**MARSHALL UNIVERSITY**

**FORENSIC SCIENCE PROGRAM**

**FSC 680 Seminar**

**Instructor:** Dr. Catherine G. Rushton **Office Hrs:** posted on office door

**Day:** Fridays, 9 – 11 AM; **Office Location:** MUFSC, WW 2nd Floor

**Time:** 9 am to 11 am (unless stated otherwise) **Email:** rushton1@marshall.edu

**Class Location:** MUFSC West Wing I & II **Cell Phone:** 304-633-2777

**Program Phone**: 304-691-8931 **Office** **Phone:** 304-691-8968

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**Prerequisite:** FSC 630 Internship for 2nd year students; Formal admission to the MUFSP for 1st year students.

**Required Textbook:** None.

**Course Goal:** The goal of the Seminar Series is to provide students with an opportunity to enhance their presentation skills through presentation, observation and evaluation of others as well as themselves. During each term the student will accomplish progressive tasks as follows:

**Overall Seminar Sequence:**

**TERM 1: FALL -** First-year students (and 2nd year students) serve as the audience while 2nd-year students present their 1 hour research topics. First-year students begin discussion with faculty concerning a spring topic. All presenters complete a seminar evaluation for each presentation and on themselves (Self-Evaluation).

**TERM 2: SPRING -**Second-year students (and 1st year students) serve as the audience while 1st-year students present their 30 minute forensic science lay topics. All presenters complete a seminar evaluation for each presentation and on themselves (Self-Evaluation). First-year students begin discussion with faculty concerning potential internship placement.

**TERM 3: SUMMER -** No Seminar. Apply for AAFS or other conference presentations (encouraged but not required). AAFS deadline for abstracts (Poster): August 1. [www.aafs.org](http://www.aafs.org)

**TERM 4: FALL -** Present research seminar (slides); review tape and perform self-evaluation; review class/faculty evaluations & incorporate self-improvements; finalize posters by February 1; lend expertise to 1st-year students

**TERM 5**: **SPRING -** 2nd year-students present at MUFSC Poster-based Research Day (required). MU Research Day is also a poster presentation opportunity (optional). Print & present poster. Attend and evaluate classmate poster presentations. Review class/faculty evaluations; incorporate self-improvements; lend expertise to 1st-year students

**OBJECTIVES:**

Seminar is an opportunity to improve public speaking skills through observation, evaluation, and delivery using a variety of formats including presentation to lay audiences, e.g., civic groups, schools, law enforcement and legal professionals, as well as research presentations to professional audiences.

**Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to:**

1. Provide a timely topic, abstract and current references as a seminar announcement and presentation.
2. Prepare a Power Point presentation or poster at the appropriate level on a forensic topic based on current scientific references.
3. Effectively present a forensic research topic to a forensic science audience.
4. Demonstrate use of essential elements of an effective presentation.
5. Maintain audience interest demonstrated by active audience participation.
6. Ask and respond to pertinent questions during a question and answer period.
7. Meet all deadlines as stated in this syllabus and announcements.
8. Provide objective criticism through the written evaluation process.
9. Provide a constructive self-evaluation from a video-taped presentation. .
10. Attend all seminars. When absences or late arrivals occur, complete the Application for a Forensic Science Excused Absence form.
11. Arrive prior to the beginning of all seminars.
12. 1st-year students: Develop an approved resume by the end of the semester.
13. 2nd-year students: Develop an approved resume and curriculum vitae by the end of the semester.
14. 2nd-year students: Submit all internship materials by the end of the semester.
15. 2nd-year students: Submit a well-developed poster by the end of the semester.
16. 2nd-year students: Sign up for Mock Interviews
17. 1st-year students: Summarize steps to be taken to gain a summer internship.
18. 2nd-year students: Summarize steps to be taken to gain employment in the field or another career path.

**ATTENDANCE:** Students are expected to attend **ALL** seminars including special seminars that may be scheduled at alternative times throughout the semester. A written explanation is required for all absences or late arrivals.

