Unit Outline 2012
Faculty of Applied Science

Forensic Science 1

8778
This Unit Outline must be read in conjunction with:

a) *UC Student Guide to Policies*, which sets out University-wide policies and procedures, including information on matters such as plagiarism, grade descriptors, moderation, feedback and deferred exams, and is available at *(scroll to bottom of page)*

b) *UC Guide to Student Services*, and is available at *(scroll to bottom of page)*

c) Any additional information specified in section 6h.

### 1: General Information

1a Unit title: Forensic Science 1

1b Unit number: 8778

1c Teaching Period and year offered: Semester 1, 2012

1d Credit point value: 3 cp

1e Unit level: Level 1

1f Name of Unit Convener and contact details (including telephone and email)
James Robertson: james.robertson@canberra.edu.au  6201 2870, room 7D18

1g Administrative contact details (including name, location, telephone and email)
Vanessa Jennings: vanessa.jennings@canberra.edu.au  6201 2121, room 7D6

### 2: Academic Content

2a Unit description and learning outcomes

This unit will introduce the principles of forensic science and the role of forensic science in the legal system. It will provide an overview of a number of forensic science disciplines, and the types of physical evidence. Students will also develop practical skills required for crime scene investigation, and will gain insights into the preparation and delivery of forensic evidence to the courts.

On completion of this unit, students should be able to:

1. apply a knowledge of basic concepts in forensic science
2. understand the scope of forensic science disciplines and potential evidence types
3. understand the role of the crime scene examiner and know how to recognise, record and collect evidence
4. understand the use of case files and the role of quality systems for forensic science
5. develop an awareness of the role of forensic science in the legal system.

2b Generic skills
The following UC generic skills and attributes will also be reinforced and assessed throughout this unit:

1. Communication: Express knowledge, ideas and opinions relevant to this professional field, both orally and in written form, with confidence and clarity.
2. Analysis and inquiry: Select and use appropriate information and communication technology to retrieve, collate, analyse, manipulate, evaluate, interpret and present information.
3. Problem solving: Apply appropriate problem solving processes, arguments, critical and creative thinking.
4. Working independently and with others: Work with others as part of a group and take responsibility for carrying out agreed tasks.
5. Professionalism and social responsibility: Act responsibly, ethically and with integrity in the context of this profession.

2c Prerequisites and/or co-requisites
None

3: Delivery of Unit and Timetable

3a Delivery mode
Delivery mode is on campus and may involve attendance off campus at specialist facilities. On campus activities include weekly lectures/ tutorials/ practical work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lectures</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>11:30 - 13:30</th>
<th>6C35</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practicals/ Tutorials</td>
<td>Weeks 3, 4, 5, 7 &amp; 14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>15:30 – 17:30</td>
<td>9A1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor crime scene activity*</td>
<td>in weeks 9, 11, 12 &amp; 13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>13:30 – 17:30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Students are required to participate in one crime scene activity and in one of the other weeks during this period (weeks 9, 11, 12 or 13) attend a Magistrates Court hearing and prepare a report on the proceedings.

Depending on class size, students may be required to participate in a second crime scene activity, and students may be offered the opportunity to visit an external forensic facility.

Note: Mondays in weeks 6 and 10 are public holidays
### Timetable of activities, such as lectures/ tutorials/ practicals/ field classes, showing key dates and topics

