

Common Course Outline

CRJU 153

Private Investigation

3 Credits

Community College of Baltimore County

Description

CRJU 153 – 3 credits - Private Investigation introduces students to the field of private investigation and its relationship to the criminal justice system. Emphasis is placed on local and national licensing regulations, scope of operations, legal considerations, civil law, and professional ethics.

3 credits

Prerequisites: ACLT 052 or ACLT053

Overall Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course the students will be able to:

1. define the qualities and skills of a private investigator;
2. evaluate ethical decisions in accordance with the rules governing private investigators;
3. explain licensing requirements for private investigators;
4. identify the sources of employment for the private investigator and investigative agency;
5. distinguish between civil and criminal law;
6. analyze lawful and ethical business practices;
7. identify lawful sources of public and private information;
8. demonstrate methods to conduct lawful video, foot, fixed and mobile surveillances;
9. design a comprehensive case management file;
10. describe the collection and recording of evidence for court presentation;
11. interview witnesses and suspects;
12. organize investigative field notes and write a concise investigative report; and
13. prepare evidence to be used in a court or administrative hearing.

Major Topics

- I. Qualities of a private investigator
 - A. Skills of a private investigator
 - B. Role of ethics in private investigations
- II. Licensing requirements for private investigators
 - A. Federal and State
 - B. Multi-jurisdictional requirements
- III. Public records research
 - A. Government and private record sources
 - B. Computerized information brokers
 - C. Criminal profiling

- IV. Still and video photography
 - A. Importance of documenting evidence
 - B. Rules of evidence
- V. Surveillance
 - A. Preparing for surveillance
 - B. Stationary and moving surveillance
 - C. Undercover operations
- VI. Interviewing witnesses and suspects
 - A. Types of interviews
 - B. Door to door canvassing
 - C. Differences between interviewing and interrogation
 - D. Interviewing special populations
- VII. Criminal law and procedure
 - A. Rules conducting criminal investigations for the private investigator
 - B. Involvement of law enforcement officials in criminal investigations
- VIII. Civil law and procedure
 - A. Burden of proof
 - B. Depositions
 - C. Types of investigations
- IX. Case Management
 - A. File preparation
 - B. Organization of cases
- X. Court testimony
 - A. Chain of custody
 - B. Pre-trial preparation with attorneys
- XI. Ethics
 - A. Ethical decision making
 - B. Adhering to the licensing requirements

Course Requirements

Students are required to utilize academically appropriate sources.

Grading/Exams: Grading procedures will be determined by the individual faculty member but will include the following:

1. At least 2 testing instruments including examinations and/or tests; specific number to be determined by the instructor;
2. Written assignments: The individual faculty member will determine specific number of written assignments; minimum of one such assignment such as:
 - Summaries of current events and their relation to course material;
 - Research project (topics may include any subject related to the course)

Other Course Information

This course is a Criminal Justice Studies program elective.