Interview and Report Writing for Criminal Justice Professionals (CJLE 1327)

Credit: 3 semester credit hours (3 hours lecture)

Prerequisite/Co-requisite: None

Course Description

Instruction and skill development in interviewing, note-taking, and report writing in the criminal justice context. Development of skills to conduct investigations by interviewing witnesses, victims, and suspects properly. Organization of information regarding incidents into effective written reports.

Required Textbook and Materials

1. *Report Writing for Criminal Justice Professionals: A Complete Text from English Composition to Interviews and Investigations* by Joseph N. Davis and Rick Vander Kam.
   a. ISBN number is 978-1-9-3377806-8.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate techniques for conducting interviews in support of incident investigations
2. Collect information admissible in court using interview techniques
3. Demonstrate appropriate note-taking skills
4. Create reports that convey all pertinent information

Course Outline

1. Syllabus
   a. Introduction of Faculty and students
2. Chapter 1: Introduction to Report Writing
   a. Definition of a Report
   b. Uses and Purposes of Reports
   c. Characteristics of a Good Report
   d. Note Taking
   e. Writing the Narrative
   f. Proof Reading
3. Chapter 2: Chronological Order and Report Formats
   a. Formats and Styles
   b. Special Paragraphs
   c. Evidence
   d. Suspect Descriptions
4. Chapter 3: Clear and concise Writing Style
   a. Active Voice Writing
   b. Word Choice
   c. First vs. Third Person Style
5. Chapter 4: Composition for Report Writing
   a. Understanding Sentence Structure
   b. Controlling the Flow of the Meaning
   c. Shaping Sentence to Your Meaning
6. Chapter 5: Custody and Corrections Reports
   a. Principles of a Good Report
   b. Essentials for All Good Reports
   c. Note Taking
7. Chapter 6: Computers and Report Writing
   a. History of the Uniform Crime Reports

b. National Incident Based Reporting System
c. Crime Analysis
8. Chapter 7: Introduction to Interview and Interrogation
   a. Definitions
   b. Acquisition of Skills
   c. Public and Private Sectors
   d. Legal Concerns
9. Chapter 8: Communications Theory
   a. Distractions
   b. Vocabulary

c. Cultural Differences
d. Modes of Speech
10. Chapter 9: The Report as an Investigative Tool
    a. Probable Cause – Stop, Detention, Arrest
    b. Probable Cause – Search and Seizure
    c. Corpus Delicti
    d. Miranda
    e. Modus Operandi
    f. Investigation Check List
    g. Specific Crime Check List

Grade Scale
90 – 100	A
80 – 89	B
70 – 79	C
60 – 69	D
0 – 59	F

Course Evaluation
Final grades will be calculated according to the following criteria:
1. Unit Tests   50%
2. Comprehensive Final Exam   10%
3. Assignments   40%

Course Policies
1. No food, drinks, or use of tobacco products in class.
2. Computers, telephones, headphones, and any other electronic devices must be turned off while in class or used only with permission of the instructor.
3. Do not bring children to class.
4. If you wish to drop a course, the student is responsible for initiating and completing the drop process. If you stop coming to class and fail to drop the course, you will earn an 'F' in the course.
5. Additional class policies as defined by the individual course instructor.

Technical Requirements (for courses using Blackboard)
The latest technical requirements, including hardware, compatible browsers, operating systems, software, Java, etc. can be found online at:
https://help.blackboard.com/en-us/Learn/9.1_2014_04/Student/015_Browser_Support/015_Browser_Support_Policy A functional broadband internet connection, such as DSL, cable, or WiFi is necessary to maximize the use of the online technology and resources.

Disabilities Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal anti-discrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights for persons with disabilities. Among other things, these statutes require that all students with documented disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodations for their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Special Populations Coordinator at (409) 880-1737 or visit the office in Student Services, Cecil Beeson Building. You may also visit the online resource at http://www.lit.edu/depts/stuserv/special/defaults.aspx

Student Code of Conduct Statement

It is the responsibility of all registered Lamar Institute of Technology students to access, read, understand and abide by all published policies, regulations, and procedures listed in the *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook*. The *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook* may be accessed at www.lit.edu or obtained in print upon request at the Student Services Office. Please note that the online version of the *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook* supersedes all other versions of the same document

Starfish

LIT utilizes an early alert system called Starfish. Throughout the semester, you may receive emails from Starfish regarding your course grades, attendance, or academic performance. Faculty members record student attendance, raise flags and kudos to express concern or give praise, and you can make an appointment with faculty and staff all through the Starfish home page. You can also login to Blackboard or MyLIT and click on the Starfish link to view academic alerts and detailed information. It is the responsibility of the student to pay attention to these emails and information in Starfish and consider taking the recommended actions. Starfish is used to help you be a successful student at LIT.