

Las Positas College  
3000 Campus Hill Drive  
Livermore, CA 94551-7650  
(925) 424-1000  
(925) 443-0742 (Fax)

## Course Outline for AJ 54

### INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

Effective: Spring 2019

#### 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 -

#### **Grading Methods:**

Letter Grade

#### **Discipline:**

- Administration of Justice

	<b>MIN</b>
<b>Lecture Hours:</b>	54.00
<b>Expected Outside of Class Hours:</b>	108.00
<b>Total Hours:</b>	162.00

#### 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
  1. Write effective summaries of texts that avoid wording and sentence structure of the original
  2. Organize coherent essays around a central idea or a position
  3. Apply structural elements in writing that are appropriate to the audience and purpose
  4. Provide appropriate and accurate evidence to support positions and conclusions
  5. Produce written work that reflects academic integrity and responsibility, particularly when integrating the exact language and ideas of an outside text into one's own writing
  6. Utilize effective grammar recall to check sentences for correct grammar and mechanics
  7. Proofread his/her own and others' prose

#### IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

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

- A. Record and use investigation notes
- B. Have a foundational understanding of the basics of narrative and form police reports
- C. Describe the physical contents of an arrest, incident, and other reports and the rationale for different reporting styles
- D. Explain the requirements for effective communication and how to find and assemble information
- E. Record information accurately and legibly in a police report to present to others in the legal community for the purposes of follow-up investigation and the issuance of complaints
- F. Demonstrate how to provide effective testimony in court as a witness
- G. Write clear, concise and detailed investigative reports with a high level of grammatical accuracy
- H. Explain the process of interviewing victims and witnesses and the legal requirements for the interrogation of suspects

#### V. CONTENT:

- A. Introduction to investigative reporting
  1. Characteristics of good reports
  2. Characteristics of poor reports
- B. Form and content of basic reports
  1. Field interview report
  2. Citations

3. Arrest report – primary headings
4. Incidents against persons, (domestic violence, rape, and assault with a deadly weapon)
5. Incidents against property, including petty theft and burglary
6. Self-initiated car stop report
7. Legal intervention/use of force memo
- C. Accuracy of reports for police and court use and for use by other Agencies
- D. Effective oral and written communication
  1. Preliminary steps to information gathering
  2. Three-phase interview process
- E. Methods used to discover information
- F. Organizational tools and mechanics
  1. Correct use of grammar and spelling
  2. Aspects of correct reporting style, including first person, past tense, active voice,
  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, but not limited to arrest reports, domestic violence offense report, rape victim interview, and use of force reports.
  1. Each report will be more complex than the one previously.

#### VIII. EVALUATION:

##### **Methods/Frequency**

- A. Quizzes
  - Periodic spelling quizzes 2-4 during the semester
- B. Class Participation
  - Giving testimony at a moot trial once
- C. Home Work
  - Take home investigation reports 10 graded reports during the semester

#### IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

1. Hess, Karen M., Ph.D *For The Record: Report Writing In Law Enforcement*. 6th ed., Innovative Systems Publishers, 2010.
2. Davis, Joseph. *Report Writing for Law Enforcement*. 3rd ed., LawTech Publishing, 2017.
3. Commission on POST. *Learning Domain 18 - Report Writing*. 10th ed., Peace Officer Standards and Training Commission, 2017.

#### X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: