Course Description

Surveys fundamental evidence collection procedures, including recognition, selection, handling, packaging and marking. Examines ways to prevent alteration, contamination, damage and tampering. Emphasizes legal requirements for a continuous chain of possession. Lecture 3 hours per week.

General Course Purpose

The purpose of this course is to provide the student with an introduction to the collection and preservation of evidence from crime scenes and other sources.

Course Prerequisites/Co-requisites

None

Course Objectives

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

- conduct a crime scene search.
- collect and preserve evidence.
- properly document a crime scene.
- correctly use chain of custody documents.
- describe the role of the crime laboratory in analyzing crime scene evidence

Major Topics to be Included

- Introduction to physical evidence
- Principles of crime scene searches
- Recording crime scenes (description, sketches and photography)
- Collection of latent fingerprints
- Collection of various kinds of evidence such as: latent fingerprints, hair and fibers, glass, paint and soils, biological fluids and stains, impressions, firearms, etc.
- Focus on specific kinds of crime scenes, such as homicide, auto accident, sexual assault, etc.

Extra Topics (Optional)

Crime scene reconstruction, court testimony, computer evidence, and related topics at the discretion of the instructor.