Special Investigations Chapter 14

May 1 Terrorism Chapter 15

May 8 Exam 4 Chapters 12-15

**Key Dates**

Jan 13 Classes begin

Jan 13-21 Schedule adjustments (add/drop/swap) open to all

Jan 13-30 Drop a class on NOVAConnect for a tuition refund

Jan 22-28 Late schedule additions (in person), permission required

Jan 30 Last day to drop a class with a tuition refund or change to audit

March 1 Last day to apply for Spring Graduation (earlier application is encouraged)

March 10-16 Spring break for students. Non-Instructional days. No classes. College offices open March 10-14

March 24 Last day to withdraw without grade penalty

April 28- May 3 Last week of classes

May 10 Examinations end