Application for a Forensic Science Absence Form is included in this syllabus but may also be found at [www.marshall.edu/forensics](http://www.marshall.edu/forensics) in the Current Students section of the website. This form must be received by the course instructor to receive an excused absence. Excused absences will be given for medical emergencies or other circumstances of a serious and documented nature. Students may also receive an excused absence for approved professional forensic science travel. An Excused Absence results in no point deductions whereas Unapproved Absences or late arrivals will result in a **5 point deduction based on 100 total points** for the course. The Form mentioned above should be submitted prior to, the day-of, or the first day back to class following an absence. When absences occur, whether excused or unexcused, the **student has 7 days** to review the taped presentation and to submit an evaluation. Failure to do so within 7 days will result in point deductions.

***Attendance is Mandatory:*** Students enrolled in the Forensic Science Program are expected to attend all classes, laboratories, seminars, internship sessions, and presentations offered by guest speakers.

***Student Absence Form****:* [www.marshall.edu/forensics](http://www.marshall.edu/forensics) <Student> <secure section> <Forms>

Completion of an Instructor-signed Student Absence Form is facilitated by the Student and sent on to Dr. Rushton for all absences. This may occur BEFORE the absence (recommended) or on the first day of class upon return. Whether the absence is EXCUSED or UNEXCUSED will dictate whether the student will be granted make-ups and whether they will receive point or grade reductions. Completed Absence Forms will be placed in the student’s formal file. A Completed Absence Form is one bearing signatures of the student, instructor(s), and program director. If the student is not able to attend class for any reason, a phone call or e-mail to the Instructor is required BEFORE class time as this is a standard employer practice.

***Excused Absences:*** Dr. Rushton must be notified of absences. Formal documentation is required for Excused Absences which may involve physician statements excusing the student from class, obituaries, or professional travel documentation. With an Excused Absence, the student may be asked to take an exam BEFORE the scheduled date. No exams, labs, or other formal exercises will be made up without an Excused Absence. Examples of Excused Absences include

* Personal Medical Emergency – Formal documentation is required from a licensed physician or appropriate healthcare provider
* Death in the Immediate Family – Documentation required
* Forensic Professional Travel – Documentation required. Marshall University Forensic Science Program, Marshall University, the West Virginia Policy Board for Higher Education are not liable for accidents or injuries incurred during trips within or out of the state.

***Unexcused Absences:*** Any unexcused absence in which a student misses a lab or exam or other graded activity will result in the deduction of 5 points from the student’s final grade for **EACH** presentation missed. If two presentations are schedule consecutively on a single day are missed, than there will be a grade reduction of 10 points.

F = < 60%

**GRADING:**

A = All objectives are satisfactorily met

B = Majority, not all, objectives are satisfactorily met

C = Average number of objectives are satisfactorily met

D = Less than half of objectives are satisfactorily met

F = Substandard performance on most objectives

A = 90-100%

B= 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

**ForFor all policies go to** [**http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/policies/**](http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/policies/)**.**

**Academic Dishonesty** Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Policy AA-12 defines academic dishonesty and describes the sanctions associated with it.

**Affirmative Action** This course will follow Marshall University’s policy on Affirmative Action. Specifically, all students will be afforded equal opportunity without regard to race, color, sex, religion, age, disability, national origin, or sexual orientation.

**Inclement Weather** Policy on weather-related and/or emergency closings and delays. As this is an afternoon class, we will not be affected by delays. To find out if the University is closed, please call Audix at 696-6245.

**Students with Disabilities Policy** Students with disabilities are required to prepare a notice from either the Help Center, Myers Hall, or Sandra Clements, PH 117, before a special accommodation can be honored. The link describing this policy is http://www.marshall.edu/disabled.

**University Computing Services Acceptable Use Policy** MUBOG Policy IT-1 explains this policy and students are responsible for knowing the University Computing Services’ Acceptable Use Policy available at http://www.marshall.edu/ucs/CS/accptuse.as

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRESENTERS**

1. Second-year students will present an effective seminar presentation as assigned.

2. Presenters must consent to being video and *Camtasia* recorded.

3. Presenters must consent to being evaluated by their audience. Any single item on the rubric which averages below 3 must be rectified.

