Course Description

Teaches the elements of proof for major and common law crimes and the legal classification of offenses. Studies the kinds, degrees and admissibility of evidence and its presentation in criminal proceedings with emphasis on legal guidelines for methods and techniques of evidence acquisition. Surveys the procedural requirements from arrest to final disposition in the various American court systems with focus on the Virginia jurisdiction. Lecture 3 hours per week.

General Course Purpose

The purpose of this course is to provide the student with an exposure to the general rules of criminal court procedures including evidence rules concerning circumstantial, documentary, physical and photographic evidence.

Course Prerequisites/Corequisites

None

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Prepare for the identification of various types of evidence
- Have a basic understanding of the rules of criminal procedure so that confessions, searches and seizures and other law enforcement activities will be performed in accordance with legal requirement
- Become an effective witness in court

Major Topics To Be Included

- Physical and circumstantial evidence
- Documentary evidence and discovery
- Photographic evidence
- How to testify effectively
- The concept of probable cause
- Search and seizure
- Confessions and admissions
- Pre-trial identification procedures
- Electronic surveillance
- Criminal trial
- Arrest procedures

EXTRA TOPICS (optional)

Related topics at the discretion of the instructor