

GE2334: SCIENCE VERSUS CRIME

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Science Versus Crime

Subject Code

GE - Gateway Education

Course Number

2334

Academic Unit

Chemistry (CHEM)

College/School

College of Science (SI)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

GE Area (Primary)

Area 3 - Science and Technology

GE Area (Secondary)

Area 2 - Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

CHEM2809/BCH2809 Science Versus Crime

Exclusive Courses

CHEM2808/BCH2808 Forensics and Modern Society

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course aims to let students have some basic understanding in how science and technology are applied to aid fighting crimes. Besides the general scientific principles, this course will highlight (i) the importance of logical and critical thinking, (ii) how existing knowledge can be applied to new challenges, and (iii) why honesty and ethical behaviour are necessary throughout the processes of criminal investigation.

Teaching is mainly done via formal lectures (2 hr every week). This is supplemented by invited guest lectures and interactive tutorials. These tutorials are arranged to allow students to learn, and discover by themselves, specific skills in crime scene investigation caseworks, and to put them in practical uses.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Describe the concepts of the various disciplines of forensic science.	25	x		
2	Describe the various forensic techniques in terms of identification, individualization and reconstruction and recommend or advise on the most appropriate selection for an investigation.	25	x	x	
3	Describe basic techniques in crime scene investigations. Explain the importance of logical thinking and ability to apply this to different forensic scenarios.	50	x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)	
1	Lectures	Students will develop an understanding of the various aspects of crime scene investigations.	1, 2, 3	2 hrs

2	Mock crime scene investigation and CSI report writing	Students will be able to experience Mock crime scene walkthrough. Students, in the form of small groups, will conduct mock crime scene investigation, and present their findings in a written CSI report.	2, 3	5 hrs (throughout the course)
3	Tutorials	In tutorials, students will apply various practical techniques for crime scene investigations.	2, 3	1 hr
4	Multimedia teaching and learning	Students will assess whether crime scenes shown in TV programmes, newspaper and the internet are realistic and scientifically sound.	1, 2, 3	N.A.

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Crime scene investigation	1, 2, 3	10	Oral presentation will be conducted in the tutorial session.	Yes
2	Essay writing on selected topics in crime scene investigations (CSI)	1, 2, 3	10	Each essay should be 3500 words	Yes
3	Short quiz	1, 2, 3	20	Multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank quiz This is a mid-term examination	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

40

Examination (%)

60

Examination Duration (Hours)

2

Minimum Continuous Assessment Passing Requirement (%)

40

Minimum Examination Passing Requirement (%)

40

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

Crime scene investigation oral presentation

Criterion

Capability in delivering a written report on observations in CSI walkthrough.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderate

Marginal (D)

Basic

Failure (F)

Below marginal levels

Assessment Task

Short-essay writing

Criterion

Demonstration of understanding of a variety of topics in modern crime scene investigations.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderate

Marginal (D)

Basic

Failure (F)

Below marginal levels

Assessment Task

Short quiz

Criterion

Demonstration of understanding the principles and practice of various topics of forensic and crime scene investigations.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderate

Marginal (D)

Basic

Failure (F)

Below marginal levels

Assessment Task

Examination

Criterion

Demonstration of understanding the principles and practice of various topics of forensic and crime scene investigations.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderate

Marginal (D)

Basic

Failure (F)

Below marginal levels

Part III Other Information**Keyword Syllabus**

Forensics; Crime scene; CSI, Chain-of-custody; Contamination; Pollution; Environment; Explosives; Counter-terrorism; Firearms; Fingerprint; Counterfeit; Narcotics; Dangerous Drugs; Documents; Accuracy; Ethics; Honesty; Dishonesty; Criminal; Identification; Identity; Individualization; Analysis; DNA; Presumptive tests; Matching.

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

Title	
1	Forensic Science: A. R.W. Jackson, J. M. Jackson, (2011 – 3rd Edition) Prentice Hall.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Forensic Science – An Introduction to Scientific and Investigative Techniques: Stuart H. James and Jon J. Norby (2014 – 4th edition), Taylor and Francis.
2	Criminalistics – An Introduction to Forensic Science: Richard Saferstein (2017 – 12th edition), Pearson.

3	FORENSICnetBase: ~150 entire books covering many different forensic sub-fields, available online. City University is the only university in Hong Kong with this excellent facility that is continually updated as new books are added to the scheme.
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Annex (for GE courses only)

A. Please specify the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) that the course is aligned to and relate them to the CILOs stated in Part II, Section 2 of this form:

Please indicate which CILO(s) is/are related to this PILO, if any (can be more than one CILOs in each PILO)

PILO 1: Demonstrate the capacity for self-directed learning

1, 2, 3

PILO 2: Explain the basic methodologies and techniques of inquiry of the arts and humanities, social sciences, business, and science and technology

1, 2, 3

PILO 3: Demonstrate critical thinking skills

2, 3

PILO 4: Interpret information and numerical data

2, 3

PILO 5: Produce structured, well-organised and fluent text

1, 2, 3

PILO 7: Demonstrate an ability to work effectively in a team

3

PILO 9: Value ethical and socially responsible actions

2, 3

PILO 10: Demonstrate the attitude and/or ability to accomplish discovery and/or innovation

3

B. Please select an assessment task for collecting evidence of student achievement for quality assurance purposes. Please retain at least one sample of student achievement across a period of three years.

Selected Assessment Task

Mock crime scene investigation, CSI report writing.