

George Mason University
Fairfax Campus, Virginia
CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS - CRIM 410-002
FALL 2019

Instructor: Steven Remick

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Office Hours: By Appointment (available ½ hour before or after class)

CRIM 410-003 Criminal Investigations meets on **Monday afternoons from 4:30pm-7:10pm at the Fairfax Campus Innovation Hall Room 132.**

I will be using your Mason email addresses to send out important class information/assignments, and the Black Board will be my primary repository for information you will need for class. You may call me at my home number listed above but, I would ask you reserve that for emergencies and use my email for class questions/guidance.

University Policies:

Campus Resources:

The Writing Center, University Libraries, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) and the Office of Disability Services are available to assist students. Links to the University Catalog and the University Policies website for all other university academic and non-academic policies may also be included in the links below.

General University Information / Weather: www.gmu.edu

Office of Disability Services: ods.gmu.edu

Writing Center: <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

Counseling and Psychological Services: caps.gmu.edu

English Language Institute: eli.gmu.edu

University Catalog: <http://catalog.gmu.edu> University Policies:

<http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu>

Accommodations for students with disabilities:

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Enrollment statement:

Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class.

Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes. (Deadlines each semester are published in the Schedule of Classes available from the Registrar's Website at registrar.gmu.edu.)

After the last day to drop a class has passed, withdrawing from this class requires the approval of the dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons.

Undergraduate students may choose to exercise a selective withdrawal. See the table below for important dates:

	FULL SEMESTER	7.5 Week Session I	7.5 Week: Session II
Schedule of Classes Available in PatriotWeb	March 11	March 11	March 11
Priority Dates Begins	April 2	April 2	April 2
Consortium Registration Deadline	TBD	N/A	N/A
First day of classes: Payment Due Date	August 26	August 26	October 21
Last Day to Submit: Domicile Reclassification Application	August 26	August 26	August 26
Labor Day: university closed	September 2	September 2	N/A
Last day to add classes:all individualized section forms due	September 3	August 28	October 23
Last Day to Drop (with 100% tuition refund)	September 9	August 30	October 25
Drop period begins with no tuition refund	September 10	August 31	October 26
Final Drop Deadline (with no tuition refund)	September 17	N/A	N/A
Student Self-Withdrawal	September 18 - September 30	August 31 - September 13	October 26 - November 7
Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via Patriot Web	September 23 - October 18	N/A	N/A
Selective Withdrawal Period(undergraduate students only)(100% tuition liability)	October 1 - October 29	September 14 - September 20	November 8 - November 14
Fall Break(Monday classes/labs meet Tuesday. Tuesday classes do not meet this week)	October 14	N/A	N/A
Incomplete work from spring/summer 2019 due to instructor	October 25	N/A	N/A
Incomplete grade changes from spring/summer 2019 due to Registrar	November 1	N/A	N/A
Thanksgiving recess(No Classes)	November 27-December 1	N/A	November 27 - December 1

Dissertation/Thesis Deadline	December 6	N/A	N/A
Last day of classes	December 7	October 14	December 11
Reading Day(s) Reading days provide students with additional study time for final examinations. Faculty may schedule optional study sessions, but regular classes or exams may not be held.	December 9 - December 10	N/A	N/A
Exam Period	December 11 - December 18	October 15 - October 16	December 12 - December 13

Course Description

This is an introduction to criminal investigations. Study includes: the history of law enforcement investigations; different approaches to conducting a proper criminal investigation; the different types of investigations; interviewing and interrogation concepts; a study of evidence and its effective use in investigations; and an explanation of the elements of a crime. There will be some focus on proper report writing, documentation of evidence and how to conduct a complex investigation properly. We will discuss the different steps in an investigation and how the basic foundation of all investigations is similar. An internal view of real investigations will give the student an understanding of how cases evolve and what steps are needed to conduct a comprehensive and thorough investigation. Search and seizure along with arrest warrants will be discussed and related back to the investigative effort. We will discuss undercover/special investigations and their role in assisting in homicide and gang related cases. Trial preparation, testimony and problem-solving techniques will be discussed as they relate to culminating the criminal investigation.

Number of Credits: Three (3)

Prerequisites: None

Required Textbook: Black Dahlia Avenger: The True Story, By Steve Hodel

- ISBN-10: 1628724390
- ISBN-13: 978-1628724394

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course the student will be able to explain how to: 1) Conduct a Criminal Investigation. 2) Describe the foundation of all criminal investigations. 3) Conduct a Crime scene examination. 4) Understand the Criminal Justice system and how evidence and testimony is presented in Court. 5) Students will learn how to conduct interviews and be able to obtain information/evidence from witnesses, suspects and victims. 6) Describe the key elements of crimes such as Homicide, Robbery, Rape and other Sex Crimes, Burglary, Financial crimes and other criminal violations.

