



forensic science.
CRIME SCENE DO NOT CROSS



how do you *know*?
what will you *find*?

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Your student has been offered the opportunity to take Forensic Science this semester at Heritage High School. The content of this course is often exciting and interesting to teenage learners, and I am happy to have the opportunity to investigate this field with them. With that said, the content of this course often includes images and ideas of a graphic or mature nature. This course will seek to include such material *for learning purposes only*; there will be no content included in this course that has not been outlined by course standards and expectations. All content will be carefully monitored and purposefully selected by the teacher in order to meet learning goals.

In addition, this course will encourage and facilitate critical discussions about complex topics related to crime and societal inequities that often appear in relation to Forensic Science and the Criminal Justice System. These topics – with close supervision from the teacher and in alignment with course goals – sometimes include discussions related to the use of illicit substances, threats and acts of physical or sexual violence, and even race, wealth, and other social disparities.

To ensure that every student feels safe, I must demand a mature demeanor from all students at all times. I also want to offer thorough communication for guardians or students who feel the content is too intense. There are several ways in which guardians can support our classroom and their students while we explore sensitive topics:

Please talk with your student often about the content of our class, including novels, videos, current events, and other materials we might be using.

Please help me hold your student accountable for maintaining a mature response to all material we can encounter in class.

Please maintain communication with Mr. Edwards, especially regarding any concerns you may have about course content.

Students who express discomfort will be offered an alternative assignment. Students who are unable to act with maturity and responsibility will be given an alternative assignment. If you have any specific questions, concerns, or suggestions, please contact me via my school email: jaedwards@wcpss.net

Please sign below and return this form with your student at your earliest convenience. Students who do not gain permission in writing from a parent or guardian will be provided with alternate assignments.

Thank you for your support and involvement.

- **Mr. Josh Edwards**

I understand that my student, _____, is enrolled in Forensic Science at Heritage High School, and I understand that this course contains some content of a sensitive nature. I agree to support Mr. Edwards' use of content-related materials and I grant permission for my student to participate in these classroom activities, including reading novels, watching films and videos, and discussing mature topics.

Student signature

Date

Parent/Guardian signature

Date



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Acknowledgment of safety procedures for the Forensic Science classroom

In addition to tests, quizzes, projects, and other in-class activities, your student will be participating in several laboratory procedures during Forensic Science at Heritage High School. Science labs can be exciting, but potentially dangerous. Few accidents ever occur, but this does not mean they are not possible. I need your awareness and support in emphasizing the need for students to follow all teacher instructions and safety precautions. **Please read our classroom safety rules with your student** (see the following section) and contact me with any questions you have. For the protection of your student and others in the classroom, failure to follow these rules will result in removal of the student from lab on a temporary basis. Repeated problems will result in parent contact and further action.

Safety precautions are necessary during lab activities and require all of our attention and support. Please sign below and return this form with your student. Students who do not gain permission in writing from a parent or guardian will be provided with alternate assignments.

Please write YES or NO on each blank.

_____ Does your student wear contact lenses?

_____ Does your student have any relevant allergies that Mr. Edwards needs to be aware of? If YES, please provide more If YES, please provide more detailed information in the space provided on the following section of this page. If you prefer, you may attach a note or contact Mr. Edwards via email with this information.

_____ Are there any other medical conditions that Mr. Edwards need to be aware of? If YES, please provide more detailed information in the space provided on the following section of this page. If you prefer, you may attach a note or contact Mr. Edwards via email with this information.

Please sign and date on the lines below, acknowledging your awareness of these safety policies:

I am aware of the safety procedures for Forensic Science at Heritage High School. I agree to support the school in discussing these guidelines as well as appropriate classroom behaviors with my student. I understand that unsafe behaviors during labs are hazardous and unacceptable. Any student whose actions during lab are unsafe or irresponsible will be immediately removed from the activity and provided an alternate assignment.

Student signature

Date

Parent/Guardian signature

Date



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Safety procedures for the Forensic Science classroom

1. Make sure you are aware of where all safety equipment is in the classroom. In case of any emergency, immediately alert the teacher and follow their instructions. Burns, wounds, and other injuries are uncommon in the science classroom when safety procedures are properly followed. Emergency equipment is not to be used or touched if you are not instructed to do so by the teacher.
2. Dress to protect! On lab days, wear close-toed shoes, long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt. Loose jackets must be taken off and long hair must be tied back. Always wear safety goggles when your teacher instructs. Use protective equipment when working with flames and heated containers. If you are not properly dressed, you will not be allowed to participate in lab activities.
3. Follow all instructions given by the teacher. Do not work outside of given procedures, mix unknown or undirected chemicals, or use any lab equipment inappropriately.
4. We will often use food in our labs and other activities. Never eat or drink chemicals or lab materials. Never drink or eat from lab equipment, glassware, or lab containers. Do not eat near lab work areas. Food and open drink containers are not allowed in the classroom on lab days. Also, do not directly inhale vapors from any chemical used in lab activities. Use a wafting technique to smell a substance's odor.
5. There are times when glassware is mishandled and breaks. Report any broken glass to the teacher immediately. Do not attempt to clean it up yourself. The teacher will clean up any broken glass. If any piece of equipment is not working properly, report it to the teacher. This is the best way to make sure all equipment is used safely and properly.
6. Keep a neat work area. Leave tables and counters cleaner than you found them. Clean all equipment after use and return all materials to the proper place.

