

*It is your responsibility to read and understand this syllabus.*

**School of Criminal Justice**  
**University of Southern Mississippi**  
***FSC 140L – Introduction to Forensic Science Laboratory***

**Instructors:**

Dean Bertram, Ph.D.  
AKH 103

Email: [Dean.Bertram@USM.edu](mailto:Dean.Bertram@USM.edu)

Office Hours: M-R 9-11:30.

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Hattiesburg, MS 39406

Thomas S. Pittman, Ph.D.

AKH 101

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Office Hours: T&R 8-10, 2-5.

118 College Drive # 5127

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Robin G. Bombardi (TA)

AKH 104

Email: [Robin.Bombardi@usm.edu](mailto:Robin.Bombardi@usm.edu)

Office Hours: See below.

118 College Drive #5127

Hattiesburg, MS 39406

**Class:** FSC 140L

**Place:** Arthell Kelley Hall 107

**Time:** Monday 10:00AM – 11:50AM

Wednesday 12:00PM – 1:50PM

Thursday 6:30PM – 9:15PM

**Credit Hours:** 1 hr

**Office Hours:** Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8:00AM – 9:30AM & 2:00PM – 3:00PM; Tuesday, Thursday 8:00AM – 9:30AM

## **Laboratory Objectives**

This laboratory course will introduce students to specific techniques and equipment used in various fields of forensic science. The lab exercises will parallel the material covered in the Introduction to Forensic Science FSC 140 lecture. The laboratory sections are designed both to encourage students to explore their interests in the many different disciplines of forensic science, and to support their theoretical knowledge of forensic science by applying that knowledge to mock exercises. The information will be communicated through the lectures, instructor demos, and group exercises.

## **Course Requirements**

**Labs/Attendance/Class Participation:** Class attendance is required, since labs will include substantial material not covered in the lecture or text. **NO MAKE-UP LABS WILL BE GIVEN UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.** If the student knows that he/she will miss a laboratory, it is his/her responsibility to make the necessary arrangements with the instructor to substitute another laboratory that week.

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Because ample opportunity is given to the students to substitute labs, only one unexcused absence will be allowed per semester without penalty. When a student misses two labs unexcused then he/she will be dropped one letter grade. If three classes are missed by a student then he/she will automatically be given a grade of an (F) for the semester.

**Required Materials:** Students are required to obtain and bring the following materials to lab:

1. Safety lab coat
2. Safety goggles or glasses
3. Composition notebook
4. Closed toe shoes

\*A USM email address (or other active email address) is required for course communications between instructor and students.

Should a student not come prepared with the necessary materials for lab, he/ she cannot participate in the lab and will be given a “0” for that lab.

**Lab Notebooks:** Students are required to maintain a lab notebook documenting the proceedings of each lab. The notebooks should describe the purpose, materials, methods, findings, and discussion of each lab exercise. The contents of the notebook will be further discussed during the first week’s laboratory meeting. Notebooks will be turned in to the instructor following the mid-term exam for evaluation, and then again after the final exam for grading. Any questions about the notebook should be directed to the instructor prior to turning it in for grading.

**Quizzes:** A quiz will be given each week at the beginning of the laboratory period. The quizzes will be based on the material covered in the previous lab. **NO MAKE-UP QUIZZES WILL BE GIVEN UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.** If the student knows that he/she will miss a quiz, it is his/her responsibility to make the necessary arrangements with the instructor to meet with another laboratory that week.

**Writing Assignments:** Topics for two papers will be assigned by the instructor as the semester proceeds. A handout detailing the requirements for the papers will be given to each student when the topics have been decided upon.

**Exams:** Two exams will be given during the semester; one mid-term exam and one final exam. The exams will be cumulative and are based on all the material covered in lab up until each exam. **NO MAKE-UP EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.** If the student knows that he/she will miss an exam, it is his/her responsibility to make the necessary arrangements with the instructor to meet with another laboratory that week.

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**Grading:** Points will be designated throughout the semester in the following manner.

- Laboratory Attendance/Participation (10 Labs @ 2 pts each = 20pts)
- Laboratory Notebook (10 Labs @ 10 pts each = 100 pts) (Submit for grading at Final Exam)
- Papers (2 Papers @ 40 pts each = 80 pts)
- Quizzes (10 Labs @ 10 pts each = 100 pts)
- Midterm Exam (50 pts)
- Final Exam (50 pts)

Grading Scale: There will be a total of 400 points possible.

A = 89.5-100%	(358-400 pts)
B = 79.5-89.4%	(318-357 pts)
C = 69.5-79.4%	(278-317 pts)
D = 59.5-69.4%	(238-277 pts)
F = Below 59.5%	(below 277 pts)

**Academic Misconduct:** Students guilty of academic misconduct, either directly or indirectly through participation or assistance, are immediately responsible to the instructor of the class. Academic misconduct includes both plagiarism and cheating, which are defined as follows: **Plagiarism**—The adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, statements, images, or works of another person as one’s own without proper acknowledgement; **Cheating**—Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours. The instructor has the authority to assign an F or zero for the exercise or examination, or to assign an F in the course. You are expected to understand this policy, which is available in the University Student Handbook at the following address: <http://www.usm.edu/union/downloads/handbook0809.pdf> Plagiarism and/or cheating will not be tolerated. There will be no excuse for lack of familiarity of the Student Code of Conduct in the Student Handbook.

**ADA:** If a student has a disability that qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and requires accommodations, please let the instructor know. Students should also contact the Office for Disability Accommodations (ODA) for information on appropriate policies and procedures. Disabilities covered by ADA may include learning, psychiatric, physical disabilities, or chronic health disorders. Students can contact ODA if they are not certain whether a medical condition/disability qualifies.

Address (Hattiesburg Campus):

The University of Southern Mississippi  
Office for Disability Accommodations  
118 College Drive # 8586  
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001  
Telephone: (601) 266-5024  
Fax: (601) 266-6035

Individuals with hearing impairments can contact ODA using the *Mississippi Relay Service* at 1-800-582-2233 (TTY) or email Suzy Hebert at [Suzanne.Hebert@usm.edu](mailto:Suzanne.Hebert@usm.edu).

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## Course Schedule

*The instructor retains the privilege to alter or change the schedule as needed.*

Week 1	Aug. 23	Exercise 1: Introduction to Laboratory Safety
Week 2*	Aug. 30	Exercise 2: Crime Scene Documentation
Week 3	Sept. 6	<b>No Class: Labor Day Holiday</b>
Week 4	Sept. 13	Exercise 3: Hair & Fiber Analysis
Week 5	Sept. 20	Exercise 4: Impression Evidence & Tool Marks
Week 6**	Sept. 27	Exercise 5: Fingerprints
Week 7	Oct. 4	<b>Mid-Term Exam &amp; Notebook Evaluation</b>
Week 8	Oct. 11	<b>No Class: Fall Break</b>
Week 9	Oct. 18	Exercise 6: Soil Analysis
Week 10	Oct. 25	Exercise 7: Questioned Documents (Handwriting/Ink Analysis)
Week 11	Nov. 1	Exercise 8: Glass Reconstruction
Week 12	Nov. 8	Exercise 9: Forensic Chemistry (Toxicology, Drug ID, Arson)
Week 13	Nov. 15	Exercise 10: DNA Analysis & Blood Spatter/Pattern Analysis
Week 14	Nov. 22	<b>No Class: Thanksgiving Holidays</b>
Week 15	Nov. 29	<b>Final Exam &amp; Lab Notebooks Final Submission</b>

\*Drop Date (and receive 100% refund) is August 31

\*\*Drop Date (without academic penalty) is September 29