



School of Justice Studies

Forensic Science & Technology

FS 230-01, Forensic Sciences

Henry Hall 107, MWF 1:30-2:20 PM | Credits: 3 | Section: 1 | Term: Fall 2026

Instructor Information

Instructor	Carlos A. Gutiérrez Ayala, PhD	
Email	carlos.gutierrez@chaminade.edu	
Phone	(808) 739-8352	
Office Location	Eiben Hall 207-A	
Office Hours	Mondays and Fridays 9:00 – 10:00 AM Thursdays and Fridays 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM	
Virtual Office	Contact to set up a Zoom or Teams meeting	

Communication

You can request a meeting outside of Office Hours by sending an email to carlos.gutierrez@chaminade.edu. Please suggest multiple dates and times that you are available to meet. Will respond within 24-48 hours.

Co-Instructor Information

Instructor	Emily Pecsí, PhD	
Email	emily.pecsi@chaminade.edu	
Phone	(808) 739-7451	
Office Location	Eiben Hall 207-C	
Office Hours	Monday/Thursday 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM Wednesday 2:30-3:30 PM	
Virtual Office	Contact to set up a Zoom or Teams meeting	

Communication

You can request a meeting outside of Office Hours by sending an email to emily.pecsi@chaminade.edu. Please suggest multiple dates and times that you are available to meet. Will respond within 24-48 hours.

School & Department

School	School of Justice Studies
Location	Wesselkamper, Room 116
Phone	(808) 440-4204
Questions?	Contact your instructor or the School of Justice Studies

Course Description & Materials

Catalog Description

Survey of scientific methods applied to the collection, analysis and preservation of physical evidence as it is used from the crime scene to the courtroom; quality assurance, ethics, professional practice.

Co-/Pre-Requisites: None required for this course

Course Snapshot

Modality	Face-to-Face
Meeting Location	Henry Hall 107
Meeting Days/Times	MFF 1:30-2:20 PM
Time Allocation	This is a three-credit-hour course requiring 135 clock hours of students' engagement per the official CUH Credit Hour Policy. Students enrolled in this course are expected to spend 35 hours in class, 12 hours brainstorming, researching, writing and editing the written assignments (Ownership document, Silver Words), 26 hours studying for end-of-module tests and team oral quizzes, and 12 hours studying and completing the final exam. There will be an additional 50 hours of work required beyond what is listed here (course readings, reviewing, note taking, etc.), averaging 3 hours each week.
Required Materials	Textbook: Saferstein R (2019) Forensic Science: From the Crime Scene to the Crime Lab. 4th Edition. Pearson. Hoboken, NJ, USA. Lecture slides: Will be made available on Canvas
Canvas & Google Drive	Course materials (slides, readings), assignments, announcements, and grades will be available online through Canvas. (chaminade.instructure.com). Google Drive (drive.google.com) will be used to house and share larger files, if needed.

Learning Outcomes

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

Upon completion of the undergraduate B.Sc. program in Forensic Sciences, the student will be able to:

1. Apply the scientific method in an adaptive and mindful manner.
2. Use techniques for recognition, documentation, analysis, and interpretation of physical evidence
3. Implement quality assurance programs, incorporating ethics and professional practice, to act as stewards of justice and peace throughout the broader community.
4. Communicate disciplinary knowledge to diverse audiences.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

Upon completion of FS 260 (Forensic Sciences), the student will be able to:

1. Define the role of forensic science in criminal investigations.
2. Identify different types of physical evidence, how they are analyzed, and what information they can provide.
3. Describe quality assurance strategies, including accreditations and certifications, in the forensic sciences and its role in the justice system.

4. Describe acceptable and professional conduct in the forensic sciences.

Marianist Values

An education in the Marianist Tradition is marked by five principles. Reflect on how this course relates to one or more:

1. Education for formation in faith.
2. Provide an integral, quality education.
3. Educate in family spirit.
4. Educate for service, justice and peace, and integrity of creation.
5. Educate for adaptation and change.

