



School of Justice Studies

Forensic Science & Technology

FS 491, Professional Skills

Eiben Hall 202, F 10:30-11:20 AM | Credits: 3 | Section: 1 | Term: Fall 2026

Instructor Information

Instructor	Emily Pecsí, PhD	
Email	emily.pecsi@chaminade.edu	
Phone	(808) 739-7451	
Office Location	Eiben Hall 207-C	
Office Hours	M 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM, W 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

Introduces professional practices and expectations for the forensic scientist. Includes discussion of employment preparation, leadership, professional organization, ethics, certification, accreditation, and research skills including data generation, analysis, and interpretation.

Co-/Pre-Requisites: EN-102, COM-101, FS-340, FS-455, Senior standing.

Course Snapshot

Modality	Face-to-Face
Meeting Location	Eiben Hall 202
Meeting Days/Times	F 10:30-11:20 AM

Time Allocation	This is a three-credit hour course requiring 135 clock hours of student engagement, per the official CUH Credit Hour Policy. A total of 11 hrs will be allocated to class time and 3 hrs will be dedicated to online self-paced workshops (INBRE). 66 hours (~ 6hrs / week) will be required for completing the mock job application, whereas 8 hrs will be dedicated to practicing for the mock interview. A remaining 13 hrs will be required for completing assignments and 34 hrs (~ 2hrs / week) will be needed for completing ancillary tasks (ex. readings, reviewing, note taking, office hours).
Canvas	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 491 (Professional Skills), the student will be able to:

1. Interact professionally, ethically and with collegiality in a forensic community and/or context.
2. Build student confidence and leadership skills.
3. Prepare and deliver an effective employment application and interview.
4. Reflect on one's own experiences, performance and values to inform professional goals and career planning.

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 aims to provide in-depth instruction and support (Value 2) to aid students with the transition from school to the workforce within the field of forensic sciences (Value 4). This includes but is not limited to developing a student's professionalism, leadership and teamwork (Value 3), while also growing their capacity to apply their skills and experiences to various job requirements (Value 5).

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
PLOs	X	X	X	
Native Hawaiian Values	X			X

Attendance & In-Class Participation

Attendance Policy

Unless otherwise stated, classes are scheduled to meet in-person between 10:30-11:20 AM on Monday, in Eiben Hall room 202. Students will earn **fifteen points per class attendance** starting on August 28th, 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 15 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 15 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 (240 points)

