PROPOSED CHANGE IN
COURSE DESCRIPTION

FCM 760: Forensic Management of Digital Evidence

Existing Course Description:

FCM 760. Forensic Management of Digital Evidence.
Students are introduced to information systems used in forensic computing and the methods for analyzing the information exposed by these systems. Emphasis will be on technology permitting the retrieval, preservation, and analysis of computer data which might be used in potential legal cases. Among the topics studied are evidence collection and preservation, data copying, data warehousing and data mining, probability and statistics methods, classification, prediction and cluster analysis. Prerequisites: FCM 700, FCM 710 and FCM 742. 30 hours plus conferences. 3 credits.

New Course Description as it is to appear in the catalog:

FCM 760. Forensic Management of Digital Evidence.
Students are introduced to information systems used in forensic computing and the methods for analyzing the information exposed by these systems. Emphasis will be on technology permitting the retrieval, preservation, and analysis of computer data which might be used in potential legal cases. Among the topics studied are evidence collection and preservation, data copying, data warehousing and data mining, probability and statistics methods, classification, prediction and cluster analysis. Prerequisites: Coursework necessary for admission to Master of Science in Forensic Computing Program. 30 hours plus laboratory. 3 credits.

Rationale for the change:

There is a demonstrated need for more time for students to master practical skills and to provide parallel learning of theory and practice. The change will entail dropping graduate pre-requisites for the course and adding an explicit lab component to the course.

Drop prerequisites: The original program design front-end loaded the theoretical side of the curriculum with the idea that practice would build upon theory. What is clear now, however, based on observations of our first entering cohorts, is that much more time is required to develop facility with the forensic tools used in the field and opportunities for practice and application of these tools should extend through the full program. The primary course for a survey of practical forensic tools is FCM 760, Forensic Management of Digital Evidence. Based on feedback from both faculty and students, it would be more useful if this course were offered in the first semester of a student's program.

Specify lab component: In the spirit of "truth in advertising" we want to make the lab work required in the course explicit by indicating there will be laboratory work in lieu of the customary conferences. These hours will be individually scheduled at faculty and student convenience outside of the regularly scheduled class.