



Physical Aspects of Forensic Science

Instructor: Assistant Professor Tammy Bracewell, PhD
Class Location: HH 318
Class Duration: August 26-December 13, 2019, 9:30am-10:45am
Office Hours: FH 217F, M/W 8:30-9:30, 1:00-2:00pm, Tues 10-12pm, or by appt. If you know you would like to meet with me it is always best to schedule an appointment, even if it is during office hours. This ensures you are given priority over walk-ins.

Email:

- tammy.bracewell@tamuct.edu or Canvas inbox *** preferred***
- When messaging/emailing, always identify yourself and what course you are in. In general, when communicating electronically you should use complete sentences and be very clear about what you are asking or saying to avoid miscommunication.
- I check my email several times a day. I check Canvas at least once a day. These are the two best ways to reach me. If you need to talk to me outside of office hours please email or message me.

*****Note: This syllabus is subject to revisions when necessary throughout the semester. Students will be notified of any changes via Canvas and/or in class*****

MODE OF INSTRUCTION AND COURSE ACCESS

This class meets face to face with some online components and resources. As this class has online components, students must be able to access Canvas. Students can access Canvas on the Texas A&M-Central Texas website: www.tamuct.edu. Log in with your TAMUCT issued ID and your password. If you have difficulty using Canvas, contact Help Desk Central 24/7 by phone at (254) 519-5466 or live chat at <http://hdc.tamu.edu>.

Technology Requirements

This course will use the A&M-Central Texas Instructure Canvas learning management system. Logon to A&M-Central Texas Canvas [<https://tamuct.instructure.com/>] or access Canvas through the TAMUCT Online link in myCT [<https://tamuct.onecampus.com/>]. You will log in through our Microsoft portal.

Username: Your MyCT email address. Password: Your MyCT password

Canvas Support

Use the Canvas Help link, located at the bottom of the left-hand menu, for issues with Canvas. You can select "Chat with Canvas Support," submit a support request through "Report a Problem," or call the Canvas support line: 1-844-757-0953. For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

Other Technology Support

For log-in problems, students should contact Help Desk Central

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu

Phone: (254) 519-5466

[Web Chat](http://hdc.tamu.edu): [http://hdc.tamu.edu]

Please let the support technician know you are an A&M-Central Texas student.

STUDENT-INSTRUCTOR INTERACTION

This is a lecture class with online components. Most communication between the instructor and students will be in person. However, students can contact me via Canvas and email. All students are able to schedule a telephone conference or meet with me during office hours.

I will check and reply to student emails on a daily basis – students should expect a response within 24 hours Monday-Friday. Any deviations from this will be announced on Canvas. Checking Canvas frequently is important as this is where any class announcements will be posted. Messages sent over the weekend can expect a response the following Monday.

It is HIGHLY recommended that you go into your “settings” in Canvas, select “notifications”, and elect to receive emails when announcements are made. You are responsible for obtaining information in a timely manner.

My preferred method of electronic student interaction is via Canvas. All students should identify the class they are in, use proper salutations and signatures, identify a question, be succinct, and maintain professionalism in any correspondence.

Copyright Notice.

Students should assume that all course material is copyrighted by the respective author(s). Reproduction of course material is prohibited without consent by the author and/or course instructor. Violation of copyright is against the law and Texas A&M University-Central Texas’ Code of Academic Honesty. All alleged violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

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WARRIOR SHIELD

Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University-Central Texas

Warrior Shield is an emergency notification service that gives Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in Warrior Shield through their myCT email account.

Connect to Warrior Shield by [911Cellular](https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Account/Login) [https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Account/Login] to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in Warrior Shield, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

COURSE INFORMATION

1.0 Catalogue Description

Physical Aspects of Forensic Science. (3-0) This course provides the non-science student a basic understanding of the specialty field of forensic science. The course focuses on the physical (non-biological) aspects of forensic science.

2.0 Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course you should be able to demonstrate an understanding of physical aspects of forensic science.

1. Understand basic crime scene procedures.
2. Understand the role of forensic scientists and crime scene investigators.
3. Understand the different applications of forensic science.
4. Demonstrate a rudimentary understanding of processing physical evidence.
5. Demonstrate the ability to process a crime scene.

