

CRJU 153

Private Investigation

3 Credits

Community College of Baltimore County
Common Course Outline

Description

CRJU 153 – 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. This is a writing-focused course, which means writing will be used as a tool to enhance the student's learning, composition, and research skills. The career in private investigations requires documenting each investigative step on a variety of reports, such as, activity reports, surveillance reports, contracts, research, letters, freedom of information requests, marketing materials, notes, and investigative plans. In the field, any documentation produced is shared with clients, government agencies and the judicial system. Developing one's writing skills will improve communication, court testimony and professional standards.

Prerequisite: ACLT 053 or (ESOL 052 and ESOL 054)

Overall Course Objectives

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

1. define the qualities and skills of a private investigator;
2. identify the ethical guidelines 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. design 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. Requirements to become a Private Investigator
 - a. Education
 - b. Certification requirements
 - c. Job outlook
- II. Basic requirements for setting up a business
 - a. Marketing

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For more information, see your professor's syllabus.

- b. Office needs
- III. Ethics
 - a. Law enforcement v. private investigator
 - b. Privacy
 - c. Evidence
- IV. Skip Tracing
 - a. Resources
 - b. Methods
 - c. Privacy laws
- V. Case Investigations
 - a. Purpose
 - b. Methods
 - c. Types (Criminal Defense, Missing Persons, Civil, etc.)
 - d. Report Writing
 - e. Testifying
- VI. Interview & Interrogations
 - a. Establishing a rapport
 - b. Taking statements
 - c. Understanding rights
- VII. Surveillance
 - a. Methods
 - b. Privacy laws
 - c. Electronic surveillance
- VIII. Homicide
 - a. Case study
 - b. Evidence types
 - c. Evidence handling
 - d. Police practices

Course Requirements

Grading will be determined by the individual faculty member, but shall include the following, at minimum:

- Two testing instruments to include examinations and/or tests.
- One written assignment such as:
 - Summaries of current events and their relation to course material
 - Research project (topics may include any subject related to the course)

Written assignments and research projects: Students are required to use appropriate academic resources in their research and cite sources according to the style selected by their professor.

Other Course Information

This is an elective course in the field of Criminal Justice. This course is also a requirement for the Private Investigation certificate program.

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