

CRIM 410-001, Criminal Investigations, CRN 13650

Spring 2024: Thursday, 7:20 pm to 10:00 pm, (January 16, through May 8, 2024)

Kathleen Johnson Hall, Room 132

George Mason University, Prince William Science & Technology Campus

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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.

Honor Code Policy:

All students are expected to be familiar with the University's Honor Code, which may be found in the University Catalog. Ignorance of the policy is not a valid excuse and all violations will be reported.

The Honor Code is as follows:

"To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University Community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set for this Honor Code: Student Members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work."

Extent of the Honor Code:

The Honor Code at George Mason University shall be specifically concerned with cheating or attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing in an academic setting.

Cheating includes using unauthorized material and/or unauthorized assistance in academic work. Plagiarism includes self-plagiarism, inadequate citation, false citation, and failure to adhere to citation forms set by the professor.

Students are expected to abide by the requirements of the University regarding academic integrity, to include lying, cheating, or stealing. (*See “Honor System and Code” in the George Mason University Catalog*) Students who present false information will be treated in accordance with the University’s Policies.

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 ample 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’s 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.

Add/Drop Period:

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| Last Day to Drop (Full-Semester Course) Full Refund | January 30, 2024 |
| Last Day to Drop (Full-Semester Course) Partial Refund | February 6, 2024 |
| Last Day to Drop (Full-Semester Course) No Refund | February 7, 2024 |

Course Description and Objectives:

The principal objectives of this course will focus on creating fundamental awareness of criminal investigations and the role of a criminal investigator in the criminal justice system. It is essential that criminal justice professionals have a thorough understanding of investigative techniques and the application of scientific principles in the investigation, detection, and apprehension of criminals. Although there is no substitute for experience regarding criminal investigations, there is however, a direct correlation between understanding the fundamental principles, developing a passion for what we “*don’t know*” and building the skills and confidence to take on the challenges and be a successful criminal investigator. This process for some will be a paradigm

shift in the way many will view their fellow man. The extent to which you embrace the process of “*wanting to know who, what, when, where, why and how*” will determine your success. The role and challenges for today’s investigators are forever changing and one’s ability to adapt to this environment is critical. Keeping this in mind, the more you know (science, math, English, history, religion, and technology) the more confidence you exude...KNOWLEDGE IS KING!

In a larger sense we will also address some of the broader policy and legal issues confronting the American criminal justice system, to include such areas as the role of the investigator in national security issue, public policy decision, and the perceived fear of crime by the public. To some extent we will also cover some of the more contemporary techniques of law enforcement to include undercover operations, the use of informants, deceptive interrogation methodologies as well as various “privacy” and due process issues that have taken on additional significance since the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks of 9/11. As well as the difficulties facing law enforcement investigators with the current policing environment in the United States.

Lastly, time permitting it is my intention to invite various practitioners in the criminal justice system to provide their views on various investigative and ethical issues from the real-world perspective.

Exams, Attendance and Participation:

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| 02/29/24 | Midterm examination | 50% of total grade |
| 05/02/24 | Final examination | 50% of total grade |

2 Exams = 100% of Grade

Examinations will normally consist of both “objective” questions and material, such as, multiple choice, true/false, there may also be some short answer and essay type questions depending on the material covered and the insightful nature of the topics left open for interpretation. 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.

Class Preparation/ Participation:

Students are expected to come to class having read the materials assigned for that class period and be prepared to discuss the material in class. Throughout the semester, we will also engage in various “debates” so, as to fully explore the merits of all sides of a policy or issue confronting the roles and responsibilities of the criminal investigator. Issues that come to mind include the interview techniques, use of informants, victimology and witness statements and identification as well as more contemporary matters such as the search and seizure, laws of evidence and other practical and ethical considerations, as well as consequences confronting investigators pressured to close cases.

One of the critical ingredients of an interesting and viable course is participation and insightful frank discussion. On the former issue, it will be particularly important that the materials highlighted in the Schedule of Topics be read as a pre-requisite to attending the class. Regarding the latter, it is my intention to involve the students in class discussion and debate as a matter of course. This will necessitate the student’s attendance and preparation.

