

Criminal Investigations

CJ - 1340 005

Course Description

This course teaches students different investigative techniques available to criminal investigators, such as surveillance, undercover operations, interviewing, and wiretapping. Students learn legal parameters of criminal investigations and develop strategies to investigate mock scenarios. It is recommended students complete CJ 1010 prior to taking this course.

Semester(s): All

Course Prerequisites

There are NO required prerequisites for this course. However, CJ 1010 is a recommended prerequisite.

Additional Information

- Semester: Fall 2025
- This is a three-credit course.
- First Day of Class: Tuesday, August 26, 2025
- Last Day of Class: Thursday, December 11, 2025
- Class Location: Online
- Class Dates and Times: Online (Asynchronous)
- Administrative Drop: Students that do not attend class by Tuesday, September 2, 2025 may be administratively dropped from this course.

- Dispute Resolution: I ask that you try to resolve any disputes that may arise (such as disputing a grade) with me before filing a complaint with the Associate Dean (Katerina Salina). Usually, an informal conversation can resolve any misunderstanding.

Course Student Learning Outcomes

- Identify legal parameters of investigative techniques.
- Compare and contrast advantages and disadvantages of investigative techniques.
- Develop investigative strategies to effectively investigate mock scenarios.
- Communicate investigative findings of mock scenarios in a written document (such as an affidavit, final investigative report, or case summary).

College Wide Student Learning Outcomes

- Acquire substantive knowledge
- Communicate effectively
- Think critically & creatively

Required Text or Materials

Title: This course uses free, online learning material. The material is available throughout the course (in each module).

For more information on textbook accessibility, contact Accessibility & Disability Services at ads@slcc.edu.

Brief Description of Assignments/Exams

Assignments are weighed by group:

- Not all points on assignments have equal weight toward your final grade. The weight of an assignment is relative to the category in which the assignment resides.

Group	Weight
Visit to a Court	10%
Criminal Complaint Affidavit	10%
Search Warrant Affidavit	10%
Discussion	25%
Quizzes	25%
Progress Checks	20%
Total	100%

Grading Notes:

- I drop your lowest quiz score, lowest discussion score, and lowest progress check score.
- You can review the instructions to any assignment by clicking on the Assignments tab and then clicking on a specific assignment. More details can be found there. For example, you can resubmit your affidavit assignments, after reviewing my feedback, to earn a higher grade.

Court Visit

This course requires a visit to a court, which will require you to set aside some time during normal business hours on a non-holiday. The court visit constitutes a significant portion of your overall grade in this course. It is imperative that you start planning for this visit early in the semester in order to help deconflict any work, family, or other obligations that many of you have. Virtual (Zoom) court visits are not approved for this assignment.

Late Work Policy

Each assignment has a due date. That date is designed to keep you on an appropriate pace. However, if you get behind, I will still accept work without the loss of points, until Monday, December 15, 2025 (11:59 pm local time).

Grading Scale

*As per SLCC's Criminal Justice Department Policy, 94% is required to earn an A. This grading scale may differ from other courses at SLCC.

A 94-100	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66
A- 90-93	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62
B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	E Less than 60

*Grade of E is a failing grade.

Engagement Plan

Engagement Plan

- I will log into the course every business day.
- Please email me your questions through Canvas Inbox.
- I will respond to emails within one business day.
- I typically do not respond to emails or grade work on weekends and holidays.
- If you would like to set up a Zoom meeting, let me know. I am available every business day.
- I will grade your work within three business days.
- I will always leave a comment to your discussion board post in the Assignment Comments section.
- I will engage with you through weekly Canvas announcements.

- I will post comments in the Assignment Comments section of your affidavit assignments.
- You should log into this course at least twice per week to ensure that you are staying up to date with the learning material and assignments.
- There will be a required discussion board for each Chapter that you read.
- When you upload a file as your assignment submission, Canvas allows me to post comments directly onto the file (electronically). If I leave a comment for you in the Assignment Comments section to view my feedback on your document, you can click on "View Feedback" and review specific comments that I have left directly on your submitted document.

