



# Course Approval Form

For instructions see:  
<http://registrar.gmu.edu/facultystaff/catalog-revisions/course/>

### Action Requested:

Create new course       Inactivate existing course

Modify existing course (check all that apply)

Title       3 Credits       Repeat Status       Grade Type

Prereq/coreq       Schedule Type       Restrictions

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Course Level:

Undergraduate

Graduate

College/School:       Department:

Submitted by:       Ext:       Email:

Subject Code:       Number:       Effective Term:  Fall       Spring       Summer      Year:

(Do not list multiple codes or numbers. Each course proposal must have a separate form.)

Title: Current       **Fulfills Mason Core Req?** (undergrad only)

Banner (30 characters max w/ spaces)        Currently fulfills requirement

New        Submission in progress

Credits:  3 Fixed       Variable      or      to

Repeat Status:  Not Repeatable (NR)       Repeatable within degree (RD)       Repeatable within term (RT)      Maximum credits allowed:

Grade Mode:  Regular (A, B, C, etc.)       Satisfactory/No Credit       Special (A, B, C, etc. +IP)

Schedule Type:  Lecture (LEC)       Lab (LAB)       Recitation (RCT)       Internship (INT)

Independent Study (IND)       Seminar (SEM)       Studio (STU)

Prerequisite(s):       Corequisite(s):

Instructional Mode:  100% face-to-face       Hybrid: ≤ 50% electronically delivered       100% electronically delivered

Restrictions Enforced by System: Major, College, Degree, Program, etc. (include code)

Equivalencies: (check only as applicable)

YES, course is 100% equivalent to: \_\_\_\_\_

YES, course is being renumbered to/will replace the following: \_\_\_\_\_

### Catalog Copy for NEW Courses Only (Consult University Catalog for models)

<b>Description</b> (No more than 60 words, use verb phrases and present tense) Medical, scientific, sociological, and legal methodologies applied to sudden or unexpected deaths, homicides, suicides, accidental deaths, and trauma. Aspects of death scene analysis by a medicolegal death investigator, and autopsy procedures, unidentified remains, child death investigations, and mass disaster investigations.	<b>Notes</b> (List additional information for the course)
Indicate number of contact hours: Hours of Lecture or Seminar per week: <input type="text" value="3"/> Hours of Lab or Studio: <input type="text"/>	
When Offered: (check all that apply) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fall <input type="checkbox"/> Summer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spring	

### Approval Signatures

Department Approval \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_      College/School Approval \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

If this course includes subject matter currently dealt with by any other units, the originating department must circulate this proposal for review by those units and obtain the necessary signatures prior to submission. Failure to do so will delay action on this proposal.

Unit Name	Unit Approval Name	Unit Approver's Signature	Date

### For Graduate Courses Only

Graduate Council Member \_\_\_\_\_ Provost Office \_\_\_\_\_ Graduate Council Approval Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Course Proposal Submitted to the College of Science Curriculum Committee (COSCC)**

The form above is processed by the Office of the University Registrar. This second page is for the COSCC's reference. Please complete the applicable portions of this page to clearly communicate what the form above is requesting.

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### **FOR ALL COURSES** (required)

Course Number and Title: FRSC 590-000/ Medicolegal Death Investigation/Pathology

Date of Departmental Approval: 11/23/15

### **FOR INACTIVATED/REINSTATED COURSES** (required if inactivating/reinstating a course)

- Reason for Inactivating/Reinstating:

### **FOR MODIFIED COURSES** (required if modifying a course)

- Summary of the Modification:
- Text before Modification (title, repeat status, catalog description, etc.):
- Text after Modification (title, repeat status, catalog description, etc.):
- Reason for the Modification:

### **FOR NEW COURSES** (required if creating a new course)

- Reason for the New Course: Medicolegal Death Investigation/Pathology plays an important role in criminal and intelligence investigations. GMU Forensic Science Program graduate students are currently lacking instruction in this area and this course will provide valuable instruction/experience for GMU Forensic Science Program graduate students.
  - Relationship to Existing Programs: The Medicolegal Death Investigation/Pathology Course will be a core course requirement for the GMU Forensic Science Program graduate Crime Scene Investigation Concentration and will also be offered as an elective course for the three other GMU Forensic Science Program graduate concentrations.
  - Relationship to Existing Courses: : The Medicolegal Death Investigation/Pathology Course is a new course which significantly enhances the GMU Forensic Science Program graduate Crime Scene Investigation Concentration as a core course and offers an elective course choice for students enrolled in the three other GMU Forensic Science Program graduate concentrations.
  - Semester of Initial Offering: Fall 2016
  - Proposed Instructors: Professor Jocelyn Posthumus, M.D. - Adjunct Professor of Forensic Science
  - Insert Tentative Syllabus Below
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**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**

**Medicolegal Death Investigation/Pathology – FRSC 590-000**

**Fall 2016**

**Instructor:** Professor Posthumus, M.D. - Adjunct Professor of Forensic Science

**Office:** Exploratory Hall Suite 3400

**Email:** [fscience@gmu.edu](mailto:fscience@gmu.edu)

**Phone #:** 703-993-5071 (main desk)

**Text:** Medicolegal Investigation of Death 4<sup>th</sup> Edition; Spitz and Fisher

**Course Description:** This course will follow a lecture format interspersed with class demonstrations, group discussions, midterm exam, case study analysis & presentation, and a final exam. Only by combining knowledge of the principles and techniques of forensic science, with logic and common sense, will students gain comprehensive insight into the meaning and significance of medicolegal death investigation, and its role in criminal investigations. The primary goal of the course is to provide a basic working knowledge for the interpretation of medical facts and the circumstances surrounding unexplained or violent deaths and an understanding of how Forensic Pathology plays an important role in Crime Investigation.

