

National Fire Academy Criteria for Contract Instructor Selection

Course: Forensic Evidence Collection (R0214)

Curriculum: Fire/Arson and Explosion Investigation

This six-day intermediate-level course addresses the critical skills essential to the effective collection, packaging, preservation, processing and testing of evidence from a fire and/or explosive scene. This course uses state of the art techniques, practices, protocols and standards relative to the investigator and laboratory scientist which ensures legally defensible evidence presentations in the court of law. This course also includes interaction and collaboration between the street-level investigator and the laboratory scientist. This partnering fosters the collaborative efforts of the entire investigative community involved in overall aspects of evidence from fire and explosive incidents.

Students will be able to assemble and assess various reports and physical evidence relational to a scene; identify the effect of fire and associated suppression activities on forensic evidence; assess and specify forensic tests requested; and describe effects of ignitable liquids and temperature on various types of forensic evidence. Participants will also be able to demonstrate a general knowledge of the instruments and techniques employed in forensic analyses; demonstrate various uses of casting materials for impressions (tires, tool marks, footwear, etc.) and fingerprint dusting/lifting capabilities; and be aware of the other various forensic services such as DNA, toxicology, firearms and tool marks, trace evidence, computer/cellphone forensics, forensic toxicology, and forensic photography.

Criteria for Contract Fire Investigator Selection

All new contract instructors shall be evaluated in three consecutive course deliveries in accordance with the National Fire Academy's (NFA's) Contract Instructor Evaluation program. Existing contract instructors are subject to evaluation in accordance with this program.

NOTE: Two categories of instructors will be used to teach this class consisting of one each from the fire investigation field (investigator) and laboratory field (forensic analyst/chemist). Criteria for the fire investigator are as follows.

Fire Investigator

1. Academic Requirement

- a. The candidate should possess a minimum of an associate degree (bachelor's preferred), from an institution that is accredited, in fire science, fire/arson investigation, fire protection, applied science, criminal justice/law enforcement, or course content in a related area.

NOTE: An equivalent combination of college-level coursework and documented experience may be considered for meeting these requirements.

- b. Documentation of successful completion of ICS-100 and ICS-200.
 - c. Documentation of successful completion of the following Certified Fire Investigator (CFI) Trainer modules (TESTED):
 - Introduction to Evidence;
 - Digital Photography and the Fire Investigator;
 - Evidence Examination: What Happens at the Lab;
 - DNA; and
 - Physical Evidence at the Fire Scene.
- NOTE:** Documentation must be in the form of a transcript indicating successful completion of these **TESTED** modules.
- d. Course attendance or attendance as a contract instructor trainee (CIT) upon preliminary approval of the application.

2. Instructional Experience

- a. Documented successful completion of a recognized adult educational methodology/ fire service instructor course at the college/university, state, or International Fire Service Accreditation Congress, or National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications level (e.g., National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1041). International Fire Service Accreditation Congress or National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications Fire Service Instructor II level certification is recommended.

NOTE: Current instructor certification by the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI) or the National Association of Fire Investigators (NAFI) in accordance with their program criteria is sufficient to satisfy this requirement.

- b. Documented ability to instruct courses or materials similar to the course content at the community college, state or regional level, demonstrated by documentation of experience to include at least three student or supervisor evaluations of instructional ability from courses taught with similar content. Copies of the course description, objectives and syllabus must also be provided.

3. Documented Knowledge and Experience in the Subject Area

- a. Current knowledge and significant experience in fire scene evidence collection practices demonstrated by documented experience or equivalent training or a combination of both experience and training. Experience must be supported by documentation and should indicate sustained and significant investigative authority/responsibility in a formal fire service, state or local fire marshal's organization, arson task force, district attorney's/state's attorney, prosecutor's office, law enforcement agency, or private fire investigative organizational setting.

- b. Current knowledge and documented ability to explain current and emerging standards and practices for fire/arson scene evidence, specifically those related to the requirements and guidelines outlined in NFPA 1033, *Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator* and NFPA 921, *Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations*, to a diverse student population with a broad range of training and experience.
- c. Documentation of experience and certification as a CFI or Certified Fire and Explosion Investigator by the IAAI, NAFI, or a state-sponsored fire/arson investigator certification program recognized by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (ProBoard).
- d. Successful completion, supported by documentation, of the U.S. Fire Administration's (USFA's) NFA course "Forensic Evidence Collection."
- e. Demonstrated current knowledge of the use of computer technology and related software for documentation, projects and classroom presentations.

4. Additional Submittals

- a. For one subject or course related to the course content, provide a 10- to 15-minute video or digital video disk demonstrating your instructional style. This video will be used to evaluate your teaching style in a student-centric adult learning environment, **or** attend the "Forensic Evidence Collection" course and successfully teach a component(s) of the course that is designated and evaluated by the Training Specialist and/or Instructional Systems Specialist.
- b. Submission of a written essay not to exceed 500 words explaining current issues, trends and research that directly relates to the course content.
- c. Curriculum vitae indicating level and extent of knowledge, training, education and experience in the course subject matter.
- d. Provide three references from individuals in organizations where you have delivered training. Do not include the NFA staff as one of these organizational representatives.

