

George Mason University
Fairfax Campus, Virginia
Criminal Investigations CRIM-410-002
Fall Semester 2023

Instructor: Steven Remick
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Office Hours: By Appointment: phone or virtual meeting

If you have questions, you may email me. During the week Monday – Friday I check my email frequently and I will typically respond the same day. I normally work Tuesday – Friday and I answer the phone number provided while I am at work. I also get voicemail alerts via email in case you must leave a message after hours or otherwise. If you need to schedule an appointment, I prefer Virtual sessions which I can set up in Blackboard or on MS Teams. You can email me or talk to me in class, and we can set up a date/time that works.

Name and pronoun use: If you wish, please share your name and pronouns with me and how best to address you in class and via email. I use he/him, and you may address me as Mr. Remick or Professor Remick, whichever you wish.

Our class, Criminal Investigations CRIM-410-002 meets:
Monday's from 4:30pm - 7:10pm at Horizon Hall Room 1010

I will be using your Mason email addresses from Blackboard to send out important class information/assignments, and the Blackboard will be my primary repository for information you will need for class.

Required E-Text:

Criminal Investigation MINDTAP 12th Edition, by Karen M. Hess, Ph.D., Christine Hess Orthmann, M.S., Henry Lim Cho, M.A. Cengage Press 2022.

ISBN: 9780357511633

You will need the E-text right away for the first week of class, to keep up with graded assignments and readings.

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 Important Dates and Schedule of Classes for selective withdrawal procedures.**

Important Dates

Last Day to Add: All Individual Sections Forms Due	Mon. Aug. 28
Labor Day: University Closed	Mon. Sept 4
Last Day to Drop: With 100% Tuition Refund	Tue Sept. 5
Last Day to Drop: With 50% Tuition Refund	Tue Sept. 12
Unrestricted Withdrawal Period: 100% Tuition Liability	Wed Sept 13 – Tue Sept 26
Fall Break (Classes do not meet)	Mon Oct. 9
Monday Classes Meet (Tuesday classes do not meet)	Tue Oct. 10
Selective Withdrawal Period- Undergrad students only (100% Tuition Liability)	Wed Sept 27 – Mon Oct. 23
Thanksgiving Recess (No Classes)	Wed Nov. 22 – Sun Nov. 26
Last Day of Class	Sat Dec. 2

GMU Course Description

Focuses on criminal investigations and the role of the criminal investigator in the criminal justice system.

Course Objectives:

Understand the basic elements of a crime

Understand the core skills, knowledge and abilities needed to conduct criminal investigations.

GMU Course 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 required in 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 instructor's convenience. Please note that according to Mason policy, "Although many students must work to meet living expenses, employment must not take priority over academic responsibilities."

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 used in this class.

A+ 100 – 97 %	
A 96.9 - 94	C+ 79.9 – 77 %
A- 93.9 – 90 %	C 76.9 – 70 %
B+ 89.9 – 87 %	D 69.9 – 60 %
B 86.9 – 83 %	F 59.9 and below
B- 82.9 – 80 %	

Course Grade Components:

E-text Chapters; MindTap Graded Assessments = 40%

Quizzes = 20%

Class Participation, Attendance; Group/class exercises = 20%

Criminal Case Project = 20%

Total Grade = 100%

Expectations and graded work:

In class, you can expect some lecture on criminal investigations and some group exercises revolving around criminal cases I will review/present in class. We will examine crime scenes, evidence, interviews, interrogations, and investigative details of the cases. All the cases I will review with you are real cases from around the area and other States. To make class interesting, I will normally bring at least one case to review with you in class, sometimes more. The more engagement, discussion, and participation I get from the class the more information I will provide in class.

Anything presented in class including lectures, readings, handouts, class discussions, guest speakers, video presentations etc. may be seen on homework, quizzes, projects, and other assignments.

In our first class we will discuss the E-Text, MindTap and the various assignments. I reserve the right to change any assignments depending on class size, class progression or other logistical reasons. We will discuss everything in class, and I will place announcements on Blackboard to make sure everyone understands their obligations.

One of the most important parts of this class will occur “in class.” Our class only meets once per week, so the class discussion, lecture and exercises are very important. For that reason, the class participation grade is not able to be made up outside of class.

The class schedule in this syllabus is a guide, there will be changes due to class progression, new topics, or current cases that are relevant to the class. I will make sure to advise the class of any changes including announcements in class and on Blackboard.

All graded work/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. Assignments turned in more than 2 weeks late may receive zero credit. There will be **no “make-up” or extra credit work for late, missed, or failed assignments.** You can expect a quiz after each Guest Speakers lecture, there may also be some pop quizzes during the semester.

