

Course Outcomes Guide

Directions: Please complete this form to document your progress toward improving student learning. For each item, indicate your progress and your anticipated next steps. Thank you!

Course/Program Title: ADJ-204, Criminal Investigation

Date: SP '18

Course Instructor: Andrew B. Kramer

Course Format: 8 students enrolled; FTF morning class

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. The student will be able to identify and explain the fundamental steps of a preliminary investigation after a crime has been reported or observed.
2. Identify, and apply accepted techniques in criminal investigations to scenarios in specific types of criminal conduct
3. Identify and evaluate issues in the gathering & admissibility of evidence, including: crime scenes, interview, confessions, search & seizure, forensic & fingerprint evidence

Assessment (How do or will students demonstrate achievement of each outcome?)

The assessment of outcomes occurred through selected short answer questions included in quizzes, exams and/or as stand-alone assignments. Additional learning activities also generated results. These include practical skills and/or observations in which students analyzed and compared fingerprints, assessed manners of death and stages of decomposition and drafted police reports and search warrant affidavits.

Outcome #1 has two (2) short answer questions from a quiz on which its assessment is based:

Outcome #2 has 2 practical skill activities (fingerprint analysis and warrant-writing) on which it is based.

Outcome #3 has one (1) multiple choice question and one (1) short answer question from a quiz on which its assessment is based.

Validation (What methods have you used or will you use to validate your assessment?)

For objective items (multiple choice/fill-in-blank/true-false), students must enter a correct response. For other types of items (short answer, essay, practical skills and analysis) students must achieve a minimum of 75% of the total possible point value of the item of the responses in order to demonstrate satisfactory mastery of a specific outcome.

The items chosen to assess mastery across the course outcomes were selected on the basis of:

- i) In-textbook discussion questions
- ii) Experience teaching prior iterations of the course and relevant item creation therein
- iii) Practical experience as a prosecutor, having dealt with aspects of criminal investigation in the context of prosecution and the goal of a conviction of those accused of crime.

Results (What do your assessment data show? If you have not yet assessed student achievement of your learning outcomes, when is assessment planned?)

Outcome #1 85% of the students achieved mastery

Outcome #2 100% of the students achieved mastery

Outcome #3 86% of the students achieved mastery

Follow-up (How have you used or how will you use the data to improve student learning?)

Four factors impact my follow-up in this class:

- 1) As Professor Dominick is new a full-time ADJ faculty, this course has been allocated to her portfolio, as it is a more police-oriented course and, therefore, more consistent with her background and professional experience. Consequently, it is uncertain how my results herein will be reflected in the teaching of this course in future semesters.
- 2) Despite my comments in No. 1, above, in the time I taught this course, I made significant revisions in the student learning outcomes. As can be seen in the COG for this course from FA/16, there was only 1 (one) student learning outcome for the course upon my arrival at HCC. I did not believe that this single outcome was sufficient to satisfactorily assess student mastery of material in this course. Consequently, 3 outcomes are now assessed in this course. Again, as mentioned above, it will be Professor Dominick's prerogative to further amend the outcomes should she believe that necessary.
- 3) Despite my initial reservations about teaching what I believed to be a more police-oriented course, I have developed much fondness for this class. Notably, as mentioned in both the course guide and to students in class, I approached the material in the context of police investigation as an important step in the path toward gaining a conviction in court. I taught the class from the prosecution perspective and believe that this allowed students a broader view of the material, and allowed me to feel comfortable in the role of instructor.
- 4) I have adopted (and would continue to do so) increasing hands-on, practical skill training in the course that exceeded my background as a prosecutor. For that reason, I sought outside speakers to supplement the material. As an example, as a regular part of the class, a member of the Hagerstown Police Department gave students training in the lifting of fingerprints. Student engagement was discernibly higher in these activities (assessed for outcome #2) and results were 100% where students are given an opportunity to apply theory to practical exercises.

Budget Justification (What resources are necessary to improve student learning?)

The proposed HCC Mock Courtroom will offer meaningful opportunities to students in this class in experiencing the transition from investigation and evidence-gathering processes, ultimately, to their testimony at trial to authenticate and admit that evidence.