Assignments	Job Search (10 pts) You will need to search online for job and/or graduate school opportunities. Screenshot and submit the top-3 postings that interest you the most. The posting doesn't necessarily have to be within forensics, but it needs to be a position that you are qualified for (if you had your Chaminade BSc in-hand). Compile the screenshots into a single document (.docx, .pages, .pdf) and submit before 11:59 PM (HST) on September 11, 2026 via Canvas or email. Job posting annotation (10 pts) You will need to go through and annotate one of the job postings that you found during your search. You can do this by hand on a printed copy or digitally. Highlight key items like: preferred qualifications, soft vs hard skills, keywords and responsibilities. Note whether you do or do not meet those requirements. Are there points that interest you (ex. Opportunity for promotion) or points that are less favourable (ex. Lack of sick days)? Are there any questions that you have regarding the job? Annotate anything and everything that catches your eye or that comes to mind while you are reading through the posting. Email or upload your annotated document (.docx, .pages, .pdf) before 11:59 PM (HST) on September 25th. Translate Your Experience (10 pts)
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	Simply listing your past experiences on your CV is not enough to distinguish you from other applicants (ex. Performed DNA extractions). You want to move away from a task-based statement (what I did) to a skills-and-impact-based statement (how I did it well, and what that proves about me). I want you to come up with two creative statements that not only indicate a past professional experience, but also highlights relevant skills and aptitudes (see Canvas for an example). Be creative and really reflect on what your past experiences bring to the table. Submit your statement on Canvas or by email before 11:59 PM on October 2nd, 2026. Create a professional outfit (10 pts) Using shoplook.io (or a similar website, or google images), I want you to create two professional outfits. Whether that is for the field, the office, the lab, the courtroom or a conference. Build a workplace-appropriate outfit that still fits within your own personal style and comfort. Email or upload your outfit (.docx, .pages, .pdf) along with a brief description (max 100 words) of why the outfit is appropriate for your chosen workplace environment or scenario. Due before 11:59 PM (HST) on October 9th.
Self-learning & Practice	INBRE Workshops Three online workshops (CVs, Cover letter writing, Interview Skills) will be posted on Canvas (40-60 min each). You must follow these workshops on your own time to help further prepare you for the course's job application (see below). Interact with a Career Service (10 pts) Kōkua 'Ike provides numerous career services that can help you land an awesome post-graduation job. You are required to take advantage of at least one of their services, including but not limited to: 1) Creating a profile on the Handshake platform 2) Attending the Career Fair (September 22nd from 10:30 AM to 1:30 PM at Ching Conference Center). 3) Making an appointment (via Stellic) with a Career Services Coordinator. By the end of the semester (December 4th at 11:59 PM (HST)), you'll need to send proof (ex. Screenshot, photo) that you've completed the task. This can be emailed (emily.pecsi@chaminade.edu) or uploaded to Canvas.
Projects	Job application (40 pts) You will need to apply to one of five mock job postings (available on Canvas). You will need to provide a cover letter (max 1 page), resume (max 2 pages), 2 references, and a copy of your unofficial transcript. All documents must be compiled into a single PDF and submitted via Canvas or email (emily.pecsi@chaminade.edu) before 11:59 PM (HST) on October 26th, 2026. The documents must be tailored to the position and the agency/employer that you are applying to. An evaluation rubric will be posted on Canvas. Late applications WILL NOT be accepted.
Final Exam	Job Interview (30 pts) Your final exam will be in the form of a mock job interview. Following the submission of your job application, you will be invited to schedule an interview on either November 6th, 13th, 20th, or December 3rd, 2026. Interviews may be scheduled during the final exam week if there is an unforeseen circumstance (ex. Class cancellation due to weather or illness). The interview will consist of 5-6 questions that need to be answered in a professional manner and in a way that is relevant to the job that you applied for. You must attend the interview wearing professional and appropriate attire. An evaluation rubric will be posted on Canvas.

Attendance	Starting August 28th, your attendance will award you 15 points per class, totalling to 120 points for the semester.
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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. Changes will be announced in class and posted to Canvas.

Final Grades

Final grades are submitted to Self-Service (selfservice.chaminade.edu):

Grade	Range	Points
A	90% and above	216-240
B	80–89%	192-215
C	70–79%	168-191
D	60–69%	144-167
F	59% and below	< 144

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	Day	Theme	Notes & Reminders
1	Aug 21	Introductions & syllabus	Aug 17-25 Course add/drop period
2	Aug 28	College to the workplace	Aug 26 Fall Spiritual Convocation (No classes, 11:30 am - 1:30 pm)
3	Sep 4	Job & graduate school search strategies	
4	Sep 11	Resume / CVs	Sep 7 Labor day (No classes) Sep 11 Job search assignment due
5	Sep 18	CLASS CANCELLED	Sep 18 Course withdraw without record deadline
6	Sep 25	Cover letters & email etiquette	Sep 25 Job posting annotation due
7	Oct 2	Ethics	Oct 2 "Translate your experience" due
8	Oct 9	Leadership	Oct 9 Professional outfit due
9	Oct 16	NO CLASSES	Oct 12-16 Wellness week
10	Oct 23	Certification, accreditation, societies	Oct 23 Course withdrawal deadline

Week	Day	Theme	Notes & Reminders
11	Oct 30	Interview skills & professionalism	Oct 26 Job application due
12	Nov 6	Mock job interviews	
13	Nov 13	Mock job interviews	
14	Nov 20	Mock job interviews	
15	Nov 27	NO CLASSES	Nov 26 & 27 Thanksgiving
16	Dec 4	Mock job interviews	
17	Dec 11	Final exam week (Dec 7-10)	