



**MANAGING A DIGITAL
FORENSICS LABORATORY**



IACIS 2016

Managing a Digital Forensics Laboratory Program Description and Syllabus

Syllabus

Program Overview

The IACIS Managing a Digital Forensics Laboratory (MDFL) Training Program is a 16-hour course of instruction. The program is designed to provide supervisors, managers and executives with the best practices in digital forensics laboratory operation.

This 16 hours of instruction (Thursday and Friday of the first week of the IACIS Training Event) is designed for new supervisors and experienced managers that have the responsibility to supervise a digital forensics unit or laboratory. Topics include training and certification of examiners, case and evidence management and development of policies and procedures. The pros and cons of accreditation from organizations such as the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors (ASCLD) and compliance with standards such as ISO 17025 will be discussed.

Prerequisites

There is no formal computer forensics credentials required for entry into the MDFL program, however, the program is designed for those that either as a first line supervisor or senior level manager supervise a digital forensics laboratory or digital forensics examiners.

Attendance and Program Conduct Requirements

The MDFL program provides sixteen (16) hours of instruction across various specialized courses on the management and supervision of digital forensics labs and personnel. The program runs for two (2) consecutive days, Thursday and Friday during the first week of the IACIS Training Event, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Each day there is a one (1) hour break for lunch from 12:00 noon to 1:00 PM. Courses are timed using the traditional "50 minute hour" to allow for a short break at the top of each hour.

On the first day of the program, the first hour (from 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM) is used for administrative purposes such as staff introductions and providing students information about the course of study to follow. This hour is considered part of the overall program due to the vital information provided.

On the last day of the program the entirety of the instructional day (8:00 AM to 5:00 PM) is dedicated to normal instruction, per the published class schedule, meaning that students should not expect early dismissal from class on that day, and so should consider this when budgeting and planning lodging and travel arrangements.

Students are expected to attend all classroom sessions. Classes begin promptly at 8:00 AM, and students are expected to be prepared to begin the instructional day at that time and classes will continue until 5:00 PM on each class day.

IACIS understands that unforeseen circumstances and emergency situations may arise, and so students are permitted to briefly leave the classroom to deal with such situations. While students are encouraged to take notes during classes, activities, and laboratory sessions, students are not permitted to use their personal laptop computers or other personal computing devices of any type during any classes. Similarly, students are not permitted to use any audio or video recording devices, at any time during any classroom or laboratory session.

Students are expected to dress professionally and appropriately for a “business casual” environment (collared shirt, slacks, etc.). Shorts, tank tops, sandals, flip flops, and similar casual dress is not permitted in the classroom at any time.

Something for students to consider is that classrooms are air conditioned, and the temperature is set lower than what one may typically expect to keep the room comfortable given the heat that can be generated by a 20-25 students and computers. At times, however, the environment can be difficult to control: There may be times when all of the computers are operating and it may get warm in the classroom, however more often the room can become too cold for some students. So one might consider dressing in light weight clothing and bringing a sweater or light jacket to wear, if needed.

Students must be mindful of the fact that the classroom is small, with a class size of 20-25 students. In such an environment, even minor distractions can make it difficult for others to hear or to remain focused on the instructor. So, then, students are asked to be courteous and aware of their fellow students.

During classes, students are expected to be attentive and fully engaged. Cell phones must be put on “vibrate” or “silent” mode, and sending text messages with cell phones and other hand-held devices is prohibited in the classroom.

Program Outline

- I. Creating a Digital Forensics Laboratory
 - Funding
 - i. Budgets
 - ii. Grants
 - Facilities
 - Evidence Storage
 - Hardware and Software Requirements
 - Selecting and Training Personnel
 - i. Competency Testing
 - ii. Certification
 - Quality Assurance
 - Legal Issues and Standards
 - i. ASCLD
 - ii. ISO 17025
 - iii. Peer Review
 - iv. Hardware and Software Validation and Testing
- II. Management
 - Role of the Supervisor/Manager
 - i. Evaluating examiners performance
 - Workload distribution and Prioritization
 - Mental Health of Examiners
- III. Future Challenges