



CRIM 3030 FDE – SPECIAL TOPICS: FORENSIC SCIENCE AND JUSTICE - FALL 2021

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Carolan Wood

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VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS: weekly via Zoom - to be determined by students – please complete Doodle poll (link provided on the course website)

D2L COURSE LINK: <https://mycourselink.lakeheadu.ca/d2l/home/84829>

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course will critically examine the position of forensic science within the Canadian legal system and the legal context of forensic evidence from key disciplines of forensic science. We will explore issues of scientific integrity, ethical dilemmas faced by the forensic scientist and the influence of cognitive bias in forensic science research. Cases involving investigative errors and wrongful conviction are employed to illustrate the rhetoric *versus* reality.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Explain the legal and scientific principles behind commonly used forensic evidence types and how this evidence should be presented and handled in court
- Apply the FILAC method of legal research to a case that addresses the admissibility of expert evidence and the role of the expert witness in a Canadian context
- Describe the role of the forensic expert witness, their contribution to criminal investigation, and the requirements to qualify as a forensic expert witness
- Identify the limits of science, the proficiency of the forensic scientist and the basis of the formation of an expert opinion
- Construct an argument based in logic through the use of peer-reviewed scientific evidence and an evaluation of evidence using critical thinking

COURSE MATERIALS: under 'Content' you will see 'CRIM 3030 Course materials' where you will find the Reading list /Course links document (see also the weekly course schedule). All course materials are available through the Lakehead library or are provided as a pdf.

LEARNING ASSESSMENTS:

	DUE	%
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms exercise	Sept 30	5%
Case study assignment	Oct 21	15%
Midterm exam	Oct 28	25%
Forensic ethical debate	Nov 18	10%
Admissibility assignment	Dec 2	20%
Final exam during exam period	Dec 9-19	25%

Nov 5, 2021 is the final day to withdraw from this course. You will have 45% of your final grade completed and returned to you by this date.

CRIM 3030 FDE ST: FORENSIC SCIENCE & JUSTICE - FALL SCHEDULE 2021		
DAY	TOPIC	READINGS
Sept 9 TH	Course Introduction	Read syllabus thoroughly Passalacqua <i>et al.</i> 2019
Sept 16 TH	Canadian Legal system Canadian Charter of Rights & Freedoms	Guide to the Canadian Charter of Rights & Freedoms
Sept 23 TH	The legal research process and the FILAC method	Principles of Legal Research uOttawa
Sept 30 TH	CANADIAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS & FREEDOMS EXERCISE DUE (5%) The Law of Evidence: Legal standards & Procedures Crime scene investigation: Fingerprints, Bloodstain pattern analysis, Firearms & Ballistics, Fire Investigation	Chlistovsky 2016 pp. 298-323 Hendrikse 2016 pp. 247-268 Knaap 2016 pp. 213-233 Laternus 2016 pp. 133-148
Oct 7 TH	Principles of Admissibility of Evidence	Schneider 2016 Almada <i>et al.</i> 2021
Oct 14 TH	FALL STUDY WEEK – no classes	
Oct 21 TH	CASE STUDY ASSIGNMENT DUE (15%) Expert witness testimony and Presentation strategies Roles of the Courtroom players	Pakosh 2016 (CH 1 & 2) Rondinelli 2016
Oct 28 TH	ONLINE MIDTERM EXAM (25%)	
Nov 4 TH	Forensic Process & Scientific Method Statistics and Probability in the Courtroom	Christensen <i>et al.</i> 2014 Cooper & Meterko 2019 Weir 2016 CH 22 & pp. 825-836
Nov 11 TH	Forensic Biology / DNA Analysis Forensic Toxicology	Hageman 2016 pp. 406-435 Innocence Canada Wigmore & Watterson 2016 pp. 759-772
Nov 18 TH	FORENSIC ETHICAL DEBATE DUE (10%) Forensic Pathology Forensic Anthropology Forensic Entomology Bite mark Identification Analysis	Forensic Pathologists of the Provincial Forensic Pathology Unit Toronto 2016 pp. 651-668 Rogers 2016 pp. 360-380 Anderson & VanLaerhoven 2016 pp. 516-526 Sweet 2016 pp. 586-625
Nov 25 TH	Memory in the Criminal Courts	Moore <i>et al.</i> 2016
Dec 2 TH	ADMISSIBILITY ASSIGNMENT DUE (20%) Evidence, Error & Justice: learning from others mistakes Forensic Hair Comparison	Harland-Logan 2016 pp. 44-75 & 90-112 Bonventre 2020
Dec 9-19	ONLINE FINAL EXAM (25%)	

IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION

COPYRIGHT POLICY: ALL content hosted on the Desire2Learn CRIM 3030 website and provided in class is protected by Canadian copyright laws. Such content is either copyright to Lakehead University, all rights reserved, copyright of the course instructor, or as otherwise stated in the particular materials. Duplication (**for example: taking screen captures, recording lectures using voice recorders, digital photography and/or video recorders etc.**), **redistribution (i.e. sharing content), or reselling of this content is strictly prohibited.**

Students are bound by these terms and conditions:

<https://www.lakeheadu.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/293/docs/Student-Conduct/Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20-%20Non-Academic.pdf>

E-MAIL POLICY: Maintaining professionalism is important in forensic science so be sure to treat email as professional correspondence - use a formal tone and format (e.g. Hello Dr. Wood). Keep your emails brief, and use virtual office hours for longer discussions. **Please email me directly at cwood3@lakeheadu.ca – DO NOT use the email through D2L. Students must use their Lakehead email address AND the course identifier ‘CRIM 3030 FDE’ MUST appear FIRST in the subject line** to ensure that their messages are delivered and not filtered out as spam. **I will do my best to reply to email within 48 weekday hours**, but at busy times there may be a bit of a delay. If you do not get a reply within that time frame – ensure you have met the above criteria and resend. Please do come talk with me during virtual office hours!

STATEMENT ON LEARNING: It is the student’s responsibility to check the course website regularly and ensure they are receiving notifications of D2L messages /announcements. To be successful in a 12-week course you can expect to devote **about 9 hours** each week engaging with the course content (e.g. watching lectures and taking notes, reading, and completing the learning assessments). Questions are strongly encouraged. Be aware that you cannot redo a learning assessment, nor are there make-up or extra credit assignments, so try to come to office hours for feedback well ahead of the deadline. Lectures /outlines are released on the day stipulated in the course schedule. Lecture is a major component of assessments, so be sure to give the lectures your full attention and take detailed notes. A slide outline will be posted for most lectures, but be aware that the outline will not include all the information provided during lecture. An outline is meant as a guide. You may have a note taking strategy that works for you, but know that the outline is meant to be printed out and filled in by hand, or completed on a tablet during lecture. The pace of the lecture is based on this practice. Taking notes by hand is a useful skill to develop and numerous studies have shown it helps to improve information retention and comprehension.

Know I am here to help you with personal feedback during virtual office hours to keep you on track throughout the course. I will hold drop-in open student hours weekly using Zoom on a day and time to be determined by students – please complete the posted Doodle poll to state your preference. To access virtual student hours, register for a Lakehead Zoom account using your Lakehead email and login through the Lakehead’s Zoom Web Portal Login. You must use the first and last name that you are registered under in the course to gain entry. Be aware that only authenticated users can join. Virtual student hours will be on an individual basis, unless you request otherwise. Students will wait in the Zoom waiting room until their turn arrives to be admitted. A Zoom link will be posted on the course website to access individual student hours once we have decided on a day and time.

STUDENT HEALTH & WELLNESS: As a university student, you may sometimes experience mental health concerns or stressful events that interfere with your academic performance and negatively impact your daily activities. All of us can benefit from support during times of struggle. If you or anyone you know experiences academic stress, difficult life events or feelings of anxiety or

depression, Student Health and Wellness is here to help. Their services are free for Lakehead Students and appointments are available. You can learn more about confidential mental health services available on and off campus at lakeheadu.ca/shw. Remember that getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do- for yourself, for those you care about, and for those who care about you. Asking for support sooner rather than later is almost always helpful.

LEARNING ASSESSMENTS:

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms exercise (5%): instructions will be provided.

Case Study (15%) and Admissibility assignment (20%): Instructions, a grading scheme and citation guidelines will be provided on D2L.

Online Midterm (25%) and Final Exam (25%): exams are not cumulative - the midterm will cover the first half of the course, and the final exam the second half. The exam will be available for completion from 12:01 am to 11:59 pm on the day stipulated in the course schedule. The date of the final exam is determined by the registrar's office. You will have a standard amount of time to complete both exams online (e.g. 120 minutes). Exams will include short answer, multiple-choice and true/false questions based on all course materials. Exam answers will not be released, but I am happy to go through your test with you during office after the exam periods have ended. See exam info at - <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/studentcentral/exams-grades>

Forensic ethical debate (10%): Students will assess and debate ethical issues in forensic science and propose evidence-based solutions. Further instruction will be provided.