This course will provide a thorough overview (Value 2) of the principles and foundations of forensic sciences, while also presenting recent advancements in the field (Value 5). FS230 will build students' capacity to make informed decisions based on the scientific method and ethical standards (Value 1) to ensure the fair application of forensics within a judicial context (Value 4). Finally, the course and its activities will emphasize the importance of cross-discipline collaborations within the forensic sciences and encourage team-building among students (Value 3).

Native Hawaiian Values

Education is central to both Marianist and Native Hawaiian culture — both seek transformative, value-centered learning that serves the marginalized. This is reflected in the 'Ōlelo No'eau (Hawaiian proverbs) below:

1. **Educate for Formation in Faith (Mana):** E ola au i ke akua ('Ōlelo No'eau 364) — May I live by God.
2. **Provide an Integral, Quality Education (Na'auao):** Lawe i ka ma'alea a kū'ono'ono ('Ōlelo No'eau 1957) — Acquire skill and make it deep.
3. **Educate in Family Spirit ('Ohana):** 'Ike aku, 'ike mai, kōkua aku kōkua mai ('Ōlelo No'eau 1200) — Recognize others, be recognized, help others, be helped.
4. **Educate for Service, Justice and Peace (Aloha):** Ka lama kū o ka no'eau ('Ōlelo No'eau 1430) — Education is the standing torch of wisdom.
5. **Educate for Adaptation and Change (Aina):** 'A'ohe pau ka 'ike i ka hālau ho'okahi ('Ōlelo No'eau 203) — All knowledge is not taught in the same school.

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This course covers the [UN SDG 16: "Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions"](#), which aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and to build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.



Alignment of Course Learning Outcomes

	CLO 1	CLO 2	CLO 3	CLO 4
Marianist Values	X	X	X	X
PLOs	X	X	X	X
Native Hawaiian Values	X	X	X	X

Attendance & In-Class Participation

Attendance Policy

Unless otherwise stated, classes are scheduled to meet in-person between 1:00-2:20 PM on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays in Henry Hall room 107. Students will earn **ten (10) points per class attendance** starting on August 26th, 2026. Please be aware that the total attendance points will be changed if a class period is cancelled due to extenuating circumstances (ex. Instructor illness, extreme weather).

Quick Reference — Absence Thresholds:

Excused Absence	An absence where the instructor was notified (preferably 24 hours prior to the course) and was due to a legitimate reason (ex. Illness, family emergency, accident). Please note that proof may be requested (ex. Doctor's note).
Unexcused Absence	An absence where the instructor was NOT notified and/or was due to an illegitimate or unacceptable reason.
Grade Penalty	Unexcused absences will result in a loss of 10 attendance-points for a given lecture. Four or more unexcused absences will result in an additional 5% deduction from the student's final grade.
Late Arrival / Early Departure	If a student is late by 5-10 minutes, they will lose 5-attendance points. If they are more than 10 minutes late, they will lose all 10 attendance points for that lecture (unless a legitimate reason is provided).

In-Class Participation Expectations

Active, respectful engagement is essential. Students are expected to come prepared and contribute meaningfully to discussions, activities, and collaborative work.

Students are expected to:

- Come prepared — complete readings and activities before each session.
- Participate actively in discussions and group work, demonstrating critical thinking.
- Engage respectfully and honor diverse perspectives.
- Use personal devices for course purposes only unless otherwise directed.
- Submit work by established deadlines to support course pacing.

