



# BROWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE COURSE OUTLINE

**LAST REVIEW: 2006-2007**   **NEXT REVIEW: 2011-2012**

*(i.e. 2003-2004)*

*(i.e. 2008-2009)*

**STATUS: A**

*(A, I, D)*

**COURSE TITLE: Legal Issues in Fire Investigation**

**COMMON COURSE NUMBER: FFP 2670**

**CREDIT HOURS: 3**

**CONTACT HOUR BREAKDOWN**

*(per 16 week term)*

**CLOCK HOURS:**

*(Voc. Course ONLY)*

Lecture:      48      Lab:

Clinic:                      Other:

**PREREQUISITE(S): Municipal Fire Inspector Certification**

**COREQUISITE(S): None**

**PRE/COREQUISITE(S):**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION** *(750 characters, maximum):* Study of the applicable laws and attending legal considerations associated with the successful prosecution of arson cases. Specific areas of concentration include: witness statements, interviews, interrogations, depositions, and written reports. Expert qualification and effective courtroom testimony will be examined and evaluated. Distinctions will be discussed between civil and criminal situations. Students will be required to prepare a case for prosecution from evidence gathered and/or provided in class, and present their testimony in a mock trial activity.

General Education Requirements – Associate of Arts Degree (AA), meets Area(s):      Area

General Education Requirements – Associate in Science Degree (AS), meets Area(s):      Area

General Education Requirements – Associate in Applied Science Degree (AAS), meets Area(s):      Area

## **UNIT TITLES**

1. Laws Related to the Crime of Arson
2. Laws Related to Evidence.
3. Interviews and Interrogations
4. Written Statements/Reports
5. Case Preparation
6. Study/Review of Relevant Court Decisions
7. Mock Trial Activity



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## ASSESSMENT:

Please provide a brief description (250 characters maximum) that details how students will be assessed on the course outcomes.

1. Quizzes, Test, and/or Final Exam (cumulative/comprehensive);
2. Selected faculty may assess homework, projects, class participation/attendance, and/or extra credit projects.

*\*\*\* Complete the following only if course is seeking general education status \*\*\**

## GENERAL EDUCATION Competencies and Skills\*:

Please highlight in green font all Competencies/Skills from the list below that apply to this course. In the box to the right of the Competency/Skill, enter all specific learning outcome numbers (i.e. 1.1, 2.7, 5.12) that apply.

1. Read with critical comprehension	
2. Speak and listen effectively	
3. Speak and listen effectively	
4. Think creatively, logically, critically, and reflectively (analyze, synthesize, apply, and evaluate)	
5. Demonstrate and apply literacy in its various forms: <i>(highlight in green ALL that apply)</i> ( 1. technological, 2. informational, 3. mathematical, 4. scientific, 5. cultural, 6. historical, 7. aesthetic and/or 8. environmental )	
6. Apply problem solving techniques to real-world experiences	
7. Apply methods of scientific inquiry	
8. Demonstrate an understanding of the physical and biological environment and how it is impacted by human beings	
9. Demonstrate an understanding of and appreciation for human diversities and commonalities	
10. Collaborate with others to achieve common goals.	
11. Research, synthesize and produce original work	
12. Practice ethical behavior	
13. Demonstrate self-direction and self motivation	
14. Assume responsibility for and understand the impact of personal behaviors on self and society	
15. Contribute to the welfare of the community	

*\* General Education Competencies and Skills endorsed by '05-'06 General Education Task Force*



**Common Course Number: FFP 2670**

**UNITS**

**Unit 1 Laws Related to the Crime of Arson**

**General Outcome:**

- 1.0 The student shall:** be able to recognize and correctly interpret the laws related to the crime of arson and essential to any conviction.

**Specific Measurable Learning Outcomes:**

**Upon successful completion of this unit, the student shall be able to:**

- 1.1 Properly define the elements of the crime of arson.
- 1.2 Ascertain the legal basis (**authority**) for conducting an investigation.
- 1.3 Recognize constitutional considerations related to the conduct of investigations.
- 1.4 Recognize the limits to right of entry.
- 1.5 Define and describe the elements of consent.
- 1.6 Determine the legal limits and/or application of exigency, and cite relevant case history.
- 1.7 Describe the proper procedures for obtaining a search warrant
- 1.8 Define and describe fire related criminal acts.
- 1.9 Discuss the concept of product/strict liability.
- 1.10 Recognize related legal terms and definitions.



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## Unit 2 Laws Related to Evidence

### General Outcome:

- 2.0 The student shall:** be able to recognize and correctly interpret the laws related to the collection, analysis, custody, and storage of evidence related to a case.

