Arson and Explosives (FSC 442) - Fall 2017

Instructor: Dean Bertram  
118 College Drive #5127  
Hattiesburg, MS 39406  
Email: Dean.Bertram@usm.edu  
Tel: 601-266-5124  
Office Hours: MW: 9:30am-12:30pm; 1pm-2pm  
TuTh: 12pm-1pm  
Class Period: Monday and Wednesday: 2:00pm – 3:15pm  
Required Text: Kirk’s Fire Investigation, 6th ed.: John D. DeHaan, PhD

Important deadline dates:  
Aug. 16: Classes begin. Add/drop and late registration begins.  
Aug. 23: Last day to drop full semester classes without academic/financial penalty. After this date (August 24 – October 27), only approved drops will result in grade of W.  
Sept. 4: Labor Day holiday.  
Oct. 19-20: Fall Break.  
Oct. 27: Last day to withdraw from the University and receive a grade of W. (After this date, students will earn a letter grade for all enrolled courses).  
Nov. 22-24: Thanksgiving holidays.  
Dec. 4-7: Final exams.

Description:  
Three credit hours. Arson and Explosives is a course designed to demonstrate to students the behavior of fire and to familiarize students with the forensic methodologies used for investigations of fires. Special attention will concentrate on processing the entire fire scene. No prerequisite courses are required although some knowledge of basic science would be helpful.

Overview:  
This course will generally follow the materials as presented in the textbook (Kirk’s Fire Investigation). The lectures will follow readings from the textbook in differing orders than appear in table of contents. Students will be given specific chapters to read based on the lecture topics. Supplemental materials will be added as needed, particularly in regard to explosives. Outside speakers may be incorporated throughout the semester. Groups of two (2) undergraduates will be responsible to present a 10-minute presentation on a specific topic of interest in the field of Arson and Explosive investigation. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to classify/recognize types of fires and explosive materials. Students will also be able to recognize evidence and methods used to investigate fires and understand whether the tools used are sufficient to withstand judicial scrutiny.

Classroom Demeanor Policy:  
Students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior during class sessions. The barometer for assessing unprofessional behavior is the reasonable anticipation test, defined as anything for which an average student should anticipate as unprofessional. Violation of this policy can result in removal from the class until the department head requests readmission. Examples of such intolerable behavior include disrespect (toward any class member), gossip, and excessive and unnecessary cell phone usage.

Exams and Quizzes:  
There will be two exams given during the semester. The exams will account for 60% of your final grade (30% each). There will be a minimum of six quizzes given during the semester that will account for 30% of your final grade, with the lowest quiz score being dropped. Presentation will be 10%.
Make-up exams are discouraged. However, if a student has a legitimate excuse for missing an exam then a time to take the exam will be arranged at the instructor’s convenience. **NO** opportunity to make up a quiz will be given.

**Grading Scale**

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90+</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 60</td>
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Exam I – October 4th  
Exam II – November 29th  
Final Exam – December 6th @ 1:30pm

**Academic Integrity Syllabus Statement**

All students at the University of Southern Mississippi are expected to demonstrate the highest levels of academic integrity in all that they do. Forms of academic dishonesty include (but are not limited to):

1. Cheating (including copying from others’ work)  
2. Plagiarism (representing another person’s words or ideas as your own; failure to properly cite the source of your information, argument, or concepts)  
3. Falsification of documents  
4. Disclosure of test or other assignment content to another student  
5. Submission of the same paper or other assignment to more than one class without the explicit approval of all faculty members’ involved  
6. Unauthorized academic collaboration with others  
7. Conspiracy to engage in academic misconduct

Engaging in any of these behaviors or supporting others who do so will result in academic penalties and/or other sanctions. If a faculty member determines that a student has violated our Academic Integrity Policy, sanctions ranging from resubmission of work to course failure may occur, including the possibility of receiving a grade of “XF” for the course, which will be on the student’s transcript with the notation “Failure due to academic misconduct.” For more details, please see the University’s Academic Integrity Policy. Note that repeated acts of academic misconduct will lead to expulsion from the University.

**ADA Syllabus Statement**

If a student has a disability that qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and requires accommodations, he/she should 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:  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
Office for Disability Accommodations  
118 College Drive # 8586  
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Voice Telephone: 601.266.5024 or 228.214.3232  
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.