Course Activities (1,270 total points)

Class activity	Silver Words (75 points) Words and communication in forensic sciences are important, they are worth their weight in silver! On the first day of class, you will need to present yourself to your peers and instructor. The exercise is designed to help improve oral communication skills while also allowing you to reflect on your interest and future in forensic sciences. While presenting, you will need to answer the following: 1. What is your name? 2. Where are you from? 3. What is your major and minor (if you have one)? 4. What got you interested in forensic sciences? 5. What topic or sub-discipline of forensics are you currently most curious about and why (ex. Biology, Chemistry, Documents, Scene investigation)?
Assignments	Ownership Document (25 points) You are required to complete the Ownership Document (posted on Canvas) which is designed to encourage you to think about your future and why you wish to pursue a career in forensic sciences. The completed document will be due before Friday, September 4th at 11:59 PM (HST). Written assignments must be submitted in Canvas or emailed to an instructor as a .docx, .pages or .pages file.
Quizzes / Exams	End-of-module test (300 points) You will be required to complete four end-of-module tests, which are modelled after the forensic science accreditation and certification exams (multiple choice, true/false). Each exam will be worth 100 points. Team oral quizzes (250 points) The class will be divided into teams. During each module, a team will be randomly selected to answer a question related to the module's topic. The team will have 2-3 minutes to discuss before answering. Each team member will be awarded 50-points for each correct answer. Final Exam (200 points) The final exam will be an oral exam that will be individually answered. It will consist of one question selected from the previous end-of-module tests. You will have 1 minute to reflect and answer the question.
Attendance	Students will be awarded 10-points for each class they attend, totaling to 420 points over the semester.

Course Policies

Late Work	Any late assignments or exams will be penalized 10-points per day late.
Make-Up Work & Extra Credit	If you require make-up or extra credit work, please discuss this with one of your instructors at least one month before finals week

	(December 7-10th, 2026). No additional assignment will be given for unexcused absences or lack of interest/participation in the course.
Incomplete Grade	At the request of the student, followed by the approval of the faculty member, a grade of "I" may be assigned to those who have successfully completed, with at least a passing grade, a majority of the work of the course and who has an unavoidable and compelling reason why the remainder of the work cannot be completed on schedule.
Syllabus Changes	The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus at any time. Any modification will be discussed and announced. A revised syllabus will therein be provided on Canvas.

Final Grades

Assignments, tests, oral quizzes and exam grades will be entered in Canvas at most 1-week after their due date. You are encouraged to regularly consult your grades in Canvas throughout the semester, and to reach out to your instructor(s) to discuss your progress and performance. Final grades will be submitted to Self-Service (selfservice.chaminade.edu).

Grade	Range	Points
A	90 – 100%	1,143 – 1,270
B	80 – 89%	1,016 – 1,142
C*	70 – 79%	889 – 1,015
D**	60 – 69%	762 – 888
F	< 59%	< 762

* This class is a pre-requisite for FS 233L. Students will require a minimum grade of C to enroll in this course.

** A student who receives a D as a final grade is considered to have passed, but will not be able to enroll in the subsequent FS courses.

Important Information

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is an essential aspect of all learning, scholarship, and research. It is one of the values regarded most highly by academic communities throughout the world. Violations of the principle of academic honesty are extremely serious and will not be tolerated.

Students are responsible for promoting academic honesty at Chaminade by not participating in any act of dishonesty and by reporting any incidence of academic dishonesty to an instructor or to a University official. Academic dishonesty may include theft of records or examinations, alteration of grades, plagiarism, **and unauthorized and/or undisclosed AI usage**, in addition to more obvious dishonesty. See catalog section *Student Use of Artificial Intelligence in Academic Work* for further information.

Questions of academic dishonesty in a particular class are first reviewed by the instructor, who

must make a report with recommendations to the Director of the Academic College. Punishment for academic dishonesty will be determined by the instructor, Director, and the Dean of Academic College and may include an “F” grade for the work in question, an “F” grade for the course, academic notice, or dismissal from the University.

AI (Artificial Intelligence) Statement

Chaminade University recognizes the increasing role of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in academic and professional environments. AI encompasses, but is not limited to, generative AI platforms, automated writing or content generation software, coding assistants, and similar tools. Students must ensure all submitted work genuinely reflects their knowledge and effort. Using AI to produce or significantly complete graded assignments, exams or other academic tasks – defined as use that substitutes for or substantially replaces a student’s own analysis, reasoning or written expression – without explicit instructor approval is considered academic misconduct and will be dealt with according to the University’s Academic Honesty Policy.