We Are A Team

It is imperative for everyone to feel a sense of belonging in this class. SLCC is unique in its student body. In any given class, you may find a mix of recent high school graduates, current high school students (concurrent enrollment), parents, military veterans, returning professionals, recently incarcerated, students with enormous out-of-school responsibilities, disabled students, and more. The student body in this class will likely contain a broad mix of different ages, race/ethnicities, marital statuses, economic statuses, etc. Everyone brings a unique perspective to class. Use this diversity to your advantage to help understand how others may have a different perspective than you.

Class discussions can fuel incredible cognitive growth, particularly when you challenge and defend each others' viewpoints based on their merits. I encourage class debate. It is imperative that we treat each other with empathy and respect. I expect you debate each other in a respectful manner, void of personal attacks or overly emotional responses to sensitive issues. This will maximize the value of our discussions of course content and help ensure that everyone feels a sense of belonging in this class.

Growth Mindset

Some students think that if they were unsuccessful in learning something in the past, they will be unsuccessful in any attempt to relearn that in the future. This type of thinking is associated with a fixed mindset. My goal is to break everyone out of that mindset and

help everyone develop a growth mindset. With a growth mindset, you realize that success can be achieved in virtually any endeavor if you put in enough quality time to learn it.

Feel free to ask me to share some of my own examples of things that I struggled to learn at one point in life, but later, with more focus and commitment, were able to successfully achieve.

Course Content Advisory

This course contains mock investigations into violent crimes.

There is a sexual assaults module in this course that teaches some of the nuanced aspects of sexual assault investigations.

There are some graphic images in this course.

How to Navigate to Canvas

Online Tutoring

Students at SLCC have access to online tutoring through Canvas. From your Canvas course click Online Tutoring in the course navigation and follow the steps to set up an appointment. If this is your first time using the Online Tutoring we recommend you click "Take a Tour" to familiarize yourself with the service.

Note that students only receive 480 minutes of tutoring time each semester. After that we encourage you to use the resources found through this link:

<https://www.slcc.edu/tutoring/index.aspx>

If you have any additional questions reach out to elarningsupport@slcc.edu.

Institutional Policies

As members of our academic community, we would like to invite you to review the Institutional Syllabus which covers important policies and procedures. This document

contains important links for students on the code of student rights and responsibilities, academic integrity, and grading policies, Title IX and other important acknowledgements. By familiarizing yourself with this information, you can help us create a safe and respectful environment for everyone.

For more information, navigate to the Institutional Policies tab on the [Institutional Syllabus](#) page.

Learning Support and Tutoring Services

We are pleased to offer a range of tutoring and learning support services to help you achieve your academic goals. Whether you need assistance with a specific subject or want to improve your study skills, you have many options for tutoring or other support.

To learn more about the services we offer and how to access them, visit the [Institutional Syllabus](#) page under the Tutoring and Learning Support tab. We encourage you to take advantage of these resources to help you succeed in your studies. If you have any questions or would like to schedule a tutoring session, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We are here to support you in any way we can.

Advising and Counseling Support Services

At our institution, we are committed to supporting your academic and personal growth. That's why we offer a range of advising and counseling services to help you navigate the challenges of college life. To learn more about the resources available to you and how to access them, visit the [Institutional Syllabus](#) page under the Advising and Counseling Support Services tab. Our advising team and the support centers across campus are here to support you in achieving your goals and overcoming any obstacles you may face.

Student Academic Calendar

As students you should be aware of all important dates in the semester, such as the day that courses begin and end, as well as the drop date and the last day to withdraw. To learn more about those dates, navigate to the Student Academic Calendar below:

[SLCC Student Academic Calendar](#)

Keys for Success (how to succeed in the course)

Here is some advice from former students:

- "Stay on track and don't get scared by the Affidavits!"
- "Not only is the course incredible interesting and helpful, I also found it entertaining."
- "Success in life comes when you simply refuse to give up, with goals so strong that obstacles failure, and loss only act as motivation. Believe in yourself, you can do it."
- "Even though there are no harsh deadlines it is good to stay on track with what is due that week so you don't fall too far behind."
- "I think this course is great! It is very straight forward and the professor is always willing to help. It makes it easy if you plan on taking other classes."
- "Pace yourself. Having flexibility does help to be able to work on other classes assignments."
- "Take your time with the course. You don't have to rush through the course to get it done. And the schedule is flexible."

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The work that you submit must be created by you. You cannot use AI to autogenerate your assignments for you.