Schedule of topics / lectures / tutorial / practical classes by week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date Week starting</th>
<th>Lecture Room 6C35 Tuesday 11:30 – 13:30</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
<th>Practical Session/Tutorial Room 9A1 unless otherwise advised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Feb 6</td>
<td>Introduction to Forensic Science</td>
<td>JR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Introduction to the Legal System</td>
<td>JR/DR</td>
<td>Venue TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>From the Crime Scene to the Lab #1 (3 Rs, GIFT, Scene Recording – sketches, notes, photography etc.)</td>
<td>JR/DR</td>
<td>Case Studies – Miscarriages of justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>From the Crime Scene to the Lab #2</td>
<td>JR/DR</td>
<td>Create a case file. Introduction to photography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>From the Crime Scene to the Lab #3</td>
<td>JR/DR</td>
<td>Crime Scene Scenario #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Fires / Explosions / Firearms</td>
<td>DR</td>
<td>PUBLIC HOLIDAY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Toolmarks / Impression Evidence</td>
<td>DR</td>
<td>Crime Scene scenario #2 CSE role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Class-Free Period (Mid-Semester Break)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>April 2</td>
<td>Document Examination</td>
<td>Guest</td>
<td>Crime Scene Examination Practical Mock Case - Group 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Fingerprints</td>
<td>CL</td>
<td>PUBLIC HOLIDAY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Trace Evidence</td>
<td>JR/CL</td>
<td>Crime Scene Examination Practical Mock Case - Group 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Biological Evidence</td>
<td>DMc</td>
<td>Crime Scene Examination Practical Mock Case - Group 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Toxicology &amp; Illicit Drugs</td>
<td>TK</td>
<td>Crime Scene Examination Practical Mock Case - Group 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>Forensic Psychology</td>
<td>SM</td>
<td>Tutorial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

JR - James Robertson  
DR - David Royds  
CL - Chris Lennard  
DMc - Dennis McNevin  
TK - Tamsin Kelly  
SM - Stephen Moston
4: Unit Resources

4a Lists of required texts/readings
There are no prescribed texts for this unit, however, the following textbook is recommended:


4b Materials and equipment
Protective clothing for the outdoor crime scene activity will be provided as needed.

4c Unit website
A Moodle site has been established for this unit and students are advised to regularly check this site for relevant unit information and course notes.

To access the Forensic Science 1 Moodle site, follow the link from the University of Canberra homepage ([http://www.canberra.edu.au](http://www.canberra.edu.au)) to My UC Portal. Login using your UC student username and password. Select ‘Study Tools’ from the top menu and then click on ‘Moodle’.

5: Assessment

5a Assessment overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment item</th>
<th>Due date of assignments</th>
<th>Weighting (total to equal 100%)</th>
<th>Addresses learning outcome(s)</th>
<th>Addresses generic skill(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online quizzes</td>
<td>Weeks 6, 11 and 14</td>
<td>30% (10% each)</td>
<td>1 - 5</td>
<td>1 - 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case file for mock scene</td>
<td>1 week following completion of the mock scene</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1, 4</td>
<td>1 - 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend Magistrates Court and produce written report</td>
<td>Friday 4 May Week 13</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1, 4, 5</td>
<td>3, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final examination</td>
<td>Exam period</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5b Details of each assessment item

*Online quizzes*

There will be three online quizzes covering the theoretical content of the unit throughout the semester. The online quizzes will be in Week 6 (covering Weeks 1 – 5), 11 (covering Weeks 6 – 10) and 14 (covering Weeks 11 – 14). Each online quiz will be worth 10% of the overall mark, and will be available for 16 days.

*Attend Magistrates Court – Written Report*

The attendance at a hearing of the Magistrates Court introduces students to the working of a lower Court and how a committal proceeding is heard. This will complement the mock case practical in introducing students to the Australian legal system. Students are to prepare a 1000 word report on the case they attend and on the processes they observe.
Case file for mock scene

The mock crime scene and case file will introduce students to the practical elements of crime scene processing including concepts of evidence recognition, recording and recovery. Students will work in small groups and will prepare a formal case file. The case file will be due 1 week after completion of the mock scene practical. Assessment will be based on individual participation and on team performance for this exercise.

Final examination

The final written examination, 2 hours in duration, will assess all delivered topics and will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions.

5c Special assessment requirements

In order to obtain a pass grade or better, students must:

- attempt all assessment items; and,
- achieve an overall aggregate mark of 50% or higher

5d Supplementary assessment

Not offered with this unit

5e Academic Integrity

Students have a responsibility to uphold University standards on ethical scholarship. Good scholarship involves building on the work of others and use of others’ work must be acknowledged with proper attribution made. Cheating, plagiarism, and falsification of data are dishonest practices which contravene academic values.