3.0 Required Textbooks

Houck & Siegel (2015). Fundamentals of Forensic Science (3rd ed). Elsevier: Oxford.

Note: This is the same book I use in the Spring biological aspects course. If you plan on taking that course I recommend keeping your book.

4.0 Supplementary Materials

Supplementary material may take the form of handouts, oral presentations, and references from your instructor, presentations by students, and articles we read. Supplementary materials are handed out in class or posted to Canvas.

5.0 Materials Needed:

Student LAB COAT. A reusable type of these will be on sale in our bookstore soon for approximately 10 dollars. You can get your own wherever you would like of any material, but it needs to be able to close completely in front. You can get them on Amazon quite inexpensively (<10 dollars).

REQUIRED COURSE WORK

I. Lab Safety

Students must complete the “Lab Safety Module” on Canvas, including the Lab Safety Quiz. Safety equipment locations will be demonstrated in class. After taking the module, students must turn in a hard copy of the Safety Agreement no later than the second day of class, Wed. Aug 28. Failure to complete the module or turn in the safety agreement will result in the student not being able to enter the lab.

II. Assignments (200 points)

There will be 10 assignments throughout the semester. There are no makeup assignments. Each assignment is worth 20 points. Some of these assignments will be in class and some you will take home. If it is an in class assignment and you are absent, you will not receive credit. If it is a take home assignment and you are not in class to either receive it or turn it in, you will not receive credit.

III. Labs 5 (250 pts)

There will be 5 labs this semester, 50 points each. You must be in class to complete and obtain credit. If you miss class you will receive a zero for the assignment. No make-up labs will be provided. See course information regarding late assignments for more information. Materials and instructions for the labs will be handed out prior to the lab day. Students are responsible for coming to class prepared and ready to begin without delay.

IV. Mock Crime Scene (250 points)

You will be split into teams and be required to work a mock crime scene. Working the mock crime scene will include processing, collecting, and interpreting evidence. The mock crime scene will be outside. Additionally, evidence processing will most likely take place outside. A rubric will be provided later in the semester.

V. Midterm Exam (100 points)

VI. Final Exam (100 points)

OTHER INFORMATION REGARDING THE COURSE

I. Late assignments: Late assignments will generally not be accepted. In the event a student misses a class for a legitimate reason (work or medical) advanced notice is required to make up any work. Documentation (including date and time) will be required for any make up assignments. There are very few reasons that late notice may be acceptable.

In the event you have an excused absence and miss an in class assignment your make-up assignment will be in the form of a summary of the current chapter we are covering in class. The summary should be no shorter than one page, double spaced. If you have an excused absence on the date of the midterm you may take make up the exam on the date of the final. If you have an excused absence on the date of the final you must, as with any other missed assignment, provide advanced notice. The only available date where students can make up the final for an excused absence is 12/11.

In the event you have an excused absence and miss the hands on exercise your make up assignment will be in the form of a 5-7 page research paper. If you miss a portion of the hands on exercise there is no make-up. You will not receive credit for that portion of the assignment.

II. Supplementary Material: Additional information may be given that supplement the topics to be addressed. This supplementary material is designed to broaden the educational experience and create more variety to the usual lecture/discussion format of class presentations. You are responsible for all information in the supplementary material.

III. Extra Credit: Extra credit is not available in this class.

IV. Punctuality: Please be ON TIME to this class. Excessive tardiness is a distraction to the entire class and will not be tolerated. Occasionally things may come up and you may run late. In this instance please enter as quietly as possible and take the first available seat. If tardiness becomes a reoccurring problem a policy of no admittance after a certain time frame will be implemented.

V. Civility: While this is a forensics class it is inevitable that some sensitive topics (race, religion, etc...) will be discussed. All students are expected to treat each other with respect. You may disagree but you must do so with civility. Rude and degrading behavior will not be tolerated.

VI. Posting of Grades: All student grades will be posted in the Canvas grade book and students should monitor their grading status through this tool.

VII. Miscellaneous: You are not permitted to record this course. This includes taking photos of powerpoints. If you have an accommodation allowing recording please let me know.