4. Presenters agree to evaluate their recorded presentations, i.e., *Camtasia* and video, resulting in submission of their Self-Evaluation within 7 days of their formal presentation.

5. First-year students agree to evaluate all presenters as defined.

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:**

**Three reviews are required for all research proposals, research papers, research seminar slides and posters. These reviewers are listed along with their signatures on your Research Proposal completed in May. Reviewer changes may be made with a written request and approval. Logos used on posters and/or slide presentations require formal agency approval. At least one reviewer must be external to the MU Forensic Science Program.**

**Seminar Announcement Required Materials: Title, Abstract, Reference, Bio**

Reviewers must approval student presenters’ title, abstract, references, & bio. Use of the recommended format is required for submission. See the example below. Note: A minimum of 5 **peer-reviewed journal articles** published within the past 5 years from the scientific literature are required. Internet references, commercial protocols, and laboratory protocols may be listed but do not count as peer-reviewed references.

Once Reviewers approve the Title, Abstract & References, the announcement is sent to [rushton1@marshall.edu](mailto:rushton1@marshall.edu) to create a formal announcement for attendee notification. Announcements go out at least 2 weeks prior to the start of presentation(s). Final materials are submitted to the Program Office with electronic approval of all reviewers.

**Presentation Practice:** By appointment, students are encouraged to practice their presentations at the Forensic Science Center.

**Non-Presenting Student Evaluations:** In the Fall Term, 1st year students observe and evaluate 2nd year research presentations using the standard evaluation form. These, and all other evaluations, are compiled for feedback to the presenter. Comments should be professional and appropriate for investigator review.

**Self-Evaluations:** Each presenter is responsible for performing and submitting a self-evaluation within 7 days following their presentation.

**Student Presentations:** Minimum of 50-minutes with 5 minutes for Q&A and 5 minute period for evaluation.

**Second-Year Student Selection of Poster Presentation Venue:** Students must submit a well-developed poster by the end of Fall Semester along with their choice of poster presentation venues. All students are required to present their research posters at the MUFSC Research Day event each year.

Other poster venues may include: AAFS, YFSF BYOP, IAI, CB-IAI, Sigma Xi, MAAFS, SOFT, etc.

Other oral venues: AAFS, YFSF, BYOS

**Main Elements of a Good Seminar:**

* Organization
* Timing
* Presentation style
* Level

**Organization:**

* Beginning, middle and end; incorporate the art of story telling
* Statement of purpose; why it’s important; draw your audience in
* Statement of hypothesis, if appropriate
* Present methods in simple terms; avoid jargon
* Provide conclusions and summary
* Provide acknowledgements
* Stay within time constraints
* Be sure to know how to use the equipment before presenting
* Aids should enhance your presentation not be your presentation
* Load presentation in advance; prior to presentation
* Practice, practice, practice

**Slides:**

* Avoid red; use good color combinations, e.g. dark background and bright lettering
* Use font size no smaller than 28;
* Keep it simple; not too busy
* Experiment with backgrounds and lettering
* Use progressive disclosure to emphasize main points
* Use simple tables and graphs; make sure they are viewable
* Be creative but don’t get fancy without purpose

**Quality:**

* National meeting quality

**Timing:**

* Not too long or too short
* Allow for pauses especially at slide transition
* Plan on 1 minute/slide
* Practice what to say for each slide or major point
* Allow time for questions and answers
* Answer quickly, yet concisely; if you don’t know, state it or recommend where the information might be obtained

**Presentation Style:**

* Know your audience and target your audience’s knowledge-base
* Is your talk interesting to your audience? Can you hold their attention?
* Maintain good eye contact
* Pay attention to body language
* Avoid distracters, e.g. moving arms/hand around aimlessly, pacing or shifting aimlessly, avoid ‘ums’ or other ineffective verbal connectors
* Effectively pause; breathe
* Come out at some point and interact with your audience
* Use examples and analogies to personalize your talk
* Use pictures to explain complex concepts
* Avoid unnecessary detail but do not oversimplify

