

Forensic Science Syllabus 2021-2022

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Mission Statement:

Thomas County Central High School is committed to all students graduating as productive citizens in a global society.

Course Description:

The Forensic Science curriculum is designed to build upon science concepts and to apply science to the investigation of crime scenes. It serves as a fourth year of science for graduation and may serve in selected Career Technology programs. Students will learn the scientific protocols for analyzing a crime scene, how to use chemical and physical separation methods to isolate and identify materials, how to analyze biological evidence and the criminal use of tools, including impressions from firearms, tool marks, arson, and explosive evidence.

Requirements:

This class will be fully digital. You will turn in assignments, take tests, take notes, etc. on your school issued chrome book. If, however, you are the type of person who wants to keep a paper copy of your work in this course, the supply list below would be my suggestions. If you choose to work in paper/pencil, you may take a photograph of your work and submit it as the digital turn-in.

- **A 1 ½ - 2 inch 3 Ring Binder.** I will supply you with note packets and graphic organizers to help you learn to take notes during each unit. This is where you will keep your materials for the course.
- **Notebook Paper.** You will be taking notes you will need paper for.
- **Pens, Pencils, Colored Pencils and a Highlighter.** You are free to take notes in any color you find helpful, but blue or black ink is preferred for assignments that are turned in. It may be helpful for you to keep these items in a zippered pouch in your notebook.
- **A hi-polymer gum eraser.** Everyone makes mistakes. If you make a mistake that requires a lot of erasing, it is best to have an eraser that does not mess up the paper.

Standards Based Instruction:

This course will include information in compliance with the Georgia Performance Standards. For complete coverage of this course's standards, please see the standards given on the first day of school, or visit <https://www.georgiastandards.org/Georgia-Standards/Documents/Science-Forensic-Science-Georgia-Standards.pdf>.

SFS1. Students will recognize and classify various types of evidence in relation to the definition and scope of Forensic Science.

SFS2. Students will use various scientific techniques to analyze physical and trace evidence.

SFS3. Students will analyze the use of toxicology, serology, and DNA technology in forensic investigations.

SFS4 Students will evaluate the role of ballistics, tool marks and evidence of arson in forensic investigation.

SFS5 Students will evaluate the role of Forensics as it pertains to Medicolegal Death Investigation.

Course Concepts Include:

Introduction to Forensic Science
Physical Evidence
Drugs
Forensic Serology
Trace Evidence
Fingerprints
Document Examination

The Crime Scene
Death
Forensic Toxicology
DNA
Fire and Explosive Investigations
Firearms, Tool marks and other impressions
Cell Phones and Cyber Crimes

Content Disclaimer:

The class content will follow the state standards; however, the Forensic Science curriculum contains content that may be disturbing for some students. If a topic is especially difficult for a student due to personal circumstances, a private discussion with the teacher can result in an alternative assignment out of respect for supporting student learning.

Textbook:

Forensic Science by Richard Saferstein (replacement cost \$130.00). A classroom set is used. Students can check out a textbook upon request.

Reading in the Curriculum Area:

As part of our content standards, all students will be required to read content related material to enhance the curriculum. Generally this is through the reading and research of various case studies, but may also include reading *The Christopher Killer*, a novel approved by the Thomas County Board of Education.

Expectations:

- Be on time to class. Be prepared to learn.
- If you are home sick, let me know. If you know you will be absent, let me know ahead of time.
- Do your best to remain on task and an active participant in class.
- Show respect to yourself and your classmates.
- Follow the dress code and the appropriate rules for the lab.
- When in doubt, ask rather than make an assumption.

If students do not meet the class expectations, the teacher will follow the course of action below:

1st Offense – Teacher/Student Conference

2nd Offense – Parent Contact/Teacher Detention

3rd Offense – Referral to Administration

Cell Phone Policy:

Cell phones will not be allowed in the classroom, except for educational purposes, at the discretion of the teacher.

Lab Rules:

You must follow all of the regulations provided to you in the lab rules as well as any additional rules either written or verbal. It is important that you follow my instructions at all times during the lab. This is not to hinder your creativity, but rather to keep you alive and non-disfigured. If you do not follow lab rules, you can be excused from the lab and given a grade of zero (0) for that lab.

Absences:

You are always responsible for any material that you miss for any reason of absence. Although most information will be available to you through my google classroom, it is good practice for you to still check with me regarding your absence. It is in your best interest to get your assignments turned in ahead of any upcoming absences.

Grading:

You will have the opportunity to earn the grade you chose to have. What you make in this class is up to you.

- Tests are worth 35%
- Labs and Projects are worth 25%
- Classwork, quizzes, and daily grades are worth 20%.
- Benchmarks (9 weeks exams) are worth 20%

Tutoring:

There may be times when you need clarification on content, grades or expectations. If that applies to you at any time during the course of this year, please email me (bhayes@tcjackets.net). If your concerns cannot be addressed via an email at that time, we can schedule a time to meet in person. To guarantee that I will be available for you, please schedule a time with me at least 24 hours in advance so I can clear my schedule and make time to give you my attention.

Communication:

I ask that you come to me, first, whenever there is something that needs to be handled. Give me an opportunity to fix the situation, grade, misunderstanding, etc. If we cannot fix it together, we will go to the next step together. If you have a situation that you feel makes an exception to my cell phone policy, grading policy, or anything else that you need to discuss with me, please reach out to me. We are a team and we will do this together!

"In the spirit of science, there really is no such thing as a 'failed experiment.' Any test that yields valid data is a valid test."

-Adam Savage, *Mythbusters*