Exam Instructions:

Once you log into the exam via the *Blackboard* link in "Assignments" section of the course page, you will have **two attempts** to complete the exam. This means that you can leave and log-in only twice, including your initial log-in. I would recommend that you try to complete the exam in one sitting and use the "second attempt" and an emergency in the event you lose connectivity or experience other technical issues. Please make sure you have ample time and connectivity to complete this exam before attempting it. These instructions apply to both the midterm exam and final exam for CRIM 410.

- The exam will open on the date specified in the class schedule at 6:00 am and close at 11:59 pm on the same day.
 - Just as in an in-class exam, you will be expected to complete the exam in the specified time during the day the exam is given; You will have 2.5 hours (150 minutes) to complete the exam once you start it.
 - If, for some reason you leave the exam, you will have the remaining balance of the time to complete it during your second and final attempt. The test will begin where you left off after the last question answered.
 - Once you complete the exam and click... [SAVE & SUBMIT] your answers will be scored and graded
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- You will see a raw score after you complete the exam. A few days later, after the exam has closed you will be able to view the question and correct answer detail for your test.

Overall Grading:

The following is the numerical conversion to the corresponding letter grade scale that we will be using for CRIM 410 Criminal Investigations:

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|----|-------------|----|----------------|
| A | 100 – 93 % | C+ | 79.9 – 77 % |
| A- | 92.9 – 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 % | | |

Text: *(required)*

**Lyman, Michael D.; Criminal Investigation: The Art and Science; 9th Edition, Pearson Education Inc. Copy 2019
ISBN-13: 978-0135186213**

Spring 2024 Class Schedule:

Students should pay special attention to the dates/activities indicated in “red” as they are time sensitive. The material will be located on the GMU Blackboard course page under the following folders: Syllabus, Course Content, Assignments and Assessments, for the corresponding weeks as indicated in the schedule below.

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|---------------------|---|
| January 18, | Introduction and Syllabus Chapter 1: Foundation and History of Criminal Investigation |
| January 25, | Chapter 2 & 3: Crime Scene Identification and Collection of Evidence <i>Begin watching Netflix Series “Unbelievable” Crime series, based on true life events. There are 8 episodes related to; Sex Crime Investigation, Crime Scene Investigation, Interview and Interrogation, Crime Analysis, and Criminalistics.</i> |
| February 1, | Chapter 4: VA Department of Forensic Science Laboratory System /Capabilities & Value of the Evidence Video Case Study – Melissa Brennan Abduction (Fairfax County, VA) The FBI Files (S01E08): https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x20p4bc |
| February 8, | Chapter 5: Legal Issues in Criminal Investigations: |
| February 15, | Chapter 6: Interviews and Interrogations |
| February 22, | Chapter 7: Criminal Intelligence and Surveillance Chapter 8: Undercover Operations... exam review |
| February 29, | Thursday, 02/29/24 at 6:00 am to 11:59 pm, On line MIDTERM EXAM (Chapters 1 through 8) |
| March 7, | NO CLASS...Spring Break (3/4/24 through 3/10/24) |
| March 14, | Chapter 9: Death Investigation Special Guest Speaker – Office of the Medical Examiner, Northern VA Region |
| March 21, | Chapter 11: Assaults, Malicious Wounding, and related offenses (Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence) |
| March 28, | Chapter 12: Abduction and Missing Persons & (Chapter 13) Crimes against Children, Abuse, Neglect, Fatalities and Exploitation Video Case Study: Stolen Innocence, The Murder of Sandra Cantu; Tracy, CA, FBI Criminal Pursuit: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9uiEyblJDXs |
| April 4, | Chapter 10: Robbery |
| April 11 | Chapter 14: Theft Related Offenses; Burglary, Larceny, Embezzlement |
| April 18, | Chapter 16: Drug Crime Investigation and (Final Exam Review) |
| April 25, | NO Class...Exam Reading Week |
| May 2, | FINAL EXAM: (Chapters 9 through 16) excluding Chapter 15. On line via Blackboard link in the “Assignment” folder. (revised: 12/30/23) |