**Student Responsibilities:** The lectures will cover the same topics as found in the assigned reading. It is expected that the student will read the assigned sections of the text prior to class so as to facilitate discussion and participation in the lecture and demonstrations. Students can expect homework assignments and unannounced quizzes throughout the semester; no make-up quizzes will be given, quizzes are graded as part of attendance/participation. Students are responsible for acquiring all lectures and handouts on Blackboard prior to attending class each week; the instructor will not bring copies of these documents to class. If you miss a class it is the students responsibility to ask a peer for missed notes; you may only contact your instructor if you have questions regarding the missed material.

**Pathology Case Study Presentation:** All students will pick one real case study in which the circumstances surrounding the death were unexplained or violent to examine and to use for the basis of their presentation.

This will result in an oral presentation of the case study in class highlighting the prominent points. PowerPoint presentations may be saved on a CD, thumb drive, and/or your email (presentation must be saved to at least two of these sources for backup purposes). A minimum of 8 references are required from credible resources i.e. journal articles, texts, newspapers, etc., websites may be used on a limited basis (Snap-TV is NOT a credible resource

**HOMEWORK:**

Case study selection deadline; all students will turn in a printed page containing the following:

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- ❖ student's name
  - ❖ name of case study (i.e. Jeffrey Dahmer Case)
  - ❖ what was the cause and manner of death
  - ❖ how did the pathology exam highly impact the outcome of the case
  - ❖ a list of a minimum of 4 references
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Please do not contact your instructor regarding possible case study topics until you have conducted preliminary research and can provide the above information. Each student will have an opportunity during this class time to verbally review their topic with the instructor in which at least 4 references must be presented during this time; please print out or photocopy articles, newspapers, court documents, and/or bring in books if possible.

Student presentations will take place over a two week period; however all students must turn in a printout of the PowerPoint presentation (thumbnails of slides is preferred) on the first week of the class presentations. Due to limited time each presentation will be strictly limited to 15 minutes each; deductions will be given for presentations that are under or over the 15 minute time limit.

A grade will be determined for the presentation by the following factors:

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- ❖ overview of case
  - ❖ description of cause and manner of death
  - ❖ description of pathology examination
  - ❖ explanation of how the autopsy impacted the case
  - ❖ organization and overall presentation score
  - ❖ overall presentation score
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**Grading:** Not only am I interested in your analytical development and how you apply critical thinking to the issues presented, I must also evaluate your intellectual efforts. To accomplish this, class participation, attendance, pop quizzes, homework, paper/presentation, a midterm exam, and a final exam will determine your grade in the course.

Specifically, your final grade will be calculated based upon the following formula:

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- ❖ Class Participation, Pop Quizzes, Homework, and Attendance- 10%
  - ❖ Presentation- 30 %
  - ❖ Midterm Exam- 30 %
  - ❖ Final Exam- 30 %
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**Grading Scale:**

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100	A+	89-87	B+	79-70	C
99-95	A	86-83	B	69 and below	F
94-90	A-	82-80	B-		

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Note: Additional reading assignments may be added throughout the semester.

Note: The schedule is subject to change, please listen for announcements during class for changes; if you are late/absent from class please ask a peer for any missed announcements.

**UNIVERSITY RESOURCES**

**GMU Honor Code:**

Standards of academic integrity as set forth by the University are strictly observed and rigorously enforced in this class. The complete Honor Code is as follows: *To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: **Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.***

**GMU Email:** <http://masonlive.gmu.edu>

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Each student is responsible for activating their GMU email account and checking their account on a regular basis for University and class announcements. **All masonlive accounts must be activated.**

**GMU Police Policy:** 703-993-2810

If you are currently employed with a law enforcement agency as a sworn officer and would like to carry a firearm on campus and into class, you must contact GMU Police Department as a courtesy.

**GMU Students with Disabilities:** <http://ods.gmu.edu>

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Resources at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office, your instructor is not obligated to provide accommodations without documentation from ODS.

**Writing Center:** <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

For general questions and comments please contact [wcenter@gmu.edu](mailto:wcenter@gmu.edu) or call:

703-993-1200 (Robinson Hall A114, Fairfax Campus)

703-993-1824 (Enterprise Hall 076, Fairfax Campus)

All appointments are made through the online scheduling system so please do not email or call to schedule appointments. If you would like to cancel an appointment you may do so via the online scheduler, simply select your appointment and click the "Cancel appointment" box at the bottom of the reservation form and then "save."

**University Libraries:** "Ask a Librarian" <http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

**Margaret Lam, Physical Sciences Liaison Librarian;** <http://infoguides.gmu.edu/forensics>

Fenwick Library, A244 (703)993-2212 [mlam3@gmu.edu](mailto:mlam3@gmu.edu)

**Counseling and Psychology Services (CAPS):** (703) 993-2380; <http://caps.gmu.edu>

**University Policies:**

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.