

CRMJ340: Investigative Interviewing

College of Graduate and Continuing Studies, Norwich University

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Course Description

In this course students will gain a multidimensional and integrated perspective in the operational, legal, ethical, and cultural dynamics that influence interrogation tradecraft. These topics are relevant to current and future interrogation practitioners and managers serving in law enforcement, the military, the intelligence community, and those engaged in national security. (3 credits)

Course Outcomes

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

- Analyze the juxtaposition of operational, legal, ethical, and cultural factors when comparing and contrasting law enforcement with military or intelligence interrogations.
- Create a tailored interrogation strategy that recognizes the many variables at play inside the interrogation room, chief among them the influence of interpersonal and intrapersonal dynamics, rapport building, the interview setting, cultural contexts, and steps to mitigate interrogation induced wrongful confessions.
- Analyze and evaluate what preparatory steps and actions an interrogator might take to advance a team-based approach, including deliberative background preparation, interviewing of eyewitnesses or victims, and using constructive best practices and persuasive messaging to transition an uncooperative subject to a cooperative source, while mitigating resistance and deception.

Prerequisite: CRMJ201 or permission of program manager.

Required Textbook

Required Text Book for this Course:

- Topalian, P. (2016). *Tradecraft Primer: A Framework for Aspiring Interrogators*. Boca Raton: CRC Press.

See the [Required Readings](#) page for a list of each week's readings.

Weekly Outline

Week	Topic	Requirements
1	Getting Our Terms Straight	1. Readings 2. Discussions
2	Interrogation's Tortuous Past	1. Readings 2. Discussions 3. Paper #1 Assigned

		4. Assigned Intro to Paper #4 - Group Project
3	Rights of Persons in Custody	1. Readings 2. Discussions 3. Paper #1 Due
4	On Being Human	1. Readings 2. Discussions 3. Paper #2 Assigned 4. Paper #4 – Group Project Status Update
5	The Interrogation Cycle	1. Readings 2. Discussions 3. Paper #2 Due
6	About Confessions	1. Readings 2. Discussions 3. Paper #3 Assigned 4. Paper #4 Group Project Draft Due
7	Unmasking Deception	1. Readings 2. Discussions 3. Paper #3 Due
8	Calling for a Code of Ethics	1. Readings 2. Discussions 3. Paper #4 Group Project – Due 4. Group Project PowerPoint Due

Grades

As a student in this course, you have a number of responsibilities that will affect the level of learning you achieve. These responsibilities include:

1. Working actively to create a challenging and useful learning experience for you, your discussion group, and the class as a whole.
2. Encouraging and supporting the learning of each member of the class.
3. Preparing and participating fully in discussions as well as group and/or class activities.

4. Completing all assigned work on time or making prior arrangements in case of an absence during the week or when a late submission is unavoidable.

In this course you have the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills that will help you become effective, confident and focused in your learning.

You will be provided a weekly commentary/lecture and have [required readings](#) and discussion assignments. There will be a number of written assignments which are explained thoroughly in the week in which they occur. A total of 1000 points are available in the course distributed across the components listed below, with both points and percent of final grade indicated.

Graded Assessments	Points	Weights (%)
Discussions (8@50 points each)	400	40%
Paper 1 – Interrogation Best Practices 1000-1500 words	100	10%
Paper 2 –Relevance of Character 1000-1500 words	100	10%
Paper 3 –Abu Ghraib 1000-1500 words	100	10%
Week 6 Group Written Assignment Draft	100	10%
Week 8 Assignment/Group Exercise PPT	50	5%
Week 8 Group Written Assignment Final	150	15%

Letter grades for the course will be based on the following grading scale.

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Point
A	93-100%	4.0
A -	90-92.9%	3.7
B +	87-89.9%	3.3
B	83-86.9%	3.0
B -	80-82.9%	2.7
C +	77-79.9%	2.3
C	75-76.9%	2.0
C -	73-74.9%	1.7
D +	70-72.9%	1.3

D	67-69.9%	1.0
D-	63-66.9%	0.7
F	0-62.9%	0.0

For complete information on the Grading Policy, please refer to the [CGCS Online Catalog](#) (Sub-Section of Catalog on "Grades.")