Please bring your text book to each class for reference. The text book *Black Dahlia Avenger: The True Story, By Steve Hodel* is meant to give some depth as to how criminal investigations evolve and how technology has changed the way investigations are able to be solved. Please search the internet for the "Black Dahlia" murder and discover some of your own thoughts on whether Hodel has solved one of the most infamous unsolved murders in U.S. History. As you begin to read the text try to pick out the subtle clues about human behavior, control and deceit, they are common themes in crimes especially crimes against persons. Keeping up with the reading of the text is imperative so stay ahead as much as possible. Be prepared for quizzes on the assigned chapters each week from the text. If you discover some interesting cases or other material that relates to the text, please discuss them in class.

Course Objectives:

The objective of the course is to provide the student with an understanding of criminal investigations and the variety of investigative steps that may be taken to be successful in solving a case.

Course Goals and Policies

Please be aware of Mason's policy requiring instructors to submit final course grades within 2 days of the final exam and prohibiting instructors from changing submitted grades for any reason other than a computational or recording error (see page 37 of the University Catalog). This means that I cannot allow, nor is there any time, for you to do a last-minute paper or other extra work at the end of the semester to raise your grade. The time to do the work is when it is assigned, and the work to do is the work that is required as class assignments. Another relevant Mason policy specifies that incompletes can only be given to students who are passing a course but cannot complete scheduled coursework for causes beyond reasonable control (see page 36 of the University Catalog). Because incompletes are to be used when students cannot complete scheduled coursework, I cannot grant incompletes to allow you time to do extra work to raise your grade. Makeup exams will be allowed only when the student provides written verification of personal illness, death/serious illness, or other emergency in the family and severe or inclement weather as defined by University policy. Makeup exams may be in a different format than the regularly scheduled exam and will be scheduled at the convenience of the instructor. Please note that according to Mason policy, "Although many students must work to meet living expenses, employment must not take priority over academic responsibilities." (See page 33 of the University Catalog.)

Privacy Policy

Please respect the privacy of any students who may disclose personal information in the class. Please also respect everyone's right to freely choose whether to disclose or not disclose personal information.

Grading Scale

Below is the numeric equivalent of the letter grades which will be used in this class.

A+ 100 – 97%	C+ 79.9 – 77%
A 96.9 – 94%	C 76.9 – 74%
A- 93.9 – 90%	C- 73.9 – 70%
B+ 89.9 – 87%	D 69.9 – 60%
B 86.9 – 84%	F 59.9 – 0%
B- 83.9 – 80%	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Course Grade Components

The final grade will be determined as follows:

Homework, quizzes, discussion board and assignments. **30%**

Two Projects, equally divided 15% for each. For a total of **30%**

Class Presentation (Group) **25%**

Participation and attendance **15%**

Total Grade = 100%

Level of Effort

I will make every attempt to give you a real view of what criminal investigations are like. In doing that there will be high expectations of you as you act in the role of investigators in this class. What may appear in the beginning to be a lot of work for nothing, will in the end be, “a lot of work” followed by a great sense of accomplishment. Rest assured throughout this semester I will make sure you have all the information needed to be successful. You just have to show up to class motivated and prepared.

I will engage you in class discussion by asking questions but, what I need from you is to pay attention, take notes, complete your homework, complete your readings and come to class prepared in order to facilitate productive discussions. Anything presented in class including but not limited to lecture, readings, handouts, class discussions, guest speakers, video presentations etc. can be expected to be seen on homework, quizzes, projects and other assignments.

To encourage you to make the most of this class, 15% of your course grade will be based on my evaluation of your level of participation in the classroom, obviously if you are not in class then you will be unable to participate which will result in a lower grade in participation and attendance. During this class you will be given quizzes, homework assignments, readings and of course chapter assignments from the text. Some of these will be posted on the Black Board others I will assign in class and then post on the Black Board. **All quizzes/assignments that are turned in late/completed late or posted after the deadline will be given a 10% grade penalty. Anything turned in more than a week late will be given a 20% grade penalty unless excused by me in advance (Exceptions would be medical emergency etc.) Anything turned in more than 2 weeks late may result in a failing grade.**

In law enforcement investigations there are often deadlines for reports, evidence filings, discovery and other important case file documentation. Adhering to timelines/deadlines

and being able to manage your time here in class is only a small reminder of what is to come if you choose a career in law enforcement.