### Specific Measurable Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this unit, the student shall be able to:

- 2.1 Define/describe the three types of evidence.
- 2.2 Determine what constitutes evidence.
- 2.3 Define/describe standard of comparison and how it's used.
- 2.4 Define/describe the common errors in collecting evidence.
- 2.5 Describe the methods for processing of evidence.
- 2.6 Define/describe how to package/store evidence.
- 2.7 Determine what constitutes best evidence.
- 2.8 Accurately determine the admissibility of evidence.



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**Unit 3 Interviews and Interrogations**

**General Outcome:**

- 3.0 The student shall:** be able to recognize the difference between an interview and an interrogation; understand the rights of a suspect; and shall conduct fact-finding initiatives in manner that doesn't violate same.

**Specific Measurable Learning Outcomes:**

**Upon successful completion of this unit, the student shall be able to:**

- 3.1 Describe/discuss the application and goals of interviewing and interrogation
- 3.2 Describe/discuss methods to improve communications.
- 3.3 Describe the characteristics of an effective investigator.
- 3.4 Determine when and in what order to interview witnesses.
- 3.5 Determine the best approach to use in questioning.
- 3.6 Identify the two requirements needed to obtain information.
- 3.7 Describe the difference between direct and indirect questioning.
- 3.8 Discuss techniques with the potential to assist recall as well as uncover lies.
- 3.9 Accurately determine the applicability of Miranda.
- 3.10 Discuss the significance of a confession, and the restrictions placed on obtaining one.



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**Unit 4 Written Statements/Reports**

**General Outcome:**

- 4.0 The student shall:** should be able to recognize the legal significance of a written statement; the essential elements of a well written report; and prepare reports that are capable of standing up to attack and/or challenge by a defense attorney in a court case.

**Specific Measurable Learning Outcomes:**

**Upon successful completion of this unit, the student shall be able to:**

- 4.1 Define the essential elements of a written statement and a written report.
- 4.2 Determine when to take notes.
- 4.3 Determine what to include in investigative notes.
- 4.4 Properly file investigative notes.
- 4.5 Effectively use notes in the courtroom, and discuss problem that could arise.
- 4.6 Describe the steps involved in writing the investigative report.
- 4.7 Discuss the types of investigative reports, and how they should be structured.
- 4.8 Define the characteristics of effective investigative reports.



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**Unit 5 Case Preparation**

**General Outcome:**

- 5.0 The student shall:** be able to properly prepare a case for either criminal prosecution or testimony in a civil proceeding.

**Specific Measurable Learning Outcomes:**

**Upon successful completion of this unit, the student shall be able to:**

- 5.1 Explain why some cases are not prosecuted.
- 5.2 Define the steps taken in preparing a case for court.
- 5.3 Describe what to concentrate on when reviewing a case.
- 5.4 Analyze the essential components of the final report.
- 5.5 Discuss the dynamics of the pre-trial conference.
- 5.6 Describe/discuss the difference in direct and cross examination.
- 5.7 Discuss defense attorney tactics to anticipate.
- 5.8 Describe/discuss nonverbal influence in the courtroom.
- 5.9 Describe/discuss strategies for effectively testifying in court.
- 5.10 Discuss defense attorney tactics to anticipate.



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**Unit 6 Study/Review of Relevant Court Decisions**

**General Outcome:**

**6.0 The student shall:** be able to participate in a critical review of relevant court cases, analyze decision, and determine the effectiveness of the investigators in each situation.

**Specific Measurable Learning Outcomes:**

**Upon successful completion of this unit, the student shall be able to:**

- 6.1 Review case summaries or briefs and assess the quality of the attending investigative process
- 6.2 Recognize critical elements of a case that significantly influence the courts.
- 6.3 Integrate lessons learned from other cases in order to avoid an unfavorable decision or undesirable outcome based on precedent.



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**Unit 7 Mock Trail Activity**

**General Outcome:**

**3.0 The student shall:** be able to participate in a mock trial activity, actually presenting their testimony in support of a conviction for arson, and successfully defend their case under cross examination.

**Specific Measurable Learning Outcomes:**

**Upon successful completion of this unit, the student shall be able to:**

- 7.1 Adequately prepare for courtroom testimony.
- 7.2 Recognize critical elements of their case and testify accordingly.
- 7.3 Recognize the importance of maintaining their focus and perspective, stating only the facts when testifying.
- 7.4 Discuss the consequences of allowing themselves to be drawn off course or into speculation by the defense.