



## Geography 497F – Forensic/Crime Geography Syllabus

Instructor:  
Dr. Steven M. Graves  
Class # - 11979

Meeting Times/Room:  
Sierra Hall 107  
Tuesday-Thursday 2:00pm- 3:15pm

Office Hours: Sierra Hall 130 D:  
Tuesday and Thursday 8 to 9AM  
[Dr. Graves' calendar](#) (click to open)  
Dr. Graves' email: [steve.graves@csun.edu](mailto:steve.graves@csun.edu)  
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Department Phone: 677-3532

### Course Catalog Description

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497A-F. Senior Seminar in Geography (3)

Prerequisite: An appropriate upper division course in geography or permission of the instructor. In a seminar setting, students will be guided in reading, research, and writing on selected topics within one of the major sub-disciplines of geography. Each seminar will focus on a particular subject within the designated sub-discipline. The subjects will vary and be determined each semester. Seminars in same sub-disciplines may be repeated for credit. A-Physical, B-Cultural, C-Economic, D- Urban, E-Regional, F-Techniques.

### Expanded Course Description

This course is designed to help students learn how to use the tools and techniques of the forensic geographer so they may prepare to do research in criminology or prepare for a career in the criminal justice field. Class activities will be split nearly evenly between discussion of concepts and theories, and applications of statistical techniques /spatial analysis

### Required Materials

Lersch and Hart. (2011). *Space, Time and Crime 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*. Carolina Academic Press. Durham, North Carolina.

Additional readings will be available on-line via Moodle.

### Attendance and Classroom Obligations

You must attend nearly every class meeting. This is a techniques course and you cannot learn the requisite skills if you are not in the room with the instructor. If you cannot attend regularly, you will not earn a high grade. You may fail the course. Students are expected to contribute regularly to discussions.

### Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities must register with the Center on Disabilities and complete a services agreement each semester. Staff within the Center will verify the existence of a disability based on the documentation provided and approve accommodations. Students who are approved for testing taking accommodations must provide a proctor form to their faculty member signed by a counselor in the Center on Disabilities prior to making testing arrangements. The Center on Disabilities is located in Bayramian Hall, room 110. Staff can be reached at (818) 677-2684.

If you have a disability, please make Dr. Graves aware of it at the beginning of the semester. I am eager to help make arrangements to accommodate any student with differential learning needs.

Other campus-wide disclosures are available at: <http://www.csun.edu/a&r/disclosures/disclosures.html>

## **Course Schedule**

The course schedule is posted on line via Moodle. It is subject to occasional updates and changes. It is critical that you attend class to make note of such changes.

## **Attendance**

Attendance is a key component of good grades. I expect students to complete each assignment on time. You owe it to yourself and those who are subsidizing your education and the taxpayers who support your education. Students who fail to maintain regular study habits should not take this course.

If you have medical or personal issues that demand your absence, please contact Dr. Graves **immediately**. If a student must miss an extended period of time, he/she should arrange to drop the course or make special arrangements with Dr. Graves.

## **Evaluation**

Students will be evaluated by a variety of tools, including multiple choice quizzes, writing assignments, on-line exercises, etc. Students will be evaluated on their ability to demonstrate basic knowledge/comprehension of the subject matter as well as the ability to apply critical thinking skills to the subject matter, by evaluating issues, applying knowledge acquired in novel situations, synthesizing multiple points, issues and knowledge. Listed below are the intended learning outcomes for this course and the evaluation and assessment tools used in the class to determine your success

### ***Intended Outcomes***

In accordance with best teaching practices, intended outcomes for this course are made transparent to students at the beginning of the semester. Students should be able to demonstrate at least basic competency with knowledge and skill sets listed below in order to earn a passing grade in this course. The assessment and evaluation tools used during the semester, designed to measure your success in acquiring these knowledge and skill sets are listed below each learning outcome below.

**Goal A: Building a Knowledge Base** -*Students in this course will identify and define key terms and concepts central to an intermediate level of comprehension of the issues, concepts and theoretical constructs that inform the practice of forensic geography and crime mapping.*

1. Students will identify and explain key terms and concepts associated with forensic geography, spatial analysis and crime mapping.

**Goal B: Acquiring Knowledge**- *Students will develop skills for acquiring new knowledge.*

1. Students will gather data from various sources (Metropolitan Police Departments, FBI, US Census Bureau, NOAA, etc.)

**Goal C: Problem Solving Skills** -*Students will demonstrate problem solving skills.*

1. Students will apply abstract concepts and models, such as: correlation, Hot-spot analysis, measures of central tendency, multivariate regression, spatial autocorrelation, location quotient, etc. to real-world situations.  
- Assessment/Evaluation tool: labs and writing assignments.

2. Students will evaluate, compare and contrast strategies for measuring and analyzing crime-  
Assessment/Evaluation tool: labs and writing assignments.
3. Students will use spatial analysis to make predictions about criminal activity.  
- Assessment/Evaluation tool: labs and writing assignments
4. Students will explain the effect of space and place as it mediates the interactions between and among, crime, economics, politics, physical geography, ethnicity, language, politics, etc.  
- Assessment/Evaluation tool: labs and writing assignments.

**Goal D: Communicating Knowledge** - *Students in this course will be able to communicate ideas effectively.*

Students will demonstrate basic communicative competency with textual, cartographic, graphic and numeric information.

1. Students will effectively communicate ideas and opinions using textual communication.  
- Assessment/Evaluation tool: labs and writing assignments
2. Students will effectively communicate ideas and opinions using graphic communication  
- Assessment/Evaluation tool: labs and mapping exercise.
3. Students will generate multiple statistical measures and use them to construct and/or explain a map other graphic device and/or a textual argument.  
- Assessment/Evaluation tool: labs and writing assignments.

### **Evaluation**

Grades will be determined by your performance on the various assignments and tests as well as your attendance/participation where appropriate.

### **Grading Regime\***

- Participation in class and discussions will count for 5 percent of your total grade.
- Labs and other assignments (7 -10) will count for 35 percent of your total grade.
- The Final Project (and constituent elements) will count for 35 percent of your grade.
- Quizzes and/or examinations will count for 30 percent of your grade.

This is 105%, which means you have an opportunity to score more than 100% in the course and each student is awarded 5% bonus points. No additional bonus opportunities will be available.

- These percentages are subject to class approved modification as conditions warrant.

### **Tentative Grade Scale**

A= (90-100%)  
 B = (80-89%)  
 C = (70-79%)  
 D = (60-69%)  
 F = (59% or less)