In this class you will be presented with a real criminal case that occurred in Virginia. In the beginning you will be given the initial crime scene introduction. Later and throughout the semester you will be given more leads and information about the case and you will be expected to act as the detective assigned to the case by planning how to follow up on evidence, leads and other items that we will discuss each class. I will provide you with plenty of information and background for you to plan your case investigation. Toward the end of the semester we will culminate the investigation and reveal what happened in the case. My hope is this project will give you a small view of what being involved in a criminal investigation is like.

I will make sure we discuss all the written assignments, homework and projects in class so that you can ask any questions before the assignment is due. The readings and assigned textbook chapters are expected to be done each week in preparation for class discussions. Falling behind in reading assignments will only lead to a hard time participating in class, so read and be prepared! In real criminal investigations detectives must digest a lot of information from notes to research and case law, just to name a few.

Group Class Presentation- Students will be split into groups. Each group must have their class presentation topic approved by me prior to completion/presentation. **Students who give a presentation on an unapproved topic will not receive credit.** We will discuss possible presentation topics and the objectives in class. Class presentations will be no more than 10 minutes with a mandatory 5 minutes of class discussion included. **I reserve the right, depending on class size, to assign groups and topics in order to conserve time and effort.**

Instructional Methodology

This course will include traditional classroom lecture for the majority of course content, I will also be including guest speakers to expound on the lecture and discuss/present real criminal investigations. Class participation will only help you learn and allow you to obtain more information related to the course. Students are responsible for all assignments and are to be prepared for class by keeping up with the required readings. Sufficient time should be allocated in preparing your individual course papers.

Blackboard

We'll use Mason's online Blackboard program (version 8) for almost all assignments and readings feedback/discussion as well as class instructions and grades, and any other necessary course materials, such as syllabus and homework.

Here is how to access Blackboard:

Go to: courses.gmu.edu

Log on using your email username and 8-digit password.

If you've never used Blackboard before and need some assistance, there is a student resource guide available at <http://tap.gmu.edu/bbstudentguide.pdf>. You can get personal assistance by calling 993-8870 or emailing courses@gmu.edu.

I use Office 2016, so if you haven't upgraded from an earlier version yet go to Microsoft's website and download the free compatibility pack so you can access the PPTs and other files.

The following schedule shows my planned discussions listed by date along with Holiday dates. Some minor changes may be made to the schedule based on class progress and or guest speaker schedules.

Summary of Scheduled Lectures

<u>Week</u>	<u>Lecture/Presentation</u>	<u>Goals for Class</u>
1. August 26, 2019	Introduction; Syllabus; Class Expectations; History of Criminal Investigations; Phases of investigation.	Due for this Class: Read the article "The Evolution of Criminal Investigations and Forensic Science." Be prepared to discuss this in class. Begin reading your Text.
2. September 2, 2019	LABOR DAY NO CLASS	2 Assignments due next class: Complete "Bill of Rights" assignment in Discussion Board. Then Read the article in the Discussion Board under "Cognitive Bias" then complete the questions posed in a new thread. READ Text Ch. 1-6 and be prepared for a Quiz next class.
3. September 9, 2019	Bill of Rights, U.S. Constitution, Probable Cause, Reasonable Suspicion. Black Dahlia Presentation	Quiz on Text Ch. 1-6; Discuss Bill of Rights assignment. READ Text Ch. 7-11 for next class.
4. September 16, 2019	The crime scene; collecting evidence, chain of custody. In class crime study, investigative steps.	Cognitive Bias Discussion Quiz on Text Ch. 7-11 READ Text Ch. 8-12 for next class.
5. September 23, 2019	Search and Seizure; search warrants. In class search warrant exercise.	READ Text Ch. 13-18 For next class.