However, you can use AI to help plan and organize your work. You should always evaluate the accuracy of the AI-generated products that you use. AI can produce misleading and incorrect information at times.

Assignment Schedule

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
	Interactive Learning: Choose Your Own Investigative Steps (Stolen Rifle Investigation).	Assignment	0
	What Questions Do You Have? (optional).	Discussion	0
8/28/25	Course Orientation Survey	Quiz	5
8/28/25	Discussion: DNA Evidence	Discussion	10
8/28/25	Introduce Yourself	Discussion	5
8/28/25	Quiz: Crime Scene Processing	Quiz	12
9/4/25	Discussion: Interviewing	Discussion	10
9/4/25	Quiz: Interviewing	Quiz	10
9/11/25	Discussion: Report Writing	Discussion	10
9/11/25	Quiz: Writing Effective Reports	Quiz	10
9/18/25	Discussion: Confidential Informants	Discussion	10
9/18/25	Interactive Learning: Choose Your Own Investigative Steps (Mafia Investigation).	Discussion	10
9/18/25	Progress Check #1	Quiz	8

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
9/18/25	Quiz: Confidential Informants	Quiz	10
9/25/25	Discussion: Undercover Operations	Discussion	10
9/25/25	Interactive Learning: Choose Your Own Investigative Steps (Boston Marathon Bombing)	Discussion	10
9/25/25	Quiz: Undercover Operations	Quiz	8
10/2/25	Discussion: Wiretapping, Title III, and Electronic Evidence	Discussion	10
10/2/25	Quiz: Wiretapping, Title III, and Electronic Evidence	Quiz	8
10/9/25	Discussion: Fourth Amendment	Discussion	10
10/9/25	Interactive Learning: Choose Your Own Investigative Steps (Destruction of a Police Vehicle)	Discussion	10
10/9/25	Quiz: Fourth Amendment	Quiz	8
10/15/25	Discussion: Fifth and Sixth Amendments	Discussion	10

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
10/15/25	Interactive Learning: Choose Your Own Investigative Steps (Stolen Rifle).	Discussion	10
10/15/25	Progress Check #2	Quiz	8
10/15/25	Quiz: Fifth and Sixth Amendments	Quiz	8
10/23/25	Discussion: Preparing to Write an Affidavit (in Support of a Search Warrant).	Discussion	10
10/23/25	Quiz: Preparing to Write an Affidavit (in Support of a Search Warrant).	Quiz	8
10/30/25	Assignment: Writing an Affidavit (in Support of a Search Warrant).	Assignment	100
10/30/25	Interactive Learning: Choose Your Own Investigative Steps (Arson of a Police Vehicle).	Discussion	10
11/6/25	Discussion: Sexual Assault Investigations	Discussion	10
11/6/25	Quiz: Sexual Assault Investigations	Quiz	9

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
11/13/25	Discussion: Emerging Issues: Biometrically-Locked Devices & Lawful Access	Discussion	10
11/13/25	Interactive Learning: Choose Your Own Investigative Steps (Homicide).	Discussion	10
11/13/25	Progress Check #3	Quiz	13
11/13/25	Quiz: Emerging Issues: Biometrically-Locked Devices & Lawful Access	Quiz	6
11/20/25	Assignment: Writing an Affidavit (in Support of an Arrest Warrant).	Assignment	100
11/20/25	Interactive Learning: Choose Your Own Investigative Steps (Arson of a Church).	Discussion	10
11/25/25	Discussion: The Changing Nature of Crime and Criminal Investigations	Discussion	10
11/25/25	Quiz: The Changing Nature of Crime and Criminal Investigations	Quiz	10
12/4/25	Discussion: Ethics Related to Criminal Investigations	Discussion	10

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
12/4/25	Quiz: Ethics Related to Criminal Investigations	Quiz	7
12/4/25	Visit to a Court	Assignment	100
12/11/25	Course Evaluation	Quiz	5
12/11/25	Discussion: Courtroom Testimony	Discussion	10
12/11/25	End of Course Survey	Quiz	4
12/11/25	Extra Credit	Assignment	100
12/11/25	Final Progress Check	Quiz	16
12/11/25	Quiz: Courtroom Testimony	Quiz	7