Guilty or Innocent?
For serious crimes, a jury must be certain “beyond a reasonable doubt” in order to convict. This legal bar is highly subjective; people disagree all the time on what constitutes reasonable doubt. Criminal forensics attempts to quantify guilt or innocence using scientific principles and data. For example, DNA evidence is capable of indicating that there is a one in one quintillion possibility that a defendant is innocent (or guilty). To put things in perspective, one quintillion is ten million times larger than the number of the human beings who have ever lived!

Course Overview
The objective of this course is to provide students with an understanding of forensic science by examining the techniques and instrumentations currently used to analyze chemical, physical and biological evidence. This course also introduces the basic science (chemistry, physics and biology) necessary to comprehend forensics. Students are expected to demonstrate knowledge of basic scientific concepts germane to forensic analysis and crime investigation. This course will also focus on broader aspects of forensic science involving law, media, art, culture and sports. There is both a lecture and laboratory portion to this class. The laboratory component of CHEM 205 will complement the lecture materials and incorporates practical experience in online research, evidence collection, forensic analyses, data confidence and statistical studies, as well as research into the societal implications of forensic science.

Course Details
Text: Forensic Science: A Very Short Introduction, Jim Fraser (available on Amazon for ~$11)
Website: https://chemmac1.usc.edu/205/
Room and Time: SGM 124, MWF 12:00 - 12:50 pm
Office Hours: T 1:30 – 3pm, Th 10 – 11:30am, SGM 450
Exams
There will be three midterms and a final. **No make-up exams are given and you cannot take exams at any other time.** An unexcused missed exam will be counted as a zero. For a student with an excused absence, the remaining exams will be weighted more heavily. Students who miss two midterms will automatically receive a MG (missing grade). Contact Prof. Bryant as soon as possible in the case of illness or emergency. All excuses will be verified based on official University policy. A comprehensive final exam will be given Friday, May 3 from 11 am - 1 pm; if you have a time conflict with the final do not enroll in this class.

Laboratory Reports
Completing lab reports is required to pass this class. Your lowest lab report score is dropped, however students who do not submit ≥2 lab reports will automatically be issued an F. Since labs are 100% internet based, laboratory attendance is optional (but recommended). By attending the laboratory period your TA can assist you in completing the exercise. Lab reports are submitted electronically on the course website only. **The course website sends an automated email verifying a lab report was successfully submitted.** Laboratories are due at 5:00 pm one week after your lab section; for example, if your lab section meets Tuesday, January 15, the lab report must be submitted by 5:00 pm on Tuesday, January 22. For late assignments less than a week late, 50% of the total possible points will be deducted. Assignments over a week late are not accepted. Lab assignments will be digitally analyzed for plagiarism; identical lab assignments from two or more students will receive zero points and will lead to additional sanctions under University rules and guidelines.
Additional Contact Information

Lab Instructors

Prof. Rebecca Broyer         Prof. Thomas Bertollini
SGM 305                    SGM 310
rbroyer@usc.edu            tbertoli@usc.edu

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:
Plagiarism — presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words — is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:
Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255
Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center
For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086
Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support
Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs
Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710
Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Diversity at USC
Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information
Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.
Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu