

Course Change Request

New Course Proposal

Date Submitted: 10/07/19 3:50 pm

Viewing: **FRSC 418 : Analytical Thinking and Violent Crime Profiling**

Last edit: 10/07/19 3:50 pm

Changes proposed by: kcarisi

Are you completing this form on someone else's behalf?

No

Effective Term: Fall 2020

Subject Code: FRSC - Forensic Science

Course Number:
418

Bundled Courses:

Is this course replacing another course? No

Equivalent Courses:

Catalog Title: Analytical Thinking and Violent Crime Profiling

Banner Title: Analytical Criminal Profiling

Will section titles vary by semester? No

Credits: 3

Schedule Type: Lecture

In Workflow

1. **FRSC Representative**
2. **SC Curriculum Committee**
3. SC Associate Dean
4. Assoc Provost- Undergraduate
5. Registrar-Courses
6. Banner

Approval Path

1. 10/07/19 9:04 pm
Emily Rancourt
(erancour):
Approved for FRSC Representative

Hours of Lecture or Seminar per week: 3

Repeatable: May be only taken once for credit, limited to 3 attempts (N3)

Max Allowable Credits:
9

Default Grade Mode: Undergraduate Regular

Recommended Prerequisite(s):
60 credit hours or permission of instructor

Recommended Corequisite(s):

Required Prerequisite(s) / Corequisite(s) (Updates only):
Minimum grade of C in FRSC 200 and FRSC 201

Registrar's Office Use Only - Required Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s):

And/Or	(Course/Test Code	Min Grade/Score	Academic Level)	Concurrency?

Registration Restrictions (Updates only):

Registrar's Office Use Only - Registration Restrictions:

Field(s) of Study:

Class(es):

Level(s):

Degree(s):

School(s):

Catalog Description:

This is a course on Analytical Thinking in the context of Criminal Investigative Analysis (CIA) from a forensic, and behavioral perspective. CIA is commonly referred to as Profiling. CIA is the behavioral interpretation of a violent crime scene, or series of scenes through the lens of multiple crime scene behaviors. During the

course, concepts of Criminal Investigative Analysis will be discussed including such topics: victimology, offender risk Level, method of victim access, crime scene planning, the presence and absence of forensic evidence, offender motivation, body disposal, anthropological perspectives etc. Subject matter experts will make presentations on a variety of topics relevant to CIA. A wide variety of cases will be discussed including, both criminal and terrorism cases, and current cases that are being discussed in the media.

Justification:

This is a new course that will be taught consistently. There is a growing interest in criminal profiling as it connects with forensic science casework. Many students have shown interest in forensic psychology and profiling and this course covers topics unique to criminal profiling. The course also engages students to use analytical thinking methods. These techniques and methods will help students in future classes or professions.

Does this course cover material which crosses into another department? No

Learning Outcomes:

Students will learn how to think in a different way – analytically/critically. Students will learn how to break down a case into manageable segments, analyze those segments as a “totality of the circumstances, and then provide an informed opinion about the crime.

Students will be evaluated on their progression of becoming better thinkers in science and in their life as a whole. Keep in mind, just because students are scientists, does not mean they are natural, analytical thinkers.

Students will be expected to practice their new thinking skills both inside and outside of the classroom.

Students will be expected to write and speak analytically throughout this course, as well – all of which will be the basis for their final grade.

Attach Syllabus

[FRSC 418.pdf](#)

Additional Attachments

Staffing:

Mary Ellen O'Toole

Relationship to Existing Programs:

This course will be added as an option as an "Additional Science" course selection for forensic science BS majors which include upper level science courses which allows students to tailor their degree towards their specific interests within the field of forensic science.

Relationship to Existing Courses:

This course will be cross-level listed with the graduate level course FRSC 518 Analytical Thinking and Violent Crime Profiling.

**Additional
Comments:**

**Reviewer
Comments**



FRSC 418: Analytical Thinking & Violent Crime Profiling

Instructor: Dr. Mary Ellen O’Toole,
Location/Time: 4:30 pm - 7:10 pm
Email: motoole2@gmu.edu
Maryellen.otoole@gmail.com
Phone #: 703-993-5059 (office)
540-604-6253 (cell) - Emergency
Office Hours: **By Appointment Only**

Required Texts:

1. *Ted Talks: The Official TED Guide to Public Speaking*
Chris Anderson
ISBN-13: 9781328710284; ISBN 10: 1328710289
(Amazon: Hardcover – \$10.89; Kindle - \$9.99; Audio - \$0.00; Used – \$6.99)
2. *Critical Thinking Skills for Dummies*
Martin Cohen
ISBN: 978-1-118-92472 -3
(Amazon: paperback - \$12.89; Kindle: \$7.99)

Other Required Reading:

Articles and other readings will be provided to students and you will be responsible for reading them and providing feedback, including them in class discussions and other elements of the class. These required readings may also be included in unannounced quizzes

Professor O’Toole’s Admin Assistant: fscience@gmu.edu

COURSE OVERVIEW/ DESCRIPTION

This is a course on *Analytical Thinking* in the context of *Criminal Investigative Analysis (CIA)* from a forensic, and behavioral perspective. CIA is commonly referred to as *Profiling*. CIA is the behavioral interpretation of a violent crime scene, or series of scenes through the lens of multiple crime scene behaviors. During the course, concepts of Criminal Investigative Analysis will be discussed including such topics: victimology, offender risk Level, method of victim access, crime scene planning, the presence and absence of forensic evidence, offender motivation, body disposal, anthropological perspectives etc. There will be subject matter experts who will make presentations to you during this semester, on a variety of topics relevant to CIA. We will discuss a wide variety of cases including, both criminal and

terrorism cases. We will also discuss current cases that are being discussed in the media and you will be expected to be current on those cases as well.

In this course, you will be learning how to think in a different way – analytically/critically. You will learn how to break down a case into manageable segments, analyze those segments as a “totality of the circumstances, and then provide an informed opinion about the crime.

Everything you do in this class is designed to help you become better thinkers in your science and in your life as a whole. Keep in mind, just because you are scientists, does not mean you are natural, analytical thinkers. You will be expected to practice your new thinking skills both inside and outside of the classroom. You will be expected to write and speak *analytically* throughout this course, as well – all of which will be the basis for your final grade.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Class Participation includes the following: (See below for further explanation of each requirement)

1. Participation in a Writing Center Workshop
2. Passing Grades Received on Unannounced Quizzes
3. Regular Class Discussion
4. Visit to Holocaust Museum

1. Participation in (1) one Writing Center Workshop

I need to know how well you write. Each student must prepare a three-page paper on *the Forensic Scientist You Most Admire*. This paper must be presented in APA format (don't forget in-text citations, footnotes, and list of references at the end). See below for APA formatting information. Before September 19th each student must make an appointment with GMU's Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>) to meet with one of their tutors in order to review their paper. Following this review, students must provide their “before” and “after” papers to Dr. O'Toole on or before September 19th along with Certification that you have consulted with the Writing Center.

2.& 3. Quizzes and Regular Class Discussion

Participating in class discussions is **one fourth** of your final grade so please read this section carefully. It includes unannounced quizzes as well as regular class discussions and interactions with other students in the course.

Unannounced quizzes will be given on the material from both textbooks. Grades on these quizzes will be factored into your overall “class participation” grade for the class. You will also be expected to incorporate textbook material into *regular class discussions, your paper, oral presentations and final poster*.

Each student **MUST** participate in **ALL** class discussions. These discussions will **not** be prompted by the professor asking students questions. Students **MUST** voluntarily participate in discussions and encourage other students to do the same. Class discussions and exchanges will be the primary method

of instruction in this course. As the professor of record, I will walk you through basic concepts of Criminal Investigative Analysis that I utilized as an FBI Profiler, and you will learn how to “critically/analytically dissect violent crimes, in order to determine some of the following information: the type of offender(s) responsible for the crime, motivation, and victimology. However, some class discussions will focus on more *global* topics in forensic science, like ethics, the Holocaust etc. The goal is for you to learn how to think differently – analytically, and to engage in scientific discussion on these topics.

4. Visit to The Holocaust Museum

Each student is expected to tour the Holocaust Museum in Washington DC. sometime before the class discussion scheduled for XXXXX. Please have a stamped receipt of some kind from the museum to give Dr. O’Toole, which shows the date you visited the Museum, and provide it Dr. O’Toole any time **before** XXXXXXXX

MID TERM (PART ONE) **PRESENTATION**

Students will select a resolved serial case they will study throughout the semester. This case will be the basis for their work throughout this course including their midterm paper and presentation, as well as their final TEDTALK and poster. Students will identify **three** concepts of CIA which they will focus on in their case. Students can only use CIA concepts discussed in class. Students will advise Dr. O’Toole on or before Thursday **XXXXX** re: their case selection. This notification can be via email or in person. Dr. O’Toole will have to approve all case selections.

The midterm will consist of a **5-minute oral** presentation on the case they are researching to include the three crime scene elements they have researched. Student presentations will be supported by a customized Power Point Slide Presentation consisting of **no more than 3 slides**. Slides must be brief and easy to read and be relevant to the presentation. Slides must be put on a hard drive and/or accessible via email accounts to access quickly on the evening of the Midterm.