We will be using Blackboard to submit most of the graded work such as MindTap, papers, presentations, projects etc. I require all written work to be submitted via a WORD Document or a PDF (Apple Friendly) so if you have any issues with those requirements let me know right away so we can produce a solution. MindTap grades will be automatically placed into Blackboard as the two are integrated. If you see any errors, please feel free to let me know.

I will make sure we discuss the instructions and all grading components in class so that you can ask any questions before any class work or assignment is due. The assigned readings, assignments and assigned textbook chapters are expected to be done each week in preparation for class discussions. Falling behind in these assignments will only lead to a challenging time participating in class, so complete the work, read, and prepare for classroom discussion.

Blackboard

We will use Mason's online Blackboard program for all assignments and reading feedback/discussion, 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 password.

If you have 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 IT Services or emailing courses@gmu.edu.

I use MS Office 2021, so if you have not 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.

In Blackboard I have created Learning Modules under the "Course Content" tab (left menu). Each module will be labeled by the corresponding E-text Chapter. The modules will list the assigned reading and any assessments.

Summary of Scheduled Lectures/Class discussion:

It should also be noted that it is the student's responsibility to stay abreast of assignments, changes to the schedule, etc., all of which will be on Blackboard and announced with adequate notice during class. The following schedule shows my planned discussions listed by date along with Holiday dates. Some changes may be made to the schedule based on class progress and our guest speaker's schedules.

Class Schedule

1. **Aug. 21:** Introduction to class & Text/MindTap; review syllabus and expectations. Homework read Ch 1 assigned in MindTap.
2. **Aug. 28:** Overview of Criminal Investigations; Case Law Discussion. Case Review. Homework, read Ch. 2 & complete MindTap assignments.
3. **Sept. 4:** **NO CLASS- LABOR DAY HOLIDAY.** Read Ch. 3 and complete MindTap assignments.
4. **Sept. 11:** Guest Speaker Tara Crider Arlington Co. Police Crime Scene Unit, Quiz after lecture. Homework, read Ch. 4 and complete MindTap assignments.
5. **Sept. 18:** Searches, Crime Scenes; Evidence Collection. Case Review. Homework, read Ch. 5 and complete MindTap assignments.
6. **Sept. 25:** Interviews & Interrogations, Gathering Information; Case Review. Homework, read Ch. 6 and complete MindTap assignments.
7. **Oct. 2:** Guest Speaker Commonwealth Attorney A Bryan Porter- Quiz after lecture. Homework, read Ch. 7 and complete MindTap assignments.
8. **Oct. 10:** **CLASS MEETS TUESDAY OCT. 10th Due to Fall Break.** ID/Arrest of Suspects Case Review. Homework, read Ch. 8 and complete MindTap assignments.
9. **Oct. 16:** Major Crimes; Case Review; Homework, read Ch. 9 and complete MindTap assignments.
10. **Oct. 23:** Major Crimes; Case Review; Homework, read Ch 10 and complete MindTap assignments.
11. **Oct. 30:** Guest Speaker Deputy Carlos Canas Alexandria Sheriff's- Gang Investigations. Quiz after lecture. Homework, read Ch. 11.
12. **Nov. 6:** Movie Day; Criminal Case Project assigned. Homework read Ch. 12, work on Criminal Case Project.
13. **Nov. 13:** TBD.
14. **Nov. 20:** TBD; Criminal Case Project due in Class!

15. Nov. 27: Class Review, Criminal Investigations Gameshow!

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>

Accommodation for students with disabilities

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodation, please see me, and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) 703-993-2474. All academic accommodation must be arranged through that office.

Sexual Misconduct and Interpersonal Violence

George Mason University is committed to providing a safe learning, living, and working environment free from discrimination. The University's environment is meant to be experienced as vibrant and dynamic, and one that includes many opportunities for exploration of self, identity, and independence. Sexual misconduct and incidents of interpersonal violence deeply interrupt that experience, and George Mason University is committed to a campus that is free of these types of incidents to promote community well-being and student success.

George Mason University encourages individuals who believe that they have been sexually harassed, assaulted or subjected to sexual misconduct to seek assistance and support.

Confidential resources are available on campus at Counseling and Psychological Services (caps.gmu.edu), Student Health Services (shs.gmu.edu), the University Ombudsperson (ombudsman.gmu.edu), and Wellness, Alcohol and Violence Education and Services (waves.gmu.edu).

All other members of the University community (except those noted above) are not considered confidential resources and are required to report incidents of sexual misconduct to the University Title IX Coordinator.

For a full list of resources, support opportunities, and reporting options, contact the University Title IX Coordinator at: integrity.gmu.edu and/or at 703-993-8730. Our goal is to create awareness of the range of options available to you and provide access to resources.

Bad Weather and Other Emergencies

Check Mason's homepage (www.gmu.edu) to see if classes are cancelled for severe 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 accommodation 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 would 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 have heard from former students that these services can be 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. Try 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 the 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 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 did not 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 to author 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 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."