5. Continuing Practice or Education

Ability to maintain currency in the field and the specific course by:

- a. teaching a similar course at the college or university level;
- b. taking a similar course within the last five years;
- c. teaching the course at the NFA or in the field within the last two years;
- d. writing and researching a paper or article related to the course topic for at least one of the fire service or related disciplines' trade journals within the last two years; or

- e. current certification as a fire investigator or IAAI certified instructor or NAFI CFI instructor, fellow of the American Board of Criminalistics, or other associated professional certifications requiring currency.

Failure to provide approved documentation of ongoing training or instruction may result in revocation of the contract instructor status.

Criteria for Contract Laboratory Analyst/Chemist Selection

All new contract instructors shall be evaluated in three consecutive course deliveries in accordance with the NFA's Contract Instructor Evaluation program. Existing contract instructors are subject to evaluation in accordance with this program.

NOTE: Two categories of instructors will be used to teach this class consisting of one each from the fire investigation field (investigator) and laboratory field (forensic analyst/chemist). Criteria for laboratory analyst/chemist are as follows.

1. Academic Requirement

- a. The candidate should possess a minimum of a bachelor's degree (master's preferred) from an institution that is accredited in forensic science, chemistry, biology, natural science, physical science, or a content-related area.

NOTE: An equivalent combination of college-level coursework and documented experience may be considered for meeting these requirements.

- b. Documentation of successful completion of ICS-100 and ICS-200.
- c. Documentation of successful completion of the following CFI Trainer modules (**TESTED**):
 - Introduction to Evidence;
 - Digital Photography and the Fire Investigator;
 - Evidence Examination: What Happens at the Lab;
 - DNA; and
 - Physical Evidence at the Fire Scene.

NOTE: Documentation must be in the form of a transcript indicating successful completion of these **TESTED** modules.

- d. Course attendance or attendance as a CIT upon preliminary approval of the application.

2. Instructional Experience

- a. Documented successful completion of a recognized adult educational methodology/fire service instructor course at the college/university, state, or International Fire Service Accreditation Congress, or National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications level (e.g., NFPA 1041). International Fire Service Accreditation Congress or National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications Fire Service Instructor II level certification is recommended.

NOTE: Current instructor certification by the IAAI or the NAFI in accordance with their program criteria is sufficient to satisfy this requirement.

- b. Documented ability to instruct courses or materials similar to the course content at the community college, state or regional level, demonstrated by documentation of experience to include at least three student or supervisor evaluations of instructional ability from courses taught with similar content. Copies of the course description, objectives and syllabus must also be provided.

3. Documented Knowledge and Experience in the Subject Area

- a. Current knowledge and significant experience in forensic science, specifically in fire and explosive debris analysis in an ISO/IEC 17025 accredited laboratory demonstrated by documented experience or equivalent training or a combination of both experience and training. Experience must be supported by documentation and should indicate sustained and significant responsibility in a formal laboratory setting.
- b. Documentation of current experience in conducting forensic examinations of fire debris and explosives-related case work. Documentation should indicate the approximate number of examinations performed and for what purpose(s) (in support for criminal cases, proficiency testing, research, etc.).
- c. Documented successful completion of a Fire Debris Analysis Training Program.
- d. Documentation of certification as a Fellow by the American Board of Criminalistics.
- e. Successful completion, supported by documentation, of the USFA's NFA course "Forensic Evidence Collection."
- f. Demonstrated current knowledge of the use of computer technology and related software for documentation, projects and classroom presentations.

4. Additional Submittals

- a. For one subject or course related to the course content, provide a 10- to 15-minute video or digital video disk demonstrating your instructional style. This video will be used to evaluate your teaching style in a student-centric adult learning environment, **or** attend the “Forensic Evidence Collection” course and successfully teach a component(s) of the course that is designated and evaluated by the Training Specialist and/or Instructional Systems Specialist.
- b. Submission of a written essay not to exceed 500 words explaining current issues, trends and research that directly relates to the course content.
- c. Curriculum vitae indicating level and extent of knowledge, training, education and experience in the course subject matter.
- d. Provide three references from individuals in organizations where you have delivered training. Do not include the NFA staff as one of these organizational representatives.

5. Continuing Practice or Education

Ability to maintain currency in the field and the specific course by:

- a. teaching a similar course at the college or university level;
- b. taking a similar course within the last five years;
- c. teaching the course at the NFA or in the field within the last two years;
- d. writing and researching a paper or article related to the course topic for at least one of the fire service or related disciplines’ trade journals within the last two years; or
- e. current certification as a fire investigator or IAAI certified instructor or NAFI CFI instructor, fellow of the American Board of Criminalistics or other associated professional certifications requiring currency.

Failure to provide approved documentation of ongoing training or instruction may result in revocation of the contract instructor status.

Submit cover letter and documentation to:

National Fire Academy
Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
16825 South Seton Ave.
Emmitsburg, Maryland 21727
fema-nfainstructorapp@fema.dhs.gov