

Las Positas College
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Course Outline for AJ 54

INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

Effective: Spring 2014

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

AJ 54 — INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING — 3.00 units

Investigative reports with emphasis upon accuracy and details necessary. Includes arrest reports, incident reports and miscellaneous field reports. Techniques and methods used to cover information; how to analyze and present information in a clear and concise report

3.00 Units Lecture

Strongly Recommended

- Eligibility for ENG 1A -
with a minimum grade of C

Grading Methods:

Letter Grade

Discipline:

	MIN
Lecture Hours:	54.00
Total Hours:	54.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

Before entering this course, it is strongly recommended that the student should be able to:

- A. -Eligibility for ENG 1A

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

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

- record and use investigation notes;
- have a foundational understanding of the basics of narrative and form police reports;
- describe the physical content of arrest, incident, and other reports and the rationale for different reporting styles;
- explain the requirements for effective communication and how to find and assemble information;
- record information accurately and legibly enough in a police report to present to others in the legal community for purposes of follow-up investigation and the issuance of complaints;
- demonstrate how to provide effective testimony in court as a witness;
- demonstrate the ability to write clear, concise and detailed investigative reports with a high level of grammatical accuracy.

V. CONTENT:

- Introduction to investigative reporting
 - Characteristics of good reports
 - Characteristics of poor reports
- Form and content of basic reports
 - Field interview report
 - Citations
 - Arrest report – primary headings
 - Arrest report – secondary headings
 - Incidents against persons, including domestic violence, rape, and assault with a deadly weapon
 - Incidents against property, including petty theft and burglary
 - Self-initiated car stop report
 - Drug possession/transportation report
 - Legal intervention/use of force memo
- Accuracy of reports for police and court use and for use by other Agencies
- Effective oral and written communication
 - Preliminary steps to information gathering
 - Three-phase interview process
- Methods used to discover information
- Organizational tools and mechanics

1. Correct use of grammar and spelling
2. Aspects of correct reporting style, including first person, active voice, past tense (FAP)
3. Syntax and organization

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Written exercises and case studies** -
- B. **Lecture** -
- D. Interview role playing
- E. Video tapes of incidents to provoke discussion and writing
- F. **Discussion** -

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Approximately 8-10 written reports of varying lengths, including arrest reports, domestic violence offense report, rape victim interview, and use of force reports

VIII. EVALUATION:

A. **Methods**

1. Quizzes
2. Class Participation
3. Home Work
4. Other:
 - a. Methods of Evaluation
 1. Attendance and participation
 2. Written report exercises
 3. Quizzes
 4. final report

B. **Frequency**

1. Attendance and participation are evaluated daily
2. Written reports are due most weeks
3. Quizzes on conceptual and grammatical topics will be given periodically throughout the term
4. The final will be given at the end of the term and will consist of a multi-part investigation that will be reduced to a final written report.

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

1. Hess, Karen M., Ph.D *For The Record: Report Writing In Law Enforcement*. 6th ed., Innovative Systems Publishers, 2010.
2. Biggs, Michael. *Just the Facts: Investigative Report Writing*. 4th ed., Prentice Hall, 2013.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: