

ENF432 Introduction to Death Investigations

(3 credit hours)

Course Syllabus

Course Description

This course examines the many facets of properly investigating death and addresses the investigator's role in the process. Topics include first responder responsibilities, autopsy and laboratory capabilities, crime scene preservation, common mistakes made in death investigations, legal considerations, and exploration of the various methods of death including homicide, suicide, accidental, natural, and undetermined. Conceptualizing and applying the investigative process to the uniqueness of death investigations is a central theme of this course.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of death crime scene responsibilities.
2. Distinguish the various methods of death.
3. Identify the fundamentals of body evaluation and examination.
4. Demonstrate mastery of the investigative process as it relates to death investigations.
5. Relate victimology as an important aspect of death investigation.
6. Demonstrate understanding of autopsy and laboratory analysis as it relates to death investigations.

Required Textbook(s) and Resources

Bucholtz, Ann. (2015). *Death Investigations*. Anderson Publishing.

The title above is a digital copy of your textbook; this is included with your DragonACCESS fees for this course. Use the DragonACCESS tool in Moodle to view your book.

Ohio Revised Code Section 313-CORONER. (Note: the ORC is available at no charge online. Instructions are included in your Week 1 Assignments)

In addition, this course has an recommended addition textbook that may enhance your learning, but is not included in the DragonACCESS program. It is recommended, but not required you also obtain:

Morgan, D., Stopak, J. (2018). *Medicolegal Death Investigation: A Step-by-Step Field Guide*. Independent Publishers Group.

Note: this course may contain additional resources for specific activities. Be sure to read the instructions carefully for individual assignments or activities for those requirements.

For access to databases, research help, and writing tips visit the [Tiffin University Library](#). You might consider registering for one of the library's many webinars on library research, source evaluation, copyright, and other topics, at the [Library Events - Upcoming Events](#) web page. If you register but cannot attend a live session, the library will email you a link to the session recording after the event. For further assistance email a librarian, at: library@tiffin.edu.

Time Commitment

Effective time management is possibly the single most critical element to your academic success. To do well in this online class you should plan your time wisely to maximize your learning through the completion of readings, discussions, and assignments. Because of our accelerated, seven-week term, TU online courses are designed with the expectation that you dedicate a little over **six (6)** hours per credit hour to course activities and preparation **each week**. For example, for successful completion of a three-credit, seven-week online course you should reserve roughly **twenty (20) hours per week**.

To help plan your time and keep on track toward successful course completion, note the distinctive rhythm of assignment due dates:

1. All times assume Eastern Time (GMT-4).
2. Weeks begin at 12:00 a.m. ET on Monday and end at 11:55 p.m. ET on Sunday.
3. Unless otherwise noted, initial assignments or discussion posts are due by **11:55 p.m. ET on Wednesdays**.
4. Additional assignments or follow-up discussion posts are due by **11:55 p.m. ET on Saturdays, and**
5. Major assignments and reflections are typically due by **11:55 p.m. ET on Sundays**.

Learning Activities

Grading for this course consists of generally two discussions per week. As exceptions, Week 7 includes a third discussion (a culminating reflection), and weeks 1 and 3 require only one. Written assignments are due in weeks 1, 2, 3 and 7. Every week you can expect a quiz based on the textbooks.

Grading and Points Distribution

The chart below identifies the individual contributions from each type of activity, per week.

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Total
Discussions Activity 1.1 (n/a) Activity 1.2 (30)	Discussions Activity 2.1 (30) Activity 2.2 (30)	Discussion Activity 3.1 (30)	Discussions Activity 4.1 (30) Activity 4.2 (30)	Discussions Activity 5.1 (30) Activity 5.2 (30)	Discussions Activity 6.1 (30) Activity 6.2 (30)	Discussions Activity 7.1 (30) Activity 7.2 (30)	360
Assignments Activity 1.3 (100)	Assignments Activity 2.2 (100)	Assignments Activity 3.2 (100)	(n/a)	(n/a)	(n/a)	Assignments Final (Due Thurs) Activity 7.3 (160)	460
Quiz Activity 1.4 (30)	Quiz Activity 2.3 (30)	Quiz Activity 2.3 (30)	Quiz Activity 2.3 (30)	Quiz Activity 2.3 (30)	Quiz Activity 2.3 (30)	(n/a)	180
160	190	160	90	90	90	220	1000

Grading Scale

Grade	Percentage
A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	<60%

Please see the [Academic Bulletin](#) for grade appeal information.

Course Schedule and Weekly Checklist

Topic	Learning Activities (Due by 11:55 p.m. ET on day designated)
Start Here	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MON: Activity 1.1: Introduce Yourself! - Initial Post
Week 1: Introduction to Death Investigations - The History, Scene Investigations, Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WED: Activity 1.1: Introduce Yourself! - Secondary Posts ● WED: Activity 1.2: Sharing Your Experience - Initial Post ● SAT: Activity 1.2: Sharing Your Experience - Secondary Posts ● SUN: Activity 1.3: Medical Examiner Office ● SUN: Activity 1.4: Week 1 Quiz
Week 2: Autopsy Procedure and Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WED: Activity 2.1: Clinical vs. Forensic Autopsy - Initial Post ● WED: Activity 2.2: Positively Identifying a Decedent - Initial Post ● SAT: Activity 2.1: Clinical vs. Forensic Autopsy - Secondary Posts ● SAT: Activity 2.2: Positively Identifying a Decedent - Secondary Posts ● SUN: Activity 2.3: Interpreting Autopsy Reports ● SUN: Activity 2.4: Week 2 Quiz
Week 3: Sudden Death in Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WED: Activity 3.1: Heart Disease - Initial Post ● SAT: Activity 3.1: Heart Disease - Secondary Posts ● SUN: Activity 3.2: Natural Deaths and Autopsies ● SUN: Activity 3.3: Week 3 Quiz
Week 4: Blunt Force Trauma and Gunshot Wounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WED: Activity 4.1: Blunt Force Trauma - Initial Post ● WED: Activity 4.2: Mass Shootings - Initial Post ● SAT: Activity 4.1: Blunt Force Trauma - Secondary Posts ● SAT: Activity 4.2: Mass Shootings - Secondary Posts ● SUN: Activity 4.3: Week 4 Quiz