**Appearance:**

* Neat and professional as if presenting at a national meeting

**50-minute Research Presentation Evaluation**

Students are required to evaluate each presentation which requires that the evaluator become familiar with the evaluation form itself. Once all evaluations are compiled, the student presenter will receive a summary of all quantitative results from the rubric itself as well as any qualitative information such as comments. It is essential that each person evaluate another in a professional manner providing useful feedback and other constructive criticism intended to facilitate the presenter’s communication and presentation skills. Any unprofessional comments will require a written explanation from the reviewer.

**FSC 680 Course / Instructor Evaluation**

The purpose of the course/instructor evaluation is to improve the course and instructor in a way that benefits the majority of students now and into the future. As instructors we listen, evaluate, and often incorporate your suggestions. However, in every instance it is the responsibility of the instructor to make changes and improvements to his or her course in a way that best serves the program, its accrediting agencies, and the majority of its students. If you are advocating change, you should be very specific in your evaluation comments or in your letter of complaint. Students-complaining-to-students may be ineffective in affecting change. Students-complaining-to-staff may be ineffective in affecting change. Only when information is communicated to your instructor and/or advisor, can informed attempts be made to meet the needs of students, faculty, staff, as well as program reviewers.

All student inquiries and complaints are to be posed in a professional manner.

To positively affect change, please observe the following procedure:

1. Discuss the “issue” with the instructor.
2. Respond constructively on the Course/Instructor Evaluation if the problem or issue is not resolved to your satisfaction.
3. If seeking a formal response, file a written statement with the Program Office. If you are not satisfied with the Program’s action, a Program Hearing composed of the FS Graduate Studies Committee will be conducted at your request to hear the complaint and to provide a formal ruling or action.

4. All written complaints will remain on file for a minimum of 5 years for FEPAC accreditation review.

**Poster Development, Evaluation, & Review**

By the end of the term, 2nd year students are required to submit a well-developed research poster reviewed by the student’s MU Topic Advisor at a minimum. To receive approval to print the poster, the student must have approval from all 3 research reviewers as stated on their original “Research Proposal” form. As each student will evaluate student posters, it is important to become familiar with the poster rubric for the purposes of a) using it as a guide document when designing and creating a poster, and b) when serving as a evaluator of a poster. The Poster Rubric is provided.

**Poster Printing Instructions & Information**

*ALL POSTERS MUST BE REVIEWED BY THREE (3) APPROVED REVIEWERS. THIS MUST BE IN WRITING. DR. RUSHTON WILL SUBMIT THE POSTER VIA EMAIL TO TIFFANY HUSSELL (crumR VIA CD ONCE WRITTEN APPROVAL IS RECEIVED FROM ALL THREE (3) REVIEWERS.*

**Poster Assistance Links:**

http://www.kumc.edu/SAH/OTEd/jradel/Poster\_Presentations/PstrStart.html

http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/

http://www.swarthmore.edu/NatSci/cpurrin1/posteradvice.htm

Posters should be created in Power Point. The maximum poster size is 52” x 52” but 52 X 48 is also fine.

The MU Topic Advisor is responsible for final review and proofing their designated posters. For other personalized assistance, please see Ian Levstein. Poster quality is the responsibility of each student. Failure to obtain all reviews (3 committee member reviewers) that result in the REPRINTING of a poster is the student’s responsibility.

**Student Applicant for Regional and National Presentation Travel Funds**

**TRAVEL FUNDS: As funds are available, students are eligible to apply for up to $200 in travel funds while enrolled in the Forensic Science Program with documentation that they will be presenting their research at a regional or national forensic science meeting or attending such meetings.**

To apply, complete the Travel Award Request Form, available at the Academic Program Office or [www.marshall.edu/forensics/student/](http://www.marshall.edu/forensics/student/).