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION POLICY: All learning assessments must be submitted electronically via D2L before the due date. **Emailed assignments are NOT accepted.** Be sure to follow the submission requirements set out in the assignment instructions. **Late learning assessments are not accepted in this course, but extenuating circumstances are always considered.** If you miss work, follow the procedure found in the 'Missed Work Policy' below. **It is the student's responsibility to ensure all work is successfully submitted well ahead of the deadline.** Be sure to give yourself plenty of time to upload to D2L. **ASSIGNMENTS WITHOUT BOTH IN-TEXT CITATIONS AND A CORRESPONDING LIST OF REFERENCES WILL NOT BE GRADED.**

MISSED WORK POLICY: If you are ill (have a death in the family, or other issue beyond your control) and miss an assignment deadline or test, **you MUST EMAIL THE PROFESSOR WITHIN 72 HOURS OF THE DUE DATE/TIME OF THE MISSED LEARNING ASSESSMENT** to request a make-up opportunity. **Late requests cannot be considered.** Requests for extensions will be granted on the basis of legitimate medical or compassionate grounds. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, be aware that Lakehead University is temporarily suspending the need for a student to provide a medical note or Certificate of Illness or Incapacitation. In situations where illness is not the issue, official supporting documentation (e.g. accident /police report etc.) must be sent to the professor via email, along with your email request for a make up **within 72 hours of the deadline.** Documents must be scanned in high-resolution colour, or a high-quality undistorted photo of the document must be provided. If your request is granted, be prepared for the makeup test/or to submit the assignment at any time. There will be no opportunity to defer a makeup test or a renegotiated assignment deadline.

POLICY ON ASSIGNMENT REAPPRAISAL: Please come speak to me during virtual office hours where I can provide detailed feedback and we can go over your work together. Requests for "remarks" must be submitted in writing **within 1 week** of the date the graded assignments/tests were made available for students to view. To request a remark, submit a concise, organized written request via email providing tangible evidence (note that opinion is not evidence) as to why your assignment should receive a different grade. Any work remarked by the instructor will involve

the entire assignment, not simply the questions or portion you believe were scored improperly, therefore, it is possible that your original mark may go down, rather than up or stay the same. The revised mark stands. Please note that marks are not awarded for effort, but for the quality of the final product.

FINAL GRADES: Final grades will be calculated according to the weights listed in the university's grading scheme. Interim grades can be found in the D2L course website under the Grades tool.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Plagiarism, cheating and academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Being caught engaging in any such activities will result in disciplinary action either within the course or at the university level. See University Regulations and code of student behaviour and disciplinary procedures:

<http://navigator.lakeheadu.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid=viewcatalog&catalogid=21&chapterid=3506&loaduseredits=False>. The following rules shall govern the treatment of students who have been found guilty of attempting to obtain academic credit dishonestly:

- (a) The minimum penalty for a student found guilty of plagiarism, or of cheating on any part of a course will be a zero for the work concerned.
- (b) A student found guilty of cheating on a formal examination or a test, or of serious or repeated plagiarism, or of unofficially obtaining a copy of an examination paper before the examination is scheduled to be written, will receive zero for the course and may be expelled from the University.

Students disciplined under the Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures may appeal their case through the Judicial Panel.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION: If you have a disability that requires accommodations, I strongly encourage you to make use of those accommodations. I am here to assist you, but need your help in ensuring I accommodate you properly. Lakehead is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that students with disabilities can fully access programs, courses, services, and activities. Student Accessibility Services (SAS) coordinate services and facilitates reasonable academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Additional information is available at: Student Accessibility Services: <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/sas>

LAKEHEAD RESOURCES: If you find yourself having difficulty with the course material or any other difficulties in your student life, do not hesitate to ask for help! Talk to me, or if it is about an issue beyond this class, please contact your academic advisors, or get help from any number of other support services on campus, including:

The Student Success Centre has many programs and support services in place to help you achieve your academic and personal goals while studying at Lakehead University. The Student success centre: <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/students/academic-success/student-success-centre> provides academic support through tutoring services, career exploration, co-operative opportunities and leadership development.

The Lakehead Library provides access to resources, study rooms, and research support online via chat, and in person. Go to <https://library.lakeheadu.ca/>

Student Life and Services offers health and wellness resources both on and off campus, as well as opportunities for involvement in health and wellness activities. More info Student services <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-services/or>

Office of Human Rights and Equity. You have the right to an education that is free from any form of discrimination. A wide variety of resources are available here Office of Human Rights and Equity: <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/human-rights-and-equity/resources>