VIII. Grading Criteria Rubric and Conversion:

Final course grades will be assessed on the following scale:

Assignment	Points
Exam 1	100 points
Exam 2	100 points
Assignments	200 points
Mock Crime Scene	250 Points
Labs	250
Total	900
806-900 points	A
716-805 points	B
626-715 points	C
536-625 points	D
<357 points	F

*****Grade Posting*** Most grades should be posted on Canvas within one week of the due date. Any deviations from this will be communicated to the class.**

At the end of the semester there will be NO curve and no extra points given. It is up to YOU to ensure you have the grade you want.

6.0 Course Calendar¹

Week	Topics/Reading	Assignments
8/26	Introduction	
8/28	Chapter 1	
9/2	Chapter 2	
9/4	Chapter 2	Assign 1
9/9	Chapter 3	Lab 1
9/11	Chapter 3	Assign 2
9/16	Chapter 19	Assign 3
9/18	Chapter 19	Lab 2
9/23	Chapter 20	Assign 4
9/25	Chapter 20	Lab 3
9/30	Chapter 21	Assign 5
10/2	Chapter 21	
10/7	Chapter 21	Lab 4

10/9	Chapter 21	Lab 4
10/14	Review	
10/16	Midterm exam	
10/21	Chapter 22	Assign 7
10/23	Chapter 22	Lab 5
10/28	Chapter 15	
10/30	Chapter 15	Assign 8
11/4	Chapter 17	Assign 9
11/6	Chapter 17	Assign 10
11/11	Hands on-1 st team	
11/13	Hands on 2 nd team	
11/18	Hands on Exercise	
11/20	No Class-Thanksgiving	
11/26	Hands on Exercise	
11/28	Presentations	Final Report
12/2	Chapter 18	
12/4	Chapter 24/Catch-up	
12/9	Review for final	
12/11	Final Exam	

Important University Dates:

Date	Description
August 26, 2019	Classes Begin for Fall Semester
August 28, 2019	Deadline for Add, Drop, and Late Registration for 16- and First 8-week
September 2, 2019	Labor Day (University Closed)
September 3, 2019	Deadline to Drop First 8-week Classes with No Record
September 11, 2019	Deadline to drop 16-week Classes with No Record
October 4, 2019	Deadline to Drop First 8-week Classes with a Quit (Q) or Withdraw (W)
October 18, 2018	Classes End for First 8-week Session
October 18, 2019	Deadline to Withdraw from University for First 8-Week Classes (WF)
October 21, 2019	Add, Drop, and Late Registration Begins for Second 8-Week Classes \$25 fee assessed for late registrants
October 21, 2019	Classes Begin for Second 8-Week Session
October 21, 2019	Class Schedule Published for Spring Semester
October 23, 2019	Deadline for Add, Drop, and Late Registration for Second 8-Week Classes
October 25, 2019	Deadline for Graduation Application for Ceremony Participation
October 28, 2019	Deadline to Drop Second 8-Week Classes with No Record
November 4, 2019	Registration Opens for Spring Semester
November 8, 2019	Deadline to Drop 16-Week Classes with a Quit (Q) or Withdraw (W)
November 11, 2019	Veteran's Day (University Closed)
Nov 28-29, 2019	Thanksgiving (University Closed)
November 29, 2019	Deadline to Drop Second 8-Week Classes with a Quit (Q) or Withdraw (W)
December 13, 2019	Deadline for Applications for Tuition Rebate for Fall Graduation (5pm)
December 13, 2019	Deadline for Degree Conferral Applications to the Registrar's Office \$20 Late Application Fee
December 13, 2019	Deadline to Withdraw from University for 16- and Second 8-Week Classes
December 13, 2019	Fall Semester Ends
December 13, 2019	Fall Commencement Ceremony
December 17, 2019	Deadline for Faculty Submission of 16-Week and Second 8-Week Final Class Grades (due by 3pm)
December 23, 2019 – January 1, 2020	Winter Break (University Closed)

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES

Drop Policy

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete a [Drop Request Form](https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop_Request_Form.pdf) [https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop_Request_Form.pdf].

Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar's Office will provide a deadline on the Academic Calendar for which the form must be completed, signed and returned. Once you return the signed form to the Registrar's Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled,

FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar's Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

Academic Integrity

Texas A&M University -Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M-Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student's academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student's work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be reported to the university's Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university's standards and expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

For more [information regarding the Student Conduct process](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html),
[https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html].

If you know of potential honor violations by other students, you may [submit a report](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=0),
[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=0].