Students are expected to practice their presentations BEFORE their midterm. Note cards may be used, but with **great discretion**. **DO NOT** write your presentation on these cards, only ideas, and these cards must be on the desk/table in front of you and **cannot be held in one’s hands**. Presentations will be closely timed and videotaped. Students are urged NOT to turn around and read off their slides during their presentations, which will result in a lower grade.

MIDTERM (PART 2) **PAPER**

On or before 11:59 Pm on **XXXXXX**, students will submit, one hard copy of a **6-page paper**, double spaced. This paper will provide a brief overview of the case he or she will be using for their final TED TALK and Poster, an overview of the three CIA concepts you will be discussing; the relevance of the CIA concepts to the case; your reasons for selecting these variables, and their significance to the case’s analysis and resolution.

Page 1: Cover sheet, containing abstract, name of student; Title of the Case; Crime Scene Elements

Pages 2 – 5: Body of the paper including “in text” references.

Page 6: (5) Scientific/academic footnotes must be used and listed on this page. These can include books, articles and online sources. References **CANNOT** include unreliable sources like murderpedia, Wikipedia etc.

Your paper in text references and footnotes must ALL be written in APA style (American Psychological Association). If you don't know APA style, please refer to those guidelines online, consult with the Writing Center, or University Library.

Students are urged to proofread their papers before submitting them. Do not rely on spell check. One point will be subtracted from a perfect score of 100, **for each error**, whether it is a punctuation error, a spelling error, a writing error, a spacing error, or a reference error etc. So, failing to put periods after sentences could result in a 10-point penalty. So, proofread, proofread, proofread!!! Students can easily earn a C or even lower grade on their paper, simply because they did not proofread their paper.

FINAL EXAM (Part 1) **Scientific Poster (See Templates Below)**

Students will complete a scientific poster on the criminal case they have studied and reviewed during the course. The focus of each poster will be on the **three** concepts of Criminal Investigative Analysis (CIA) selected by the student. For example, if you choose to investigate the San Francisco Zodiac case, and one of the three concepts you choose to focus on is victimology, your poster will provide critical information about the victimology, and its relevance to the case

Students' posters should be creative, eye catching, and accurate. Please do not use any solid dark color backgrounds due to the amount of ink that this will require to print. The poster should include a combination of text and photographs. The student will locate supporting photographs from either textbooks or the Internet. Google images is a great place to search for images to include on the poster. The sky is the limit with this project, and your imagination and creative juices are key to creating a quality poster!

If images or photographs are obtained from textbooks or the Internet, a brief statement should appear somewhere on your poster (very small font is fine) acknowledging that *“the images or photographs used herein may be copyright protected”*. However, since the posters are being used for educational purposes and will be displayed within our university laboratories, this should be sufficient.

All students must make sure that they email their poster to me – **IN PDF** - by no later than XXXXXXXX. **Each day that your poster is late will result in a loss of 10 points per day.**

TED TALK (Part 2)

Each Undergraduate student will give a **5- minute TED TALK** for their final Exam and will use their poster to illuminate their talk. Below are links for information on constructing and delivering a TED TALK. Students are expected to incorporate the elements of a Ted Talk into their own presentation including a relevant – attention grabbing opening and closing – both of which are suitable in tone and content to the seriousness of the case they will be discussion.

Tape Recorded Presentations & Class Discussion

ALL students will be videotaped during select class discussions, during their mid-term presentation and during their final presentation. The purpose of being videotaped is for the course professor to discuss ways to help students improve their public speaking practices and habits.

LINK FOR TED TALKS: <https://www.ted.com/participate/organize-a-local-tedx-event/tedx-organizer-guide/speakers-program/what-is-a-tedx-talk>

100 BEST TED TALKS

https://www.learnoutloud.com/content/blog/archives/2011/11/100_best_ted_talks.php

TED TALKS WEBSITE: <https://www.ted.com/>

Guest Speakers

Professor O'Toole is still arranging guest speakers for the class and is awaiting their confirmation. These speakers will fit into the class schedule and appropriate changes made to the syllabus.

Additional Student Responsibilities

Students will be expected to take an active role in all aspects of this course. This includes:

- a. Attend all classes; Unexcused absences WILL lower grades
- b. Arrive to class on time and remain for entire class
- c. Notify the professor at least 24 hours ahead of time if there is a non-emergency preventing you from attending class
- d. Notify the professor ASAP if there is an emergency preventing you from attending class or arriving on time
- e. Submit all required course work on time, and as indicated in this syllabus
- f. Students will alert the professor in a timely manner, if they are experiencing any problems with fellow students, the course and/or course content and requirements.