**Students must attach a copy of the event agenda which lists their presentation, a completed “special activities form”, and a copy of their slides and/or 8x11 paper copy of their poster to document their participation in the event.**

**Please keep all receipts. No receipts - No reimbursement.**

**Student Name:**

**Event Name, Date, & Location:**

**Type of Presentation: [Circle one]**

* **slide presentation**
* **poster**
* **other (describe)**

**Estimated cost of travel you are assuming (excluding meals):**

* **Flight: $ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (round trip)**
* **Mileage (portion you are assuming, if applicable): # miles \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
* **Overnight accommodations per night $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ x # nights \_\_\_\_\_\_**
* **Registration fees**
* **Other fees, e.g. parking, travel to-and-from airport, etc**

**Professional Special Activities Report**

Complete, maintain, and submit a SAF each time you participate in a special activity. Examples of special activities are seminar slide presentations, poster presentations, conference or meeting presentations, internship interviews, job interviews, reporting agency background checks, visiting various agencies, GA and work study positions, independent studies, employment, etc. These activity records will be kept in your student file so that the Program can provide “personalized” letters of recommendation, now and in the future, as you request them. Maintaining this practice for your own personal records will assist you in creating a powerful resume now and throughout your professional career.

**Name:**

**Type (check all that apply):** Meeting Workshop Seminar

Poster Research Publication Lecture

Other

**Sponsoring Organization/Agency:**

**Topic/Title:**

**LOCATION**: City, State:

**Dates Attended:**  through

**If published, provide reference and page number:**

**Description of Event: Essential Elements of a Portfolio**

We recommend that you maintain a record of all educational activities while enrolled in the program and thereafter. Suggested materials are as follows:

* Resume
* GA, TA, RA or WS positions by date and descriptions of duties; supervisors with contact information
* Seminar slide and poster presentations by date and venue
* Meeting attendance by date and any educational sessions attended
* Workshops by content, presenter, and date
* Special award or honors
* Presentation evaluations
* Transcripts
* Independent Study reports
* Background check reports, if available
* Information needed for completing background checks
* Internship information by date, agency and supervisor
* Internship evaluations and research paper or hard-copy Internship Notebook itself
* Plan of Study
* Any other information needed for rapid response to job postings
* Employment/ internship contacts

**Career Development Assistance**

[www.marshall.edu/forensics](http://www.marshall.edu/forensics%20Current%20Students/) Under the ‘Current Students’ tab – enter password

1. Forensics Career Guide for Internships

2. Forensics Career Guide for Job Seekers

3. CV Template; Standard CV Example; Long CV Example

4. Interview Stream Instructions

5. Interview Stream Link

6. Career Services Website

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| **FORENSIC SCIENCE SEMINAR FALL 2017 SCHEDULE AT-A-GLANCE**  **MARSHALL UNIVERSITY FORENSIC SCIENCE CENTER**  **WEST WING Classrooms 1 & 2**  **Friday, August 24**  Introduction to Seminar  Hazing Policy – Dr. Catherine Rushton  **Friday, August 31:**  Cary Oien (FBI)  **Friday, September 7:**  9 am – Career Services – 1st year students - Resume & CVs & Covers – Beth Waugh  10 am – Career Services – 2nd year students – Resume to CV – Jennifer Brown  **Friday, September 14:**  Tara Bliss  Rachel Maragliano  **Friday, September 21:**  Steve Little  Grayce Behnke  **Friday, September 28:**  Heidy Rivera  Rachel Lane  **Friday , October 5:**  Nicole Odom  Erik Onessimo  **Friday, October 12:**  Abby Meyers  Jessica Slater  **Friday, October 19:**  Megan Little  Nico Kresl  **Friday, October 26:**  Chelsey McPhillen  Tori Fuller  **Friday,  November 2:**  HollyAnn Swann  Allegra Forwith  **Friday, November 9:**  Andrea Kardohely  Haley Oliver  **Friday, November 16:  TBD**  **Friday, November 23:  Thanksgiving Break**  **Friday, November 30: TBD**  **Friday, December 7: TBD** |
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