

FIRE 0182 - FIRE INVESTIGATION 1B, EVIDENCE AND DOCUMENTATION

Catalog Description

Formerly known as FIRE 155

Prerequisite: Completion of FIRE 181 with grade of "C" or better

Hours: 33.5 lecture

Description: Designed for fire investigators and law enforcement officers responsible for conducting fire investigations. This course provides information on scene documentation and evidence collection/preservation. Topics include photographing the scene, diagramming the scene, constructing investigative notes, processing evidence and establishing chain of custody, processing victims and fatalities, selecting evidence for analysis, maintaining a chain of custody, preparing a fire investigation report, and disposing of evidence. (not transferable)

Course Student Learning Outcomes

- CSLO #1: Explain how to photograph and diagram a fire scene.
- CSLO #2: Explain how to process evidence and establish a chain of custody.
- CSLO #3: Outline how to prepare a written report that accurately reflects the investigative findings.
- CSLO #4: Defend the process of evidence disposal.

Effective Term

Fall 2019

Course Type

Credit - Degree-applicable

Contact Hours

33.5

Outside of Class Hours

67

Total Student Learning Hours

100.5

Course Objectives

1. Identify the courses and requirements for Fire Investigator certification.
2. Explain how to photograph the scene to accurately document and support scene findings.
3. Diagram the scene and identify evidence, pertinent contents, significant patterns, and area(s) or point(s) of origin.
4. Construct investigative notes that provide accurate documentation of the scene and represent complete scene findings.
5. Explain how to locate, document, collect, label, package, and store evidence to properly identify and preserve for use in testing, legal, or other proceedings and examinations, establish the chain of custody, and avoid cross-contamination and investigator-inflicted damage to evidentiary items.

6. Describe how to process victims and fatalities to discover and preserve all evidence while utilizing proper procedures and following protocol.
7. Outline how to select evidence for analysis so the items support specific investigation needs.
8. Explain how to maintain a chain of custody with written documentation for each piece of evidence.
9. Prepare a written report that accurately reflects the investigative findings, is concise, expresses the investigator's opinion, contains facts and data that the investigator relies on in rendering an opinion.
10. Describe how to dispose of evidence safely in compliance with jurisdictional or agency requirements.

General Education Information

- Approved College Associate Degree GE Applicability
- CSU GE Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU approval)
- Cal-GETC Applicability (Recommended - Requires External Approval)
- IGETC Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU/UC approval)

Articulation Information

- Not Transferable

Methods of Evaluation

- Objective Examinations
 - Example: Students will take a multiple-choice examination on evidence collection. Example question: Which of the following is not a likely cause of cross-contamination? A. Properly cleaned metal tools, B. Using a gas-powered generator, C. Using the same gloves between samples, D. Leaving evidence containers unsealed.
- Reports
 - Example: In a report, students will describe how to process a fire victim. Rubric Grading.
- Skill Demonstrations
 - Example: Given an instructor based scenario of a fire scene, students are to outline the steps on how to properly identify, collect and preserve evidence. Grade based on industry standard.

Repeatable

No

Methods of Instruction

- Lecture/Discussion

Lecture:

1. The instructor will lecture on evidence collection. Students will then list the proper procedures for collecting evidence.
2. Following a lecture on how to properly diagram a fire scene, students will then draft a diagram of an instructor provided fire scene scenario.

Typical Out of Class Assignments Reading Assignments

1. Students will read chapter in textbook on diagramming the fire scene and be prepared to discuss in class.
2. Students will read chapter in textbook on photographing a fire scene and complete review questions in back of chapter. As a group, the class will discuss each question and answers.

Writing, Problem Solving or Performance

1. Based on an instructor provided scenario including photographs, students are to diagram the fire scene. 2. Following an instructor provided fire scenario, students will prepare a fire investigation report for a criminal case.

Other (Term projects, research papers, portfolios, etc.)

Required Materials

- Fire Investigator, Principles and Practice
 - Author: International Assoc. of Fire Chiefs, International Assoc. of Arson Investigators, & NFPA
 - Publisher: Jones and Bartlett Learning
 - Publication Date: 2016
 - Text Edition: 4th
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:

Other materials and-or supplies required of students that contribute to the cost of the course.