If an instructor has reasonable grounds to question whether submitted work genuinely reflects a student’s own knowledge, authorship, or mastery of course material — or whether it meets the course’s expectations for AI use — the instructor may require the student to provide additional or alternative evidence of authorship and content mastery. Such evidence may include drafts, notes, revision history, source materials, process explanations, oral discussion, in class work, or completion of an alternative assessment. A student’s refusal or inability to provide such evidence may be considered, along with other available information, in evaluating whether the work meets course requirements and stated learning outcomes. Instructors will not rely solely on AI detection software or other automated tools in making grading or academic integrity determinations. Such determinations will be based on the totality of the available information and handled in accordance with applicable University policies and procedures. See the catalog section *Student Use of Artificial Intelligence in Academic Work* for further information.

Title IX and Nondiscrimination

Chaminade University of Honolulu is committed to providing a learning, working and living environment that promotes the dignity of all people, inclusivity and mutual respect and is free of all forms of sex discrimination and gender-based violence, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. As a member of the University faculty, I am required to immediately report any incident of sex discrimination or gender-based violence to the campus Title IX Coordinator. For pregnant and parenting students, I am also obligated to provide you with similar resources for support and protections available to you. My goal is to make sure that you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources and support you need.

Contact information and reporting options: chaminade.edu/titleix/nondiscrimination/. File a report via the [Campus Incident Report Form](#).

Nondiscrimination Policy and Notice of Nondiscrimination

The university is committed to comply with all State and Federal statutes, rules, and regulations which prohibit discrimination. The university is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination on the basis of race, sex, gender identity and expression, age, religion, color, national origin (including shared ancestry and ethnic characteristics), ancestry, citizenship, disability, genetic information, marital status, breastfeeding, arrest and court record (except as permissible under State law), sexual

orientation, or status as a covered veteran. Inquiries about Title IX or general Civil Rights concerns may be referred to the University's Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both and contact information may be found [HERE](#). *On-campus Confidential Resources may also be found here at [CAMPUS CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES](#).*

The University's Nondiscrimination Policy and Grievance Procedures can be located on the University webpage at: <https://chaminade.edu/compliance/title-ix-nondiscrimination-policies-procedures/>. To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please refer to the [Campus Incident Report form](#). Chaminade University of Honolulu prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. The NOTICE of NONDISCRIMINATION can be found here: [Notice of Nondiscrimination](#).

Student with Disabilities Statement- Kōkua 'Ike

Accessibility Services recognizes disability as a valued aspect of diversity and ensures equal access to the educational environment in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act; the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended; and the principles and professional standards of the Association on Higher Education and Disability. Access is supported through reasonable accommodations and referrals to campus and community resources.

Appointments with the Accessibility Services Coordinator are available through Stellic at <https://chaminade.stellic.com> and may be held virtually or in person. Drop-in appointments are also welcome.

Students seeking support must meet with the Accessibility Services Coordinator as early as possible, even if they are unsure whether they have appropriate documentation of their disability or its impacts. The Accessibility Services Coordinator prioritizes listening to students's experiences and will discuss any documentation needs during the initial intake meeting. Students may seek support at any time. Learn more at <https://chaminade.edu/ada-accommodations>

Assessment of Student Work

Chaminade University may use student work anonymously to assess achievement of course, program, and institutional learning outcomes as part of ongoing quality improvement efforts.

Campus Resources & Support Services

The following resources are available to all Chaminade students. Reach out early — these services exist to support your success.

