

**Forensic Science  
Course Syllabus  
High School for Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice  
Mr. Chasteen  
Credits: ½ - 1**

**Course Description:** The course uses a structured and scientific approach to the investigation of various crimes involving the collection and preservation of evidence, and the retrieval and examination of information from various forensic science evidence sources.

**Course Outline**

1. Investigative Theory and History
  - a. Investigative process and purpose
  - b. Objectivity
  - c. Basic investigative techniques
  - d. Concept of proof
2. Evidence Collection, Processing, and Preservation
  - a. Crime scene conduct
  - b. Crime scene search and reconstruction techniques
  - c. Evidence handling
  - d. Scientific method
3. Forensic Science Topics
  - a. Fingerprints
  - b. Hair and fibers
  - c. Forensic entomology
  - d. Autopsy examination
  - e. Glass fracture analysis
  - f. Forensic anthropology
  - g. Firearms and tool marks

## **Instructional Philosophy**

I believe that all children can learn, and education takes the active involvement of the whole community. It is my responsibility to provide a class environment that is safe and supportive for my students. It is the responsibility of the parent to see that their student is prepared for their learning experience. It is the responsibility of the student to know and understand that respect given to others yields respect in return.

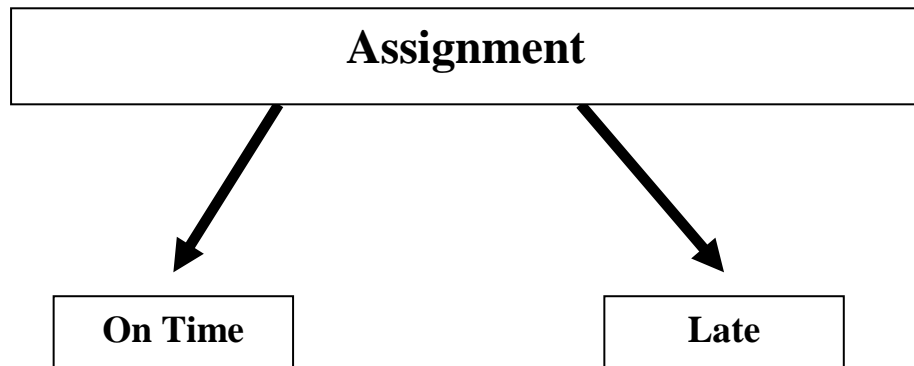
Students will engage in a variety of challenging real-world projects and assignments to demonstrate how criminal investigation techniques and forensic science is used in the investigative environment. Students will often work in teams and perform data collection, interpretation, processing, and present results in a PowerPoint presentation and written essays using the American Psychological Association (APA) format.

## **Grading Scale and Procedures**

To prevent “fatal zeros,” no single grade will count for more than 25% of the total cycle average. For example, if science labs are worth 40% of the grade, two separate labs grades must be entered for the six weeks cycle so each entered grade is worth 20%.

Students may redo assignments that they turned in on time and received a grade of a D or F within three weeks of the original due date. The student is required to attend tutorials to receive assistance with the concepts missed the first time. Before students are allowed to retest or resubmit projects or major grades, all assignments and quizzes (practice work) related to concepts assessed in the test/project must be complete. Any special circumstances beyond the three week time limit require a teacher, student, parent conference where a written agreement will be developed. Retests will be given during tutorial time and will be scheduled before or after school. Teachers may elect to give alternate assessments and assignments to assess if the students have learned and mastered the concepts in the original assessments.

In order to assure that assignments are graded for mastery, late penalties of no more than 10% will be assessed. Any assignment that is submitted late may require a parent note to the teacher explaining the circumstances about the late work and that the student and parent understand that the assignment may not be resubmitted for a higher grade. Teachers may elect to give alternate assessments and assignments to assess if the students have learned and mastered the concepts in the original assessments.



If the grade is an A, B, or C , the grade will remain the same.  
If the grade is a D or F, the student will have three weeks to re-do that assignment or complete an alternative assignment for a chance at a better grade.  
\*\*For major grades (exams, projects, major essays), students must come to tutorials and complete or re-do all assignments leading up to that major grade before the teacher will allow that student to re-do that major assignment.

If a student turns in an assignment late, the teacher will assess a penalty of 10% off the grade the student has earned.  
A student may not re-do a late assignment for a better grade.

Exams	20%
Projects	45%
A. student performance/ application	15%
B. student engagement	15%
C. technology application	15%
Quizzes	15%
Practices	20%
Total	100%

### **References**

Saferstein, Forensic Science: An Introduction, Prentice Hall, Texas Penal Code, and Texas Code of Criminal Procedure

### **Required Supplies**

1. No. 2 pencils, ink pen, flash drive
2. 3 ring binder for notes and returned work

### **Assignment Policy**

Assignments are to be turned in on time or the student will receive a reduced grade. If the student is absent from class, for any reason, they are responsible for contacting the teacher concerning missed or future assignments. **The teacher can be contacted by email at [dchastee@houstonisd.org](mailto:dchastee@houstonisd.org) or by phone at 713-867-5100.** Tutoring is available upon appointment.

### **Discipline Policy**

Students disrupting the teaching environment will either be given (1) a verbal warning, (2) a conference between the teacher, the student, and the parent, (3) or removed from the classroom, depending on the seriousness and frequency of the violation. This action will also result in a conference with the parent.

### **STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WORK THEY DO OR FAIL TO DO**

It is the policy of the Houston Independent School District not to discriminate on the basis of age, color, handicap or disability, ancestry, national origin, marital status, race, religion, sex, veteran status or political affiliation in its education or employment programs and activities, as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.