

FS 680 Special Topics in Physical Evidence

Monday, Wednesday 9:30AM – 10:50AM

David O. Carter, PhD
5 Henry Hall
Forensic Sciences Unit
Division of Natural Sciences and Mathematics
Chaminade University of Honolulu
3140 Waiālae Avenue
Honolulu, HI 96816
+1 (808) 739-8352
david.carter@chaminade.edu



Office Hours Monday 2:30PM – 4:30PM, Wednesday 11:00AM – 12:30PM, or by Appointment

Oftentimes discovered in small (or trace) quantities, physical evidence can serve as a valuable means to trace the movement of a person or an object. Anything can serve as evidence but some traditional forms are hair, fiber, soils, glass, and paint. Please note that several other forms of physical evidence such as pollen, insects, building materials, liquids, and plastics are also used as trace evidence, although they will not be the focus of this class.

Measurable Learning Objectives

By participating in this class, each student will be able to:

- Identify and discuss the values and ethics required for effective physical evidence analysis,
- Develop protocols for the collection, preparation, analysis, and preservation of physical evidence,
- Present the results of trace evidence analysis.

Required Text

This class does not require you to purchase a textbook. However, readings from the following sources are recommended:

- Houck MM (2001) *Mute Witnesses*. Academic Press, San Diego, CA.
Kirk PL (1953) *Crime Investigation*. John Wiley and Sons, San Francisco, CA.
Saferstein R (2013) *Forensic Science: From the Crime Scene to the Crime Lab*. 2nd Edition. Pearson, Boston, MA.
Siegel JA and Houck MM (2010) *Fundamentals of Forensic Science*. 2nd Edition. Academic Press, San Diego, CA

FS 680 Special Topics in Physical Evidence

Tentative Class Schedule

Week (Dates)	Topic	Notes
1 (25 & 27 August)	Introduction, values & ethics	
2 (1 & 3 September)	What is investigation? What is physical evidence?	Labor Day
3 (8 & 10 September)	Soils	
4 (15 & 17 September)	Soils	
5 (22 & 24 September)	Soils	
6 (29 September & 1 October)	Glass	
7 (6 & 8 October)	Glass	
8 (13 & 15 October)	Glass	Discoverer's Day
9 (20 & 22 October)	Hair	
10 (27 & 29 October)	Hair	
11 (3 & 5 November)	Hair	
12 (10 & 12 November)	Fibers	Veteran's Day
13 (17 & 19 November)	Fibers	
14 (24 & 26 November)	Fibers	Thanksgiving
15 (1 & 3 December)	Final Protocol Development	SHSU Seminar
16 (Finals Week)	TBD	No classes

FS 680 Special Topics in Physical Evidence

Evaluation/Assessment

Your grade for this class will be the result of participation and the production of a volume for The Chaminade Protocols. Each student will be assigned a topic for inclusion in this educational resource. Book subjects will include:

- Soils
- Human hairs
- Non-human hairs
- Organic fibers
- Synthetic fibers
- Latent fingerprints
- Bloodstain patterns

The point breakdown is as follows:

Assignment	Points Possible
The Chaminade Protocols	100
Total Points Possible	100

The grading scale for this class is as follows:

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	≥ 90
B	80 – 89
C	70 – 79
D	60 – 69
F	≤ 59

ADA Accommodation

Students who meet the criteria for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) must provide written documentation of their needs to the Chaminade University of Honolulu Counseling Center by the end of the 3rd week of class. Failure to provide this documentation will exempt you from ADA accommodations. Please direct any questions to the Dean of Students at www.chaminade.edu/student_life/sss/counseling_services.php

Dress Code

This class will take place in the lecture hall, laboratory and outside. Please dress accordingly. Close-toed shoes, long pants, and personal protective equipment are required in the laboratory. No food or beverages are allowed in the laboratory.