6. September 30, 2019	Interview/interrogation; Miranda; confessions; developing leads and source information. In class interview exercise.	Complete Discussion Board Assignment on Larry Nassar Case Due Oct 7th. Quiz on text Ch. 13-18 Read Text Ch. 19-22 for next class.
8. October 7, 2019	False Confessions; Interview/Interrogation pitfalls.	Quiz in Text. Read text Ch. 23-27 Film: "A murder in the Park" Discussion Board assignment on "A Murder in the Park"
9. Tuesday-October 15, 2019 CLASSES DO NOT MEET MONDAY.	Crimes against persons; death investigations; Cold Case Presentation. In Class investigations exercise.	Quiz on Text. Read remaining text chapters. Project #1 Assigned
10. October 21, 2019	Cold Case Update: Project #2 assigned. Black Dahlia case update.	Project #1 Due Determine Group Presentation Topics.
11. October 28, 2019	TBD Guest Speaker	Project #2 due
12. November 4, 2019	Undercover/Special Investigations; informants; prostitution; gambling, narcotics.	Quiz on Guest Speaker. Discuss COLD CASE projects and outcome.
13. November 11, 2019	Black Dahlia discussion; Case preparations; Trial preparations. TBD Guest Speaker	Quiz on investigations.
14. November 18, 2019	TBD Group Presentations	
15. November 25, 2019	TBD Group Presentations	
16. December 7, 2019	Last day of class, Review	Conclusions, evaluations

Bad Weather and Other Emergencies

Check Mason's homepage (www.gmu.edu) to see if classes are cancelled for bad weather or other emergency circumstances. You can also register for Mason's emergency alert system at <https://alert.gmu.edu>. If I should have to cancel a class due to a personal emergency, I'll make every attempt to email you ASAP at your Mason

email address. Be sure to stay on top of your Mason email so that you can receive urgent information when you need it.

University Services and Resources

If you have (or think you may have) a learning disability or other condition that may affect your academic performance, you should: 1) make sure documentation is on file with the Office of Disability Services (703-993-2474; ods.gmu.edu) to determine the accommodations you need; and 2) see me to discuss your accommodation needs. By Mason policy, I cannot make any accommodations for students without certification from ODS on the existence of a disability and the specific accommodations needed.

If you feel you need to improve your writing skills, seek assistance from the University Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>). Your writing needs to be sufficiently fluent to make your meaning clear.

If you are in personal distress, you can get help from Counseling and Psychological Services (caps.gmu.edu).

If you are not a native English speaker and may be interested in linguistic and cultural enrichment services, you can contact Mason's English Language Institute (eli.gmu.edu).

If you'd like to improve your academic skills, you can get help from Learning Services caps.gmu.edu/learning-services. They offer workshops on the study cycle, effective note-taking techniques, individual learning styles, ways to prepare for exams, and effective time management. I've heard from former students that these services can be very helpful.

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

Enrollment Responsibilities and Deadlines

Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class. Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the schedule of classes, see registrar.gmu.edu. Any other type of withdrawal requires the approval of the dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons. **If you enroll late** it is your responsibility to complete any assignments, you may have missed in class or on Black Board. Make an effort to establish a relationship with fellow students in class so you can get caught up on assignments you may miss **when and if you miss class**. Failure to meet deadlines on assignments will cause grades on those assignments to suffer.

University Honor Code

The following is a summary of Mason's honor code; see the Undergraduate Catalog and honorcode.gmu.edu for additional information. Mason's honor code will be strictly enforced in this class and all violations will be reported to the Honor Committee.

The Honor Code of George Mason University specifically prohibits cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing. Cheating and attempted cheating include "willful giving or receiving of an unauthorized, unfair, dishonest, or unscrupulous advantage in academic work over other students." Examples include the use of unauthorized resources during an exam, copying off another student's work (with or without their permission), allowing another student to copy your work, using an assignment or test from another student who took the class previously, accessing tests or grades electronically for the purpose of getting an unfair advantage, and any other behavior that fits the general definition above.

Plagiarism includes "presenting as one's own words, the work, the ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgment. While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions for this include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources, the writers' own insights or findings from their own field research, and what has been termed common knowledge." Examples of plagiarism include taking or buying a paper from someone else or the internet and presenting it as your own and submitting as your own work a paper with substantial unacknowledged contributions from others. Information and graphics obtained from the internet (except for freeware clipart) must include source citations to avoid plagiarism.

Lying includes "the willful and knowledgeable telling of an untruth, as well as any form of deceit, attempted deceit, or fraud in an oral or written statement relating to academic work." Examples include making up source materials or source citations in a paper, pretending to use an actual source that you didn't really use, making up an excuse for missing a test or assignment due date, pretending you attended a class or an extra credit opportunity when you did not in order to write a paper or get points without justification, falsifying any written or electronic document, or presenting any other falsehoods through any method and in any context.

Stealing includes "taking or appropriating without the permission to do so, and with the intent to keep or to make use of wrongfully, property belonging to any member of the George Mason University community or any property located on the university campus. This includes misuse of university computer resources (see the Responsible Use of Computing Policy section in the "General Policies" chapter). This section is relevant only to academic work and related materials. "