UC has provided an Integrity Module “On Target with Referencing” to help students understand more about Academic Integrity. (AIM details: URL http://www.canberra.edu.au/tlc/assessment/academic-integrity-module-aim ).

This module is designed to:

- heighten students’ awareness of what constitutes academic integrity:
- inform them of the importance of acknowledging the sources used in their academic writing:
- introduce students to the conventions of citing sources in different disciplines. In particular, this module will explain how to avoid plagiarism

5f Text-matching software

Text-matching software may be used to check for plagiarism for assessments in this unit. See Academic Integrity above.

6: Student Responsibility

6a Workload

The amount of time you will need to spend on study in this unit will depend on a number of factors including your prior knowledge, learning skill level and learning style. Nevertheless, in planning your time commitments you should note that for a 3cp unit the total notional workload over the semester or term is assumed to be 150 hours. These hours include time spent in classes.
6b  **Special needs**

Students who need assistance in undertaking the unit because of disability or other circumstances should inform their Unit Convener or UC AccessAbility (formerly the Disabilities Office) as soon as possible so the necessary arrangements can be made.

6c  **Participation requirements**

Participation in the crime scene practical is a compulsory condition of this unit. In the event that you cannot attend your assigned crime scene practical due to illness or unavoidable commitments, contact the unit convener as soon as possible so that an alternative session can be arranged. You will need to provide the unit convener with an official medical or counsellor’s certificate or a letter from your employer to be permitted into an alternate practical.

If you have to miss an examination because of illness or personal problems you must submit an official medical or counsellor’s certificate to the unit convener as soon as possible once you are well. If possible, please contact the unit convener by email or phone prior to the exam so that you are not disadvantaged in any way and we can make alternative arrangements in a timely fashion.

In all cases of absence, sickness or personal problems the onus is on you to ensure that the unit convener is informed. If you feel that any problems are interfering with your work please let the unit convener know. Furthermore, the University has extensive counselling services that are available free of charge to all students. These are found in the Health and Counselling Centre (Room: 1B124, phone: 6 201-2351). The Centre offers help and advice in areas such as relaxation, financial and personal problems. The Study Skills unit (Room 1B26, phone: 6 201-2361) offers help, advice and extra courses on effective study skills and general course guidance.

If you have a serious dispute with the School or with the University there are a number of experienced mediators who are available to help. Details of how to use this facility are available from your Division Student Information Office or the Student Association. For any conflicts regarding the Forensic Science 1 unit, please feel free to discuss your concerns with the unit convener.

6d  **Withdrawal**

If you are planning to withdraw please discuss with your unit convener. Please see this link for further information on deadlines. [http://www.canberra.edu.au/student-services/re-enrolment/determine_your_study_program_and_register_on_osis/withdrawal_of_units]

6e  **Required IT skills**

Familiarity with Microsoft Office software, Word, Excel and PowerPoint or equivalent is necessary.

6f  **Costs**

None

6g  **Work placements, internships or practicums**

The magistrates court and mock scene constitute work learning components into the unit.

6h  **Additional information**

Most information relevant to the unit will be posted on the Moodle website.
7:  **Student Feedback**

All students enrolled in this unit will have an opportunity to provide anonymous feedback on the unit at the end of the Semester via the Unit Satisfaction Survey (USS) which you can access by logging into MyUC via the UC homepage: [http://www.canberra.edu.au/home/](http://www.canberra.edu.au/home/). Your lecturer or tutor may also invite you to provide more detailed feedback on their teaching through an anonymous questionnaire.

As this is the first time Forensic Science 1 has been delivered we are especially interested in student feedback.

8:  **Authority of this Unit Outline**

Any change to the information contained in Section 2 (Academic content), and Section 5 (Assessment) of this document, will only be made by the Unit Convener if the written agreement of Head of Discipline and a majority of students has been obtained; and if written advice of the change is then provided on the unit site in the learning management system. If this is not possible, written advice of the change must be then forwarded to each student enrolled in the unit at their registered term address. Any individual student who believes him/herself to be disadvantaged by a change is encouraged to discuss the matter with the Unit Convener.