Students must follow all specific safety instructions given by the teacher. Any violation of safety procedures will be taken seriously. Students who choose to put themselves or their classmates at risk will not be permitted to participate in lab activities. An alternative assignment will be provided for them.

Please note any important medical or safety information below, or contact your student's teacher:



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Student Code of Conduct for Forensic Science

Forensic Science is a high-interest course that many high-school students do not have the opportunity to take. You have been given a great chance to explore and learn about this field of Applied Science and its impacts on important social issues. In order to succeed in this course, all students must show respect, integrity, self-discipline, and kindness. You will help accountable to the expectations outlined in each section of this Code of Conduct.

Classroom expectations: Forensic Science is a course that requires maturity and responsibility. For this reason, is it only offered to upperclassmen at Heritage High School. Students selected to take this course must set an example for our school community. In addition to meeting all WCPSS and HHS expectations for behavior and student conduct, students in Mr. Edwards' classes show **R.I.S.K.** by meeting the following **classroom expectations** on a consistent, daily basis:

- I am in my **seat**, materials **ready**, **working** on today's *Warm Up* when it is *time* for class to start. I am ready to learn when I walk into the classroom.
- I follow directions the **first** time they are given.
- I am consistently on **task**, **focused** in the best way that *I* can. I use electronic devices appropriately – when directed by my teacher and for a specific, class-related purpose.
- I follow all **safety procedures**, at all times.
- We take care of **each other** and our **classroom**. We **support** and **learn** from one another, and we **value** one another's **differences**.

Students are expected to follow HHS' "**Bring Your Own Device**" (BYOD) guidelines. **All devices are to be turned off and completely put away unless Mr. Edwards has invited students to use these for a specific, class-related purpose.** If any student struggles to follow this expectation, their device will be held by Mr. Edwards.

Quality of work: All Science elective courses offered at Heritage High School are honors-level courses, including Forensic Science. While the honors-credit system rewards students for accepting academic challenges, this designation also requires critical thinking and creative work that shows a deeper level of academic engagement than non-honors-level courses. Honors-level courses are open to all students at HHS and all students are encouraged to enroll, but they will also be required to meet higher classroom expectations in order to succeed.

Students taking Honors Forensic Science will be expected to complete assignments in and out of class in order to show their learning and ability to bring together important "big ideas" about Science, its contexts, and its impacts on important social issues. **These assignments will include collaborative and independent work, creative projects, and formal presentations throughout the semester.** The most successful students choose to use their in-class work time as productively as possible and actively engage in classroom discussions and activities.



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Academic honesty: Forensic Science students are responsible for submitting work that represents their own, unique ideas and efforts. This means that plagiarism, copying work from classmates, or other forms of academic dishonesty will not be accepted. In order to avoid concern, students should always ask for help when needed, make sure that any work they complete is based on their own personal ideas and efforts, and that they consistently give formal credit to online and offline resources they have used. **Copying another students' work or copying information from websites is unacceptable under any circumstances.** All cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be taken seriously by Mr. Edwards.

Maturity and Openness: Forensic Science often includes some mature content and diverse perspectives that not everyone is ready to handle. While there are a great variety of scientific and pop culture resources that will help students directly experience the field of Forensics and Criminal Justice, these images, videos, articles and current events, audio stories, podcasts, and novels often contain violent images, aggressive language, or references to difficult topics related to race, gender, and inequality. Mr. Edwards will always make sure that all students feel safe in this class at all times, so it will be required that students conduct themselves with maturity while participating in class discussions and activities.

While sensitive topics may be of interest to some students, they sometimes make others uncomfortable. At no time will Mr. Edwards permit one student to make another student feel uncomfortable or less important in our classroom. All students will treat each other with respect. Additionally, students should let their teacher know at any point they are uncomfortable with the content or ideas we are discussing in class. Mr. Edwards will always provide an alternative for students where they feel safe and can contribute positively.

In this course, students will be asked to consider their own personal experiences and those of others, their own perspectives and biases and those of others. These will play an important role in understanding the contexts in which Forensic Science is most often used and the complex issues facing the Criminal Justice system today. Students will be encouraged to listen to one another as well as opposing viewpoints and evaluate the evidence and arguments of many different sides of difficult topics. Everyone's ideas are valid and important, and everyone will be asked to share their own ideas throughout the semester. While everyone is entitled to their own ideas and opinions, they are not entitled to belittle the opinions of others. Students will be held accountable to participate in class discussions with thoughtful ideas, respect, and an open-mind.

Please sign and date on the lines below, acknowledging your awareness and willingness to abide by this Code of Conduct:

I am aware of the expectations outlined in each section of this Code of Conduct. I agree to follow these expectations to the best of my ability, and to help others do so as well. I will communicate with my teacher at any time I feel I cannot meet these expectations. I understand that I will be held accountable to this Code of Conduct and my choice to violate it may lead to my removal from class discussions and activities and being given an alternate assignment.

Student signature

Date