

# LAW ENFORCEMENT SEMINARS LLC SYLLABUS

## Course Title

Overdose Death Investigations

## Length of Course

12 Hours

## History and Purpose

Overdose deaths have risen to epidemic proportions across the United States, surpassing car accidents in 2018 and continuing today. Many Law Enforcement Agencies have been caught off-guard in their response, or lack thereof, to the crisis. Addiction, coupled with the unbridled greed and ruthlessness of drug cartels have created the perfect storm of a combined Public Safety and Public Health catastrophe: taking the lives of millions of Americans.

Developing and implementing a Law Enforcement response to the overdose epidemic not only builds trust within the community, it also holds Drug Trafficking Organizations and their minions accountable. More importantly, it also saves lives. This course offers a thorough foundation for a departmental response to overdoses and how to investigate drug overdose deaths.

## Participants

This course is designed for narcotics investigators, homicide investigators, patrol officers, supervisors, task force directors and crime scene investigators.

## COURSE COMPOSITION

	<u>HOURS</u>
1.1 Introduction and Course Overview	1.0
1.2 History of Opioid Epidemics	1.0
1.3 The Science of Addiction	1.5
1.4 Crime Scene Considerations	1.5
1.5 Federal and State Overdose Statutes	1.5

1.6	Cell Phone Considerations	1.0
1.7	Medical Examiner / Coroner Investigations	1.0
1.8	Case Studies	2.0
1.9	Prosecuting the Overdose Arrest	1.0
2.0	Summary / Critique	0.5

### **Course Goals**

Upon completion of this seminar, the participants will be able to:

- **Understand contributing factors leading to a drug overdose death.**
- **Evaluate your Agency's current response to the overdose crisis.**
- **Create a guideline of how to investigate and prosecute a drug overdose death.**

### **Section Title:** Introduction and Course Overview

Learning Goal: Instructor will describe goals and objectives, as well as student responsibilities. An overview of the course material will be presented. Students and instructors will self introduce.

Performance Objectives: Students will have an understanding of course content and topical areas.

### **Section Title:** History of Opioid Epidemics

Learning Goal: Instructor will present a history of where the current opioid epidemic came from and previous opioid epidemics. Main players and socio-economic contributing factors will be discussed.

Performance Objectives: Students will gain an understanding of where we are in the opioid epidemic by understanding where it came from.

### **Section Title:** The Science of Addiction

Learning Goal: Instructor will present medical information about brain chemistry as it relates to drug use, and how addiction treatment works. Students will learn the biological reasons people exhibit poor decision making when suffering from addiction.

Performance Objectives: Students will have increased understanding of the actions of people

during active narcotics use, as well as their habits and patterns. Students will also learn effective communication methods and strategies when speaking with and interviewing individuals suffering from opioid use disorder.

**Section Title:** Crime Scene Considerations

Learning Goal: Instructor will walk students through what a thorough overdose death investigation entails. Students will learn the necessity of a detailed crime scene investigation, and how the success of an overdose prosecution relies on it.

Performance Objectives: Students will recognize how to direct a thorough crime scene investigation as it pertains to an overdose death crime scene.

**Section Title:** Federal and State Overdose Statutes

Learning Goal: Instructor will present the U.S. Code as well as any State statutes (it will be custom designed for the State in which the instruction is occurring). Students will learn the difference between Federal and State overdose law, as well as the positives and negatives of each.

Performance Objectives: Students will learn the specific details of Federal and State overdose laws and be able to determine which route is the most beneficial with each investigation.

**Section Title:** Cell Phone Considerations

Learning Goal: Instructor will provide an in-depth analysis of forensic cell phone extraction and the key aspects of phone downloads needed in overdose death investigations. Instructor will discuss legal constraints as they pertain to cell phone data in both Federal and State prosecutions.

Performance Objectives: Students will be proficient in identifying pertinent data in an overdose death victim's phone, as well as a suspect's phone. Students will be provided examples of cell phone search warrants and cell phone extraction data.

**Section Title:** Medical Examiner / Coroner Investigations

Learning Goal: Instructor will provide medicolegal instruction on the breakdown of an autopsy and how it pertains to overdose death investigations. Instructor will provide instruction on the anatomy of an overdose death.

Performance Objectives: Students will understand the importance of an autopsy to an overdose death investigation. Students will learn to analyze Medical Examiner / Coroner data provided on an autopsy report.

**Section Title:** Case Studies

Learning Goal: The instructor will provide students an in-depth overview of several drug overdose death investigations and prosecutions.

Performance Objectives: Students will learn first-hand how to structure an overdose death investigation and prosecution.

**Section Title:** Prosecuting the Overdose Arrest

Learning Goal: Instructor will provide thorough insight into some pitfalls and traps to avoid when prosecuting drug overdose deaths. Students will learn about the nuances specific to prosecuting these cases, and how to increase chances successful prosecution.

Performance Objectives: Students will understand how to successfully structure a drug overdose death investigation and have a roadmap of a successful jury prosecution.

**Section Title:** Summary / Critique

Learning Goal: The instructor will provide students an opportunity for questions and answers of any previously covered material. Course evaluations will be completed and certificates will be distributed.

Performance Objectives: Students will clarify any misunderstanding they may have from the course material. Students will also have an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and instructional staff.