Computer Crime / Forensics Course

Crim 304 DL2, Course number 80432

Fall 2020 class begins August 27th

Thursday 13:30 to 1610 hours

GMU / Fairfax Campus / Live On Line class

Instructor: Robert Grims, Adjunct Professor, GMU

Department of Criminology, Law, and Society

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Phone: (240)876-7992

Office Hours: By appointment, I spoke with every student in the spring semester after Spring Break via telephone individually.

My Background

Police Officer for the Montgomery County Department of Police serving since July 1993. Have investigated all types of crimes at both the State and Federal Level. I will use several real-life experiences throughout the course. Currently I supervise a group of detectives in our Major Crimes Robbery/Homicide Division. Most of my career has been investigating criminal gangs to include several Asian gangs and MS13. I have also taught criminal justice at two other colleges and have taught several Ethics based courses. I also teach at our police academy when police officers attend Basic Investigator School.

Course Information

Computer Crimes, Computer Forensics, Crime Scene Management, and the study of DNA will be the main part of the course. There will be some basic criminal review as well. Several Guest speakers will assist us through the entire semester. There will be a lot group discussion and interaction.

Grading Composition and Exam Dates

Midterm on 10/7/2020, 35 % of total grade

Final exam on 12/16/2020, 35 % of total grade

Class Participation including group participation 15% of total grade. Most days there will be time allotted for groups to work on crime scenes and also computer crime related scenarios.

Homework, 15% of total grade

Class Calendar/Agenda

August 27 First day of class. Class overview and Review of Syllabus. Review of 4th and 5th  amendments with focus on Reasonable Expectation of Privacy and Search and Seizure. The Search warrant process will be discussed. Students will give their backgrounds as will Mr. Grims.

Sept. 3rd Before class students will need to watch the movie Citizen X. I will explain more on the first day of class. I will present a case involving DNA and several crime scenes connected to it. Classes will be set up in groups to discuss the movie.

Sept. 10th First Guest Speaker will be a Retired FBI Agent. He now volunteers to work Cold Cases Murders with my department now. He will explain the importance of detailed reports and putting them into a database and how the database can put you in a position to win.

Sept. 17th Chapter one of the text

Sept. 24th Chapter two of the Text

October 1st Chapter Three of the Text. Detective (Woman) from Montgomery County will discuss a gang rape case and the stress of the case as she obtained a short video and then a full audio recording of six subjects raping and beating the victim for over 30 minutes. A tremendous amount of computer work was done on the case.

October 8th Mid Term covering search and seizure, The movie Citizen X, and first three chapters of text. Guest speaker from the ATF. A female supervisor who also spent several years as a patrol officer. Is now an expert on computer databases with the ATF

October 15th Chapter Four

October 22nd Chapter Five. Guest speaker a Montgomery County gang prosecutor with experience also in human trafficking. MS13 gang will be discussed. Lead detective from Montgomery County will also attend. Computer side of the case will be examined as several phone search warrants and data recovered were critical to the case.

October 29th Chapter 6

November 5 Chapter 7

November 12 Chapter 8

November 19 Chapter 9 and Group Presentations of Crime Scenes

December 3 Chapter 10, last guest speaker TBD

December 10 Final Exam Review

December 17 Final Exam

Grading System

A + 100 -97 %, A 96.9 – 93%, A- 92.9 – 90%, B + 89.9 – 87%, B 86.9 – 83%, B- 82.9 – 80 %, C+ 79.9 – 77%, C 76.9 -73 %, C- 72.9 – 70 %, D 69.9 – 60, F 59.9 and below

Required Textbook

Eoghan Casey, Handbook of Digital Forensics and Investigation

Published by Elsevier Inc. (2010) AP

Course Goals

Establish a solid foundation for Computer Forensics. Also learn about crime scene management and DNA analysis. Several real life examples will be examined.

Honor Code and in class behavior

Please abide by the George Mason University Honor Code. Also understand group discussions can become intense please refrain from bad language and please respect the opinions and perspectives of your fellow classmates during these discussions.