All writing for this seminar must follow the APA writing style. All writing for this seminar must follow APA guidelines for formatting and citation, which can be found at [The Purdue Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#). Grading rubrics for assignments and discussions are provided from the [Grading Guidelines and Rubrics](#) link.

[Using Appropriate Sources](#)

In weekly discussion groups and in separate written assignments, students will use research derived from legitimate academic sources. It is the responsibility of the student to choose appropriate source material as necessary.

What You May Use:

Scholarly sources (also referred to as academic or peer-reviewed sources) are written by experts in a particular field and serve to keep others updated on the most recent research, findings and news for that field. All source material should be of sufficient scope and rigor to be suitable for inclusion in a collegiate course.

What You May Not Use:

Popular sources – including general news, business publications, movies, podcasts, magazines and some newspapers – are generally not suitable for inclusion in a bibliography or discussion citation.

Do not use – under any circumstances – reference materials such as encyclopedias (online or traditional print), materials from Wikipedia, etc.

If you have any questions about the suitability of prospective source material, consult your instructor prior to its intended use.

[Discussions](#)

In this course, you will be assigned to a discussion group. Each week your group will discuss one to three questions. All discussions are graded. The quality of your posts and those of your fellow students are intended to create a lively discussion and ensure that a high level of learning occurs. The intended structure and function of this course casts each student in the role of the unbiased observer coolly analyzing the subject matter on a factual basis. As such, the weekly discussions will be analytical in nature, grounded in facts rather than opinion.

Each week you are expected to:

1. Enter the “Discussions” section of the classroom in your assigned group. The discussion questions for the week will be posted by your instructor no later than Monday morning. The week’s discussion will remain active through Saturday evening, at which time the discussion will close. The new discussion will be posted again on Monday, and so forth throughout the term. Discussion questions will begin with “Week 1 title” and so forth in order to identify the question for the week. While you will have access to other groups, your main objective is to participate in your own discussion group.
2. Construct and submit an initial response to the first question(s) no later than midnight Wednesday, local time of the discussion week. The purpose of these posts is to objectively address the subjects at hand. You

will be graded for analysis and integration of course materials and not for the mere recitation of personal experiences or anecdotes. The second response should be posted no later than Friday AM. Critical research is expected as part of posting responses. Initial posts should be between 200 and 300 words in length. Please review the Weekly Discussion Rubric to see how you will be graded.

3. You must also respond to the postings of at least two additional members of your group per question. Your response may be to follow up on points made in the posting, develop new points, or bring in additional information, research etc. to the discussion. Analysis and thoughtful insights will enhance your discussion grade. Therefore, to meet the minimum acceptable standard, three posts per question are expected. This would equate to 'C' level work. More interaction will result in additional grade points.

[Late Work](#)

It is important that writing assignments and discussion posts be completed on time. Extensions of deadlines will be given only for serious extenuating circumstances and when requested and approved in writing in advance. In the absence of such extensions, late work will be downgraded according to the discretion of the instructor.

[Academic Honesty and the Norwich University Honor Code](#)

A student must submit work that represents the student's own original analysis and writing. Copying another's work is not appropriate. If the student relies on the research or writing of others, the student must cite those sources. Words or ideas that require citations include, but are not limited to all hardcopy or electronic publications, whether copyrighted or not, and all verbal or visual communication when the content of such communication clearly originates from an identifiable source. While students are encouraged to seek editing feedback, extensive revisions of one's work by another person is considered a lack of academic honesty, as it is representing another student's work as one's own.

For more information see:

[Academic Dishonesty](#)

[Academic Integrity](#)

[Norwich University Honor Code](#)

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[Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/ADA](#)

Please consult [Appendix H: University Policy - Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) for instructions on obtaining an accommodation.

Disclaimer: Please note the specifics of this Course Syllabus are subject to change. Students are responsible for abiding by any such changes. Your instructor will notify you of any changes.