Changes to Syllabus

Please be flexible as this will not be a typical graduate course!! This is a class designed to change how you approach problems and analyze them, and change is part of critical/analytical thinking. As the Professor of Record, I reserve the right to make "reasonable" changes to the course and the course schedule. For example, change the topic for the evening or change discussion topics. Be prepared for changes in the syllabus based on the progress of the course, the needs of the students, and schedules of guest speakers. Flexibility on all of our parts is essential.

Grading

At the end of the course, you will receive a final grade. Your grade will be based on your performance as indicated and explained in this syllabus.

- **Class Participation & Attendance (includes quizzes)** 25%
- **Midterm 6-page paper** 25%
- **Midterm: Oral Presentation w/PPT** 25%
- **Final: TEDTALK & Poster** 25%

Grading Scale:

100	A+	87-89	B+	77-79	C+	60-69	D
95-99	A	83-86	B	73-76	C	0-59	F
90-94	A-	80-82	B-	70-72	C-		

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>

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 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

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

Toastmasters:

Toastmasters Club meets every Wed. from 12:00-1:pm in the HUB VIP 2 room. The Website for GMU's Toastmasters is <http://toastmasters.gmu.edu/events/2016-08/>

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.

Unauthorized Use Of iPad, Computers, Smart Phones, Etc. During the Class:

This class will also focus on the importance of ethics in a forensic science context. Students' respect for each other, the professor and the furtherance of a learning environment designed for all of you to become better forensic scientists, requires that your attention be focused on what is going on in the classroom. Therefore, if you 'disengage' from participation by using any of the above devices, you will be penalized by a 20% reduction in your final grade. I will not be giving **ANY** warnings about this issue. It is that important. As professionals in the field, you will find yourself in the courtroom someday where you must have your attention focused on the case and your testimony. You could never sit in the witness's chair and appear distracted because you are on your smart phone. The judge would seriously chastise you, and you would not be able to testify. Such a dismissal by a judge could hurt your career permanently. It is not ethical behavior. For all of the above reasons, I have to make this a part of the class. So, I urge you to be aware of your behavior, to not use these devices during class – in an unauthorized manner, or you will be penalized.

**CLASS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS
FALL 2019**

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	
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1	8/29	INTRODUCTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of Students • Overview of Course & Explanation of Syllabus • Expectation of Students • Instructor's Expectation of Students 	
2	9/5	RELEVANCE OF CRITICAL THINKING IN FORENSIC SCIENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing CT • Introduction to Criminal Investigative Analysis • Listening and Emotional Intelligence 	
3	9/12	OVERVIEW OF <i>SELECT</i> CRIME SCENE BEHAVIORS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victimology and Victim Analysis in the Crime Scene • Victims of Opportunity vs. Targeted Victims • Victim Risk Level & Accessing Victims • Neighborhood Investigation and Influence • Paraphilic/Sexual behaviors • MO VS Signature 	
4	9/19	OVERVIEW OF <i>SELECT</i> CRIME SCENE BEHAVIORS (CONT) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood Investigation & Analysis • Paraphilic/Sexual Behaviors • MO vs. Signature Behaviors 	
5	9/26	NO CLASS FOR HOLOCAUST TOUR	
6	10/3	MASS MURDER; BODY DISPOSAL: OFFENDER BEHAVIOR	
7	10/10	INTERPRETATION OF FORENSIC REPORTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weapons • Wound & Blood Pattern • Mental Health, • Emotions 	
8	10/17	GUEST SPEAKER <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Anthony Falsetti , Board Certified Forensic Anthropologist: Interpretation of skeletal remains from a forensic & behavioral perspective: Mass Graves 	
9	10/24	MIDTERM	
10	10/31	PSYCHOPATHY AND ITS RELEVANCE FOR CRIME SCENE BEHAVIOR	
11	11/7	MOTIVATION AND INTENT- GETTING INTO THE HEAD OF THE OFFENDER – REALLY? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime Scene Behavior Interpretation (continued) • Homicide Study (Guest Speaker – TBD) 	
12	11/14	GUEST SPEAKER <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Mark Wilson, Retired Special Agent FBI, Areas of Expertise, DNA and relevance of DNA Phenotyping in Cold Cases and Unidentified Remains. 	
13	11/21	ETHICS AND FORENSIC SCIENCE	
14	11/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanksgiving – NO Class 	

15	12/5	HOLOCAUST MUSEUM DISCUSSION – SPECIAL GUEST	
16	12/12	FINALS: TEDTALKS & POSTER PRESENTATIONS	

-end-