

## First-hand Forensics: NSU University School Offers Lessons in Crime

Reprinted from Florida Sun Sentinel

By Scott Fishman Staff Writer

Forensic Science AT students at NSU University School immerse themselves in the investigative process.

The culmination of all the lab work is their final exam, which is going through the motions of an outdoor crime scene. The future detectives take on various roles including blood, blood splatter and hair/fiber analysis, as well as forensic geology, toxicology, ballistics and fingerprinting. Measurements are also taken around the taped area with a photographer documenting the activity and evidence.



They then reveal their findings to the class during a PowerPoint presentation where they are critiqued by the group. Each of the students writes a paper concentrating on their particular piece of the project, which is then presented to the district attorney.

The class is headed up by Arnold Miller, who has been teaching at the Davie school for 10 years. The yearlong curriculum is broken up in half with the first part focusing on microbiology. The students are doing college level work with bacteria and other resources. This leads into the forensic science. It is Miller's goal, he said, to create a hands-on environment that is as real and authentic as possible.

"These kids are really good," he said. "They can tell you how a crime was committed within five minutes just by looking at the patterns. These students really get to see different sides of the profession."

Other students and staff are invited to watch the participants in the field. The forensic scientists are wearing lab coats, surveying the area and using their tools with the utmost precision. Senior Carlos Feliciani is part of the ballistics team since it was a shooting and specifically looking at the bullets.

"This class has definitely exceeded my expectations," Feliciani said. "I was really interested in it, but to actually getting to do the work has been great...It's kind of exciting."

Juniors Alicia Bell and Rachel Dickinson have seen their interest in forensic science increase after participating in the course. The two enjoy the fingerprinting aspects of the job.

"When I signed up I didn't know it would be so involved," Bell said. "I'm glad it was. There are so many different parts of the process. You are actually working in a lab analyzing evidence. I can see what I can do later on. We do a lot of labs, so we really understand what we are doing."

"We like the finger printing because you get to process right there and it's among the most hands-on parts of a crime scene. With so many moving pieces, it's really interesting. I want to do something like this when I'm older. It's one thing to see it on television shows, but it's another to experience it a bit more in person and so authentically."