Resource	Description	Contact / Website
Accessibility Services (Kōkua 'Ike)	Accommodations under Section 504 and ADA. Contact early — appointments via Stellic, virtual or in person.	ada@chaminade.edu chaminade.edu/ada-accommodations
Tutoring & Academic Coaching (Kōkua 'Ike)	Tutoring and Academic Coaching Services support students' progression toward their academic, personal, and professional goals with clarity and intention. Services include individualized support in English, math, nursing, sciences, and social sciences, as	chaminade.edu/tutoring-academic-coaching-services

Resource	Description	Contact / Website
	well as guidance in developing goals and study strategies.	
Career Services	Career Services supports students throughout their career journeys. Services include individualized job search strategy coaching, resume reviews, job interview coaching, and access to career-related resources and opportunities.	chaminade.edu/career-services
Basic Needs Resources	Support for food insecurity, housing instability, and other basic needs.	chaminade.edu/basic-needs/
Title IX / Nondiscrimination	Reporting and support for sex discrimination and gender-based violence. Campus Incident Report Form available online.	chaminade.edu/titleix/resources-and-support/
Hazing Prevention	Confidential support, crisis intervention, and reporting for any type of abuse including hazing.	hazingpreventionnetwork.org/athlete-helpline/
Campus Safety / SafeSwords	Security escort service for anyone who feels unsafe walking alone on campus at any time of day. Call security and a professional will escort you to your destination.	chaminade.edu/student-life/security/campus-safeswords-program/
CUH Alert Emergency Notification	Emergency text system. Register your cell number via the Chaminade portal and confirm the text to complete enrollment.	chaminade.edu

Weekly Course Schedule

Note: The instructor reserves the right to modify this schedule. Changes will be announced in class and posted to Canvas.

Week	Dates	Chapter	Topics	Notes & Reminders
Module 1 - Science and Investigation				
1	Aug 17, 19, 21	1	Syllabus review Orientation, Roster review, Introduction (Silver Words)	Aug 17-25 Add/Drop period
2	Aug 24, 26, 28	1	Evidence & Admissibility	Aug 26 Fall Spiritual Convocation (No classes, 11:30 am - 1:30 pm)
3	Aug 31 Sep 2, 4	1	Evidence & Admissibility Quality assurance	Sep 4 Ownership document due
4	Sep 9	1	Team oral quizzes	Sep 7 Labor day (No classes)
	Sep 11		Module 1 Test	
Module 2 - Scene Investigation				
5	Sep 14, 16	2, 3	Securing & searching the scene Recording the scene	Sep 18 - No Class & Withdraw without record deadline.

Week	Dates	Chapter	Topics	Notes & Reminders
6	Sep 21, 23, 25	3	Recording the Scene & technology Collection of physical evidence	
7	Sep 28, 30 Oct 2	4	Collection of physical evidence	
8	Oct 5	4	Collection of physical evidence	
	Oct 7	2-4	Team oral quizzes	
	Oct 9		Module 2 Test	
9	Oct 12-16 Indigenous People's Day & Wellness Week			Oct 14 College of Arts & Science wellness activity
Module 3 - Pattern Evidence				
10	Oct 19, 21, 23	5, 7	Physical evidence Scene reconstruction	Oct 23 Withdrawal deadline
11	Oct 26, 28, 30	7, 8	Scene reconstruction Fingerprints	
12	Nov 2, 4, 6	9, 10	Firearms, toolmarks & other impressions Bloodstain pattern analysis	
13	Nov 9	5-10	Team oral quizzes	Nov 11 Veteran's day (No classes)
	Nov 13		Module 3 Test	
Module 4 - Biological Evidence				
14	Nov 16, 18, 20	15, 6	Biological stain analysis & DNA	
15	Nov 23, 25	6	Death investigation &Forensic taphonomy	Nov 26 & 27 Thanksgiving (No Classes)
16	Nov 30	6, 15	Entomology & anthropology	
	Dec 2		Team oral quizzes	
16	Dec 4	11,12	Drugs & toxicology (If there is time)	
17	Final Exam, Monday Dec 7th. 11:00 am to 1:00 pm			