Academic Accommodations

At Texas A&M University-Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier-free education. The Office of Access and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the university's programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations please contact the Office of Access and Inclusion, WH-212; or call (254) 501-5836. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

For more information please visit our [Access & Inclusion](https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717) Canvas page (log-in required)
[https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717]

Important information for Pregnant and/or Parenting Students

Texas A&M University-Central Texas supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and related guidance from US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs' Office can assist students who are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. Students should seek out assistance as early in the pregnancy as possible. For more

information, please visit [Student Affairs](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html) [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html]. Students may also contact the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these [requirements and guidelines](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf) online, please visit the website [http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf].

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender—including pregnancy, parenting, and all related conditions. A&M-Central Texas is able to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to pregnant and parenting students. All pregnant and parenting students should contact the Associate Dean in the Division of Student Affairs at (254) 501-5909 to seek out assistance. Students may also contact the University's Title IX Coordinator.

Tutoring

Tutoring is available to all A&M-Central Texas students, both on-campus and online. Subjects tutored on campus include Accounting, Advanced Math, Biology, Finance, Statistics, Mathematics, and Study Skills. Tutors are available at the Tutoring Center in Warrior Hall, Suite 111. Tutor.com tutoring **will not offer writing support** beginning August 1, 2019, but will continue to offer other tutoring support.

If you have a question regarding tutor schedules, need to schedule a tutoring session, are interested in becoming a tutor, or have any other question, contact Academic Support Programs at (254) 519-5796, or by emailing Dr. DeEadra Albert-Green at deeadra.albertgreen@tamuct.edu.

Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject from on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables A&M-Central Texas students to log in and receive online tutoring support at no additional cost. This tool provides tutoring in over 40 subject areas. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

University Writing Center

Located in Warrior Hall 416, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University–Central Texas (TAMUCT) is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday with satellite hours in the University Library Monday thru Thursday from 6:00-9:00 p.m. This semester, the UWC is also offering online only hours from 12:00-3:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. By providing a practice audience for students' ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students' texts, offering guidance and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. In addition, students may work independently in the UWC by checking out a laptop that runs the Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on writing, including all of the relevant

style guides. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the UWC is here to help!

Students may arrange a one-to-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by visiting the UWC during normal operating hours (both half-hour and hour sessions are available) or by making an appointment via [WOnline](https://tamuct.mywconline.com/) [https://tamuct.mywconline.com/]. In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu if you have any questions about the UWC and/or need any assistance with scheduling.

University Library

The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 250,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 85,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at A&M-Central Texas are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available 24 hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place on Skype or in-person at the library. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the A&M-Central Texas main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our [Library website](http://tamuct.libguides.com/index) [http://tamuct.libguides.com/index].

OPTIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS

A Note about Sexual Violence at A&M-Central Texas

Sexual violence is a serious safety, social justice, and public health issue. The university offers support for anyone struggling with these issues. University faculty are mandated reporters, so if someone discloses that they were sexually assaulted (or a victim of Domestic/Dating Violence or Stalking) while a student at TAMUCT, faculty members are required to inform the Title IX Office. If you want to discuss any of these issues confidentially, you can do so through Student Counseling (254-501-5955) located on the second floor of Warrior Hall (207L).

Sexual violence can occur on our campus because predators often feel emboldened, and

victims often feel silenced or shamed. It is incumbent on ALL of us to find ways to actively create environments that tell predators we don't agree with their behaviors and tell survivors we will support them. Your actions matter. Don't be a bystander; be an agent of change. For additional information on campus policy and resources visit the [Title IX webpage](https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/compliance/titleix.php) [https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/compliance/titleix.php].

Behavioral Intervention

Texas A&M University-Central Texas cares about the safety, health, and well-being of its students, faculty, staff, and community. If you are aware of individuals for whom you have a concern, who are exhibiting behaviors that pose a threat to safety, or individuals causing a significant disruption to our community, please make a referral to the Behavioral Intervention Team. You can complete the [referral](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=2) online [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=2].

Anonymous referrals are accepted. Please see the [Behavioral Intervention Team](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/bat.html) website for more information [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/bat.html]. If a person's behavior poses an imminent threat to you or another, contact 911 or A&M-Central Texas University Police at 254-501-5800.