

Forensic Science Syllabus

Jonah Pearson – Lake Dallas High School

Fall 2025 - Spring 2026

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to Forensic Science at Lake Dallas High School! This syllabus outlines the course plan for your child's class this semester, including key topics, expectations, and how you can support their success. As required by Texas law (Senate Bill 12), this document serves as the instructional plan and is available for your review. I look forward to working with you and your child!

Contact Information

Teacher: Jonah Pearson

Tutorial Hours:

- Monday: 7:00–7:25 AM
- Monday: 3:00–3:30 PM

Conference Time:

- Monday–Friday: 1:25–2:10 PM

Class Location: Room 241 (Second Floor)

Email: jpearson@ldisd.net

School Phone: 940-497-4031

Best Way to Reach Me:

Email or call the office. I will respond within 24 hours on school days.

Required Textbook: No select textbook required. All readings and presentations will be provided to the student unless otherwise stated. Canvas will act as the main source of classroom material distribution. In order to get the most out of lectures, it is important to complete any assigned readings, notes, assignments, and review PowerPoints before coming to class.

Course Description and Objectives: Forensic Science is a course that introduces students to the application of science to connect a violation of law to a specific criminal, criminal act, or behavior and victim. Students will learn terminology and procedures related to the search and examination of physical evidence in criminal cases as they are performed in a typical crime laboratory. Using scientific methods, students will collect and analyze evidence such as fingerprints, bodily fluids, hairs, fibers, paint, glass, handwriting, etc. Students will also learn the history and the legal aspects as they relate to each discipline of forensic science.

The course is recommended for students in Grades 11 and 12. Prerequisites: Biology and Chemistry. Recommended prerequisite or corequisite: any Law, Public Safety, Corrections, or Security Career Cluster course. Students must meet the 40% laboratory and fieldwork requirement. This course satisfies a high school science graduation requirement. Students shall be awarded one credit for successful completion of this course.

Students should be able to distinguish between scientific decision-making methods and ethical and social decisions that involve the application of scientific information. Students should also analyze a system in terms of its components and how these components relate to each other, to the whole, and to the external environment. Lastly, students are encouraged to participate in extended learning experiences such as career and technical student organizations and other leadership or extracurricular organizations.

Texas Administrative Code Objectives (TEKS):

Link to full Texas Administrative Code for this course:

<https://sboe.texas.gov/state-board-of-education/sboe-2021/sboe-2021-november/cofb3-chap127-subm-attach4.pdf>

Attendance: Attendance will not be graded for this course unless the minimum number of minor assignments is not met. However, attendance is still expected from every student and skipping class, other than for an excused absence, will not be tolerated and will result in either a parent phone call, principal call and either detention or in-school suspension for the first offense and rapidly escalate to a possible DAEP placement. This class will require a large amount of in person labs and experiments, making attendance critical for a passing score.

Food Policy: Food and drink (apart from water) will not be permitted in the classroom for the duration of lab activities. This is to ensure the safety of students during experimentation as organic matter, harsh chemicals, and small breakable materials may be used.

Canvas: This class will utilize our course page on Canvas for a majority of the course information. Make sure you can access Canvas as soon as possible and alert the instructor to any difficulties immediately. You will find a copy of this syllabus and other course materials (including online assignments, supplementary materials, videos, and lecture slides) on Canvas. Your instructor will attempt to keep the Canvas gradebook up to date and accurate. Please notify the instructor of any possible errors of graded assignments on Canvas as soon as possible and be prepared to bring the actual assignment to as proof of the grade record error.

Online Assignments: Online assignments will be posted on Canvas under the “modules” and “assignments” tab. For major grades that are not lab related, you are not allowed to use course materials when taking the quizzes, this includes readings, lecture notes, and your handwritten notes. You are not allowed to ‘google’ or otherwise search the web for answers. **You should not ask other students for the answers.** These assignments are intended to help YOU learn the material. Send the instructor an email if you are locked out or have other computer difficulties that prevent you from completing the assignments on time.

Late Work: Assignments will typically be due or graded at the beginning of the week in order to allow the student ample time to correct and potential grading errors. A soft deadline of two days after the assignment due date will sometimes be permitted depending on the situation. Following this deadline, the instructor reserves the right to deduct up to 10 points per class meeting after an assignment is due. Excused absences will allow an additional amount of time to complete assignments proportional to the amount of time a student has been absent for.

Lecture Notes: Most lectures will be posted as pdfs or ppt's on Canvas 2 days after their presentation in class. Lecture notes will be provided to aid with learning and act as study material for tests/quizzes.

Tests/Quizzes: This class will rely mainly on exams and in class assignments for major grades, with quizzes over the lecture material and daily assignments providing the required weekly minor grades.

Grading Policy: By the campus's regulations, this course will be divided into major and minor grade categories. **Major grades will account for 40% of the student's overall grade, Minor grades will account for 60% of the student's overall grade.**

504/ Students with Disabilities: Lake Dallas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Each teacher is given a copy of the student's learning plan and is expected to make the necessary accommodations for each student. For additional accommodations, notify your teacher, school administration, or the campus 504 coordinator. If a teacher fails to meet the legal accommodations for a student, reports may be filed to the school administration or campus 504 coordinator.

