
FS-169 Sec 01
Forensic Science Senior Seminar: Studies in Contemporary FS Issues
Spring 2022

Instructor: Dr. Mark Barash

Office Location: HB 216

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Office Hours: **Mon 11am-12pm; Thr 3pm-5pm; Zoom link: <https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/6339297996>** (no need to book, just drop-in)

Class Days/Time: **Thursday 12:00pm–2:30pm**

Canvas Course: <https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1430432>

Prerequisites: Senior standing in a final semester; Justice Studies or Forensic Science major; JS 100W and JS 114 with a "C or better"; Department consent.

FS Library Liaison: Nyle Monday: Nyle.Monday@sjsu.edu

FS Lib Guide:

FS Program Website:

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Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives (CLO)

The overarching goal of this course is to encourage students to develop a self-directed and proactive learning attitude and essentially transform the empirical knowledge they acquire, into professional expertise and autonomy. These qualities would help students becoming more confident and independent individuals, which would positively impact their career and life in general.

Course Learning Objectives (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- CLO1** Undertake a critical analysis of contemporary problems relevant to forensic science.
- CLO2** Integrate cumulating knowledge on various forensic science controversies by reviewing relevant scholarly sources and presenting the findings in a form of oral and poster presentations and a formal research paper.
- CLO3** Apply scientific (and otherwise rational) forms of reasoning, argumentation, research, and support in forming any particular worldview or position in the pursuit of ‘justice’ and addressing social problems in our communities/societies.
- CLO4** Prepare for a professional career in forensic science by creating a clear and appealing resume, developing communication skills and identifying resources for job search and professional development.

Course Format

This senior seminar is designed with the structure, rigor, and spirit of a graduate level course. In a seminar, students meet regularly to report and discuss an area of research under the guidance of a course coordinator. The coordinator’s role in this course is to guide

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Zoom Classroom Etiquette

I strongly encourage you to turn on your camera during the class. This would create a more pleasant learning environment, which would be beneficial to all. However, if you choose not to, I completely understand that privacy of your home life and access to a room for privacy should not be a barrier to your success in this class. Nevertheless, class discussions are an essential part of this course and you are required to participate in these discussions. Feel free to contact me if you have questions or concerns regarding this matter.

This course or portions of this course (i.e., lectures, discussions, student presentations) might be recorded for instructional or educational purposes by the instructor. The recordings will only be shared with students enrolled in the class through Canvas. If, however, you would prefer to remain anonymous during these recordings, then please speak with the instructor about possible accommodations (e.g., temporarily turning off identifying information from the Zoom session, including student name and picture, prior to recording).

Please be advised that students are prohibited from recording class activities (including class lectures, office

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You will need to contact your classmates and create a team of 3-4 students. Each team will have its own Canvas-integrated homepage where the team members can collaborate on their project (more details to be discussed in class). The digital media project will benefit you in various ways such as studying the course content in a non-trivial and engaging form, learning valuable software tools and incorporating digital media principles for more effective learning, communication and engagement, as well as encouraging creativity. The digital media project is an authentic task that resembles real life scenarios, which you will likely experience in your professional career such as communicating scientific findings to a jury or a police investigator.

This project is not about using expensive equipment or sophisticated technology. It is about learning to tell a story in a clear, succinct and visually appealing manner, using digital media principles to ensure the message will be conveyed efficiently. The digital “props” are not to be ignored of course, as they could be very helpful to deliver your ideas.

Nonetheless, your media project will be primarily judged on its content and how well you communicate it to the audience, and less on how (s T21(”).9

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Tentative Course Schedule

Notes about course schedule: The order of the discussed topics and their focus may change according to students' progress and/or any unforeseen circumstances. I reserve the right to change the schedule including the

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March 17th

“Implications of DNA transfer”, “DNA mixture interpretation”, “Low-template DNA testing”

Weekly presentations.

Check Canvas.

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