HIBBING COMMUNITY COLLEGE
COURSE OUTLINE

COURSE NUMBER & TITLE:  LAW 1544: Police Report Writing
CREDITS:  3 (1 Lec / 2 Lab)
PREREQUISITES:  ENGL 1060 or ENGL 1065: Freshman Composition (must pass with a “C” or higher)

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:
Report Writing is a study of the importance of taking effective complete notes, then transcribing the information into clear, complete, concise, police reports. This includes preserving a chain of evidence through accurate reports. The common types of report forms currently in use are included.

OUTLINE OF MAJOR CONTENT AREAS:
1. An introduction to police reports and report writing
   A. Reports defined
   B. Types of reports
   C. Uses of reports
   D. Audience
   E. Common problems
   F. Importance of well-written reports
2. Characteristics of a well-written report: content
   A. A well-written report: content vs. form
   B. Factual
   C. Accurate
   D. Objective
   E. Complete
3. Characteristics of a well-written report: form
   A. A well-written report: form vs. content
   B. Concise
   C. Clear
   D. Mechanically correct
   E. Standard English
   F. Legible and on time
4. Steps in report writing
   A. The five basic steps
   B. Gathering the facts - investigating, interviewing, interrogating
   C. Taking notes
   D. Organizing your information
   E. Structuring the narrative
F. Writing your report
G. Using past tense
H. A word on computers
I. Evaluating your report
J. Appearances count

5. Principles of clear writing
   A. First person
   B. Active voice
   C. Modification
   D. Pronoun reference
   E. Parallelism

6. Choosing the right words
   A. Word choice
   B. Conciseness

7. Grammar
   A. Use of pronouns
   B. Subject and verb agreement
   C. Adjectives and adverbs
   D. Negation
   E. Use of articles
   F. Sentences
   G. Sentence fragments
   H. Run-on sentences
   I. Combining sentences

8. Spelling for law enforcement
   A. Common words with difficult spellings
   B. Words frequently used in police reports
   C. Homonyms
   D. Commonly confused words

9. Abbreviations, numbers and capitalization
   A. Abbreviations
   B. Numbers
   C. Capitalization
   D. Apostrophes
   E. Commas
   F. Parentheses, dashes, and slashes/diagonals
   G. Semicolons
   H. Colons
   I. Quotation marks
   J. Underlining (italics)
   K. Hyphens

10. Practical applications of police report writing
    A. Seven scenarios
B. Reports
   1. Powerful little words
   2. Action words
   3. Factual statements
   4. Everyday language
   5. Organization of thoughts
   6. Structure of ideas
   7. AFINC (active voice, first person, interviewing, notetaking, chronological order) formula

11. Specialized forms
   A. Vehicle
   B. Initial complaint report
   C. Narrative report
   D. Minnesota offense code
   E. Person
   F. Domestic abuse
   G. Implied consent advisory
   H. Blood alcohol
   I. Urine alcohol
   J. Intoxication field
   K. Notice and order of revocation and/or disqualification
   L. Evidence/property
   M. Arrest
   N. Crime victims

12. Constitutional considerations
   A. Obtaining information
   B. Use of information
   C. Ethical and Professional Behavior

13. Courtroom Testimony
   A. Preparation
   B. Testifying

**COURSE GOALS/OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES:**
1. Students will demonstrate, through discussion and application, an understanding of content and form as characteristics of a well written report.
2. Students will define the acronym AFINC and demonstrate its importance in a report.
3. Students will define the five (5) steps used in report writing and demonstrate their use by completing written and dictated reports.
4. Students will demonstrate and apply an understanding of proper grammar, punctuation, and accurate spelling in a report.
5. Students will demonstrate an understanding of special forms and types of reports through discussion and practical application.
6. Students will demonstrate an understanding of constitutional considerations and courtroom testimony through discussion and application in interviews and a mock trial.

**MNTC GOALS AND COMPETENCIES MET:**
N/A

**HCC COMPETENCIES MET:**
- Working Productively and Cooperatively
- Communicating Clearly and Effectively
- Thinking Creatively and Critically
- Social /Civic Responsibility

**STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS:**
Examination of your performance is directly related to the performance objectives. Each student is expected to prepare for class, attend lectures, participate in class activities, participate and implement input into class discussions, complete examinations and hand in outside assignments when due.
Attendance is crucial in this class.

**STUDENT ASSESSMENT SHALL TAKE PLACE USING INSTRUMENTS SELECTED/DEVELOPED BY THE COURSE INSTRUCTOR.**

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**
We cannot plan, and subsequently establish training for every conceivable eventuality or situation which an officer will confront. However, we intend to increase awareness of risks and show various tactics at a basic entry level with the understanding that procedures may change from department to department.

*Curriculum Committee Approval Date: February 8, 2018*

AASC APPROVAL DATE: February 21, 2018
REVIEW DATE: February 2023