<p>Week 5: Sharp Force Injuries and Asphyxia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WED: Activity 5.1: Sharp Force Trauma - Initial Post ● WED: Activity 5.2: Asphyxia - Initial Post ● SAT: Activity 5.1: Sharp Force Trauma - Secondary Posts ● SAT: Activity 5.2: Asphyxia - Secondary Posts ● SUN: Activity 5.3: Week 5 Quiz
<p>Week 6: Sudden Death in Children and Special Circumstances</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WED: Activity 6.1: Sudden Infant Death - Initial Post ● WED: Activity 6.2: Crematory - Identifying Remains - Initial Post ● SAT: Activity 6.1: Sudden Infant Death - Secondary Posts ● SAT: Activity 6.2: Crematory - Identifying Remains - Secondary Posts ● SUN: Activity 6.3: Week 6 Quiz
<p>Week 7: Case Studies and Final Paper</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WED: Activity 7.1: Case Study #1 - Initial Post ● WED: Activity 7.2: Case Study #2 - Initial Post ● THU: Activity 7.3: Final Paper ● SAT: Activity 7.1: Case Study #1 - Secondary Posts ● SAT: Activity 7.2: Case Study #2 - Secondary Posts

Tips for Success

Successful online learning requires a good deal of self-discipline and self-direction. As seekers of the truth, we should be willing to challenge and review one another's academic work in a spirit of respectful comradery and constructiveness. Your course is a place for you to stretch and grow as you benefit from the expertise, knowledge, experience and diverse perspectives of your instructor and peers. Constructive feedback will challenge you to stretch your own thinking, thereby expanding your knowledge, understanding and application.

To get the most out of your learning experience, you should actively engage (participate) in **ALL** course activities. Your Instructor Will Expect You to:

- Thoroughly review orientation materials (Start Here) within the first 48 hours of the term.
- Monitor your TU email account **daily** for important updates and announcements.

- Take ownership of your learning experience and act in a proactive, self-directed manner. That means:
 - Fully participate in all learning activities.
 - Complete assignments as described in rubrics or other instructions.
 - Submit all work on time and in the specified format (e.g. APA format for citations).
 - Utilize and incorporate instructor provided feedback to improve your work.
 - Ask questions so you can better understand course material or assignments.
 - Use the highest standards of intellectual honesty and integrity. For more information, see the TU Library guide: [Digital Literacy: Netiquette and Internet Safety](#).
 - Treat others respectfully and demonstrate "netiquette" (online politeness and respectfulness) at all times. TU celebrates cultural uniqueness and expects all students to be considerate and thoughtful throughout their learning experiences.

You Should Expect Your Instructors to:

In general, your instructors should advocate for your success as a learner and help guide you toward successful completion of the course activities and most importantly, attainment of the course learning outcomes. To accomplish this, your instructors should:

- Post an introductory announcement/email at the beginning of each week to provide updates and help you prepare for the week's activities.
- Maintain an active and engaged presence in all course activities and throughout the course.
- Respond to your emailed questions within 48 hours, if not sooner.
- Clearly communicate any absences or expected non-participation due to extenuating circumstances. For example, "I will be traveling to attend a funeral this week and may not be able to respond to questions or participate in forums for a couple of days."
- When grading your work, your instructors should:
 - clearly indicate their grading approach (what they like to see in submitted work as well as what types of errors they tend to penalize more harshly),
 - thoroughly review and evaluate your submissions in a timely manner (in less than 5 days for most assignments), and
 - provide constructive feedback that indicates the strengths and weaknesses of your work and provides suggestions on how you can improve your performance on future assignments.

Accommodations

The **Office for Disability Services** supports the institutional commitment to diversity by providing educational opportunities for qualified individuals with disabilities through accessible programs and services in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. If you need reasonable accommodations due to a documented disability, contact the Office for Equity, Access, & Opportunity 419.448.3021 or via email at disabilityservices@tiffin.edu.

Additional Resources & Support

For technical support, either email moodlesupport@tiffin.edu or call the 24/7 Technical Support Call Center at 855-664-1200.

If you need to consult an academic advisor refer to TU's [Meet the Team](#) page.

For information about TU's peer tutoring program see the Murphy Center's [Tutoring Policies and Procedures](#) page. Veterans and active military can seek assistance from TU's [Veteran and Military Services Web Page](#).

Comments or Concerns

TU's online programs are designed to be student *driven*: to empower you with a voice and stake in your learning. Our courses feature multiple and varied ways that you can share feedback, and we invite you to become an active voice and help drive our improvement efforts. In addition to providing in-course feedback, we encourage you to submit questions or comments directly to the online team at online@tiffin.edu.