Semester 1 Overview

	Topics Covered	TEKS	Activities
Unit 1	Professionalism in The Sciences: Forensic Science	1.A.i; 1.A.ii	Vocabulary, Checks for Understanding, Key Concepts Reviews, Task Prioritization Activities, Drawing a Professional, Professional Email Activity, Employee Handbook Project
Unit 2	STEM Careers: Forensic Science	5.C.i; 5.C.ii; 8.A.i; 8.A.ii; 8.A.iii; 8.A.iv; 8.A.v; 8.A.vi; 8.A.vii; 8.A.viii; 8.A.ix; 8.A.x; 8.B.i	Vocabulary, Checks for Understanding, Key Concepts Reviews, Career Exploration Activity, Educational Institution Research, Careers in Forensics Research Project
Unit 3	The Scientific Method: Forensic Science	2.A.i; 2.A.ii; 2.B.i; 2.B.ii; 2.B.iii; 2.B.iv; 2.B.v; 2.B.vi; 2.B.vii; 2.C.iv; 2.C.v; 2.C.vi;	Vocabulary, Checks for Understanding, Key Concepts Reviews, Science vs. Pseudo-science Case Study,

		2.E.i; 2.E.ii; 2.E.iii; 2.E.iv; 2.E.v; 2.F.i; 2.F.ii; 2.H.i; 5.A.i; 5.A.ii; 5.A.iii; 5.A.iv; 5.A.v; 5.A.vi; 5.A.vii; 5.A.viii; 5.A.ix; 5.A.x; 5.A.xi; 5.B.i; 5.B.ii; 5.B.iii; 5.B.iv; 5.B.v; 5.B.vi; 5.B.vii; 5.B.viii; 5.B.ix; 5.B.x; 5.B.xi; 5.B.xii; 5.B.xiii; 5.B.xiv; 5.B.xv; 5.B.xvi	Theory vs. Law Activity, Scientific Research Project
Unit 4	Ballistics	8.C.i; 15.A.i; 15.B.i; 15.B.ii; 15.B.iii; 15.B.iv; 15.C.i; 15.C.ii; 15.C.iii; 15.C.iv; 15.D.i; 15.D.ii; 15.E.i; 15.E.ii	Vocabulary, Checks for Understanding, Key Concepts Reviews, Online Firearms Components Identification Activities, Interior Ballistics Animation Project, Exterior Ballistics Calculations Worksheet
Unit 5	Toxicology & Controlled Substances	16.A.i; 16.A.ii; 16.B.i; 16.C.i; 16.C.ii; 17.A.i; 17.A.ii; 17.A.iii; 17.A.iv; 17.B.i; 17.B.ii; 17.C.i; 17.C.ii; 17.C.iii; 17.C.iv	Vocabulary, Checks for Understanding, Key Concepts Reviews, Drug Types & Schedules Practice, Lethal Dose Worksheet, Presumptive Tests Lab
Unit 6	Blood Spatter	2.E.i; 2.E.ii; 2.E.iii; 2.E.iv; 18.A.i; 18.A.ii; 18.B.i	Vocabulary, Checks for Understanding, Key Concepts Reviews, Bloodstain Recreation, Blood Spatter Stringing Lab
Unit 7	Questioned Document Analysis	14.B.i; 14.B.ii; 14.B.iii; 14.B.iv; 14.C.i; 14.A.ii; 14.A.iv	Vocabulary, Checks for Understanding, Key Concepts Reviews, Security Features Project, Find the Match Activity, Mock Crime, Ink Analysis Lab

Semester 2 Overview

	Topics Covered	TEKS	Activities
Unit 8	Serology & Bodily Fluids	8.C.i; 18.C.i; 18.C.ii; 19.B.i; 19.B.ii	Vocabulary, Checks for Understanding, Key Concepts Reviews, Components of Blood Project, Blood Typing Lab
Unit 9	DNA Analysis	19.C.i; 19.C.ii; 19.D.i; 19.D.ii; 19.D.iii; 19.D.iv; 19.E.i; 19.F.i; 19.G.i	Vocabulary, Checks for Understanding, Key Concepts Reviews, DNA Model Project, DNA Extraction Lab
Unit 10	Fingerprint and Impression Analysis	8.C.i; 10.A.i; 10.B.i; 10.B.ii; 10.B.iii; 10.B.iv; 10.B.v; 10.C.i; 10.D.i; 10.D.ii; 10.D.iii; 10.D.iv; 10.E.i; 10.E.ii; 10.E.iii; 10.F.i; 10.F.ii	Vocabulary, Checks for Understanding, Key Concepts Reviews, 10-card Lab, Label the Print Activity, Fingerprint Matching Lab, Mock Crime Scene
Unit 11	Forensic Anthropology & Odontology	21.A.i; 21.B.i; 21.B.ii; 21.D.i; 21.D.ii; 21.D.iii.21.E.i	Vocabulary, Checks for Understanding, Key Concepts Reviews, Identification of Remains Lab
Unit 12	Forensic Anthropology & Odontology	21.A.i; 21.B.i; 21.B.ii; 21.D.i; 21.D.ii; 21.D.iii.21.E.i	Vocabulary, Checks for Understanding, Key Concepts Reviews, Identification of Remains Lab
Unit 13	Evidence Collection: Procedures	9.A.ii; 9.D.i; 9.D.ii; 9.G.i; 9.G.ii; 9.G.iii; 12.A.i; 12.A.ii; 13.A.i; 13.A.ii; 17.D.i; 19.A.i; 19.A.ii; 19.A.iii; 21.C.i; 21.C.ii	Vocabulary, Checks for Understanding, Key Concepts Reviews, Evidence Collection Labs