

# CHM 128IN Case Study Report Information

Students are required to write a case study report. This is a study of various forensic science methodologies in a real OR in a simulated crime case. The report should include a short description of the case, the physical evidence involved in the case, how the physical evidence and the crime lab contributed, what was the outcome. Although the development of the inquiry and the story are important, the presentation should tell the story in a concise manner and elaborate on the physical evidence. The student's presentation is a lesson, not a detective story.

Select a case study from the literature (see the reference section on the course web page) that has sufficient involvement of the crime lab or a case from truTV. Pay attention to all the details: Crime scene description(s), participants in the case (victim, suspects), family, friends, police, crime lab investigators, the background, description of the discovery and collection of the evidence, handling and analyses of the evidence, trial, and outcome. Be sure to discuss the contribution of the crime lab.

When researching the case on the Internet, use a search engine such as Google ([www.google.com](http://www.google.com)). Start out with one or two key words, then, after checking, add additional key words or terms. Use the word "and" or a "+" sign to join key words together. You can also use sentences or phrases in your search. Precede phrases or sentences by the term "intitle:" if you are looking for the phrase in the title of the article, or "intext:" if you are looking for the phrase in the text of the article.

A word of caution. Information on the Internet ranges from excellent to inaccurate. Wikipedia, may be a good starting point, but the information has not always been checked or is occasionally modified by individuals with the purpose of reinforcing their own agenda. Web sites often quote directly from other sites and omit important information. Some writers will inject their own viewpoints, writing styles, and emphasis, producing misconceptions. It is important to cross check information on at least two independent web sites and, if the information is identically worded, check a third web site. There are always two sides to an issue, don't just choose information from one side, try to get opposing viewpoints.

Prepare a handout of 2-5 neatly typed pages, double spaced, for the class with a concise summary of the case, with sketches or other aides if necessary and a bibliography of sources. Each student is responsible to submit the handout to the instructor as a PDF file. The content of the handout PDF file should be approved one week before the presentation day by the instructor. An approved handout is a prerequisite of the presentation. Prepare your presentation in PowerPoint for the presentation day. Rehearse your presentation, and be prepared to answer questions. The presentation should be about 15 minutes.

**Topics for the case study reports must be approved by your instructor.** (This reduces duplication of topics and will help you to manage information.)

**.Margins** should be no greater than **one inch** (2.5 cm), top, bottom and sides.

**Type size** should be no greater than **11 point**, except for headings. Use a standard type font (such as Times, Calibri, or Arial), don't search for the font that takes up the most space. Points will be deducted for large type size or extra wide character spacing.

**Diagrams, pictures, charts, and graphs** may be important information to explain or illustrate your topic. These items are considered additional material. The diagrams, pictures, charts or graphs may be placed in the body of the text or added on separate pages at the end of the text. Don't forget to reference this material.

**Try to use three or more references.** Use multiple sources, do not use different sections of a single web site or a single book or magazine. Look for sources that may tell negative or unfavorable information about your case to obtain a balanced overview of your topic. Do not believe everything you read, you must apply some critical thinking to the information you find. Put the information in your own words rather than copying directly from the reference or the internet. Use footnotes or appropriate citations, where applicable, to acknowledge borrowed material, informing the reader of the source of statements or quotations, or for presenting explanatory or supplementary material not appropriate to the text. **Not citing direct quotes of downloaded material is considered plagiarism and will result in a grade of zero for the report. Please be advised that direct downloading of large sections of material from the Internet is considered to be plagiarism even with a citation listed at the end of the material.**

All sources used in the researching and writing of the report should be listed in a **bibliography**. Generally, the bibliography will be on the last page of the report. The bibliography (and also footnotes, if you use them in your writing style) presents the following information:

**For a book:**

Author's name (last name first), the title of the book (underlined or in italics) including any series or volume number, the edition, if other than the first, the publisher, the place of publication (or home office of the publisher), the date of publication on the copyright page, and relevant page numbers. An example of a book reference is:

Saferstein, Richard, *Criminalistics, An Introduction to Forensic Science*, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed., Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ, 2001, pages 228-257.

**For an article:**

The name of the writer, the title of the article in quotation marks, the title of the periodical (underlined or in italics), the volume number (underlined or in bold print), the date of the issue of the periodical, and the page numbers. An example of a magazine reference is:

Roger, J., P. Angel, and Neville J. Woolf, "Searching for Life on Other Planets", *Scientific American*, **274**, No. 4, April 1996, P. 60.

**For Internet material:**

The name of the author or publisher of the home page, the title of the article in quotation marks, the title of the magazine or journal or database (underlined or in italics), Internet address of the article, and the date the article or the home page was last updated. (The internet address, by itself, is not considered a valid reference.) An example of an Internet reference is:

Proctor & Gamble, "The Tide Fabric Care Network",  
[http://www.pg.com/frameset\\_fs.jhtml?frameURL=www.tide.com](http://www.pg.com/frameset_fs.jhtml?frameURL=www.tide.com), 2003

Internet references will be checked by your instructor. Failure to find and connect to an internet reference will invalidate that reference.

**For unpublished material:**

The name of the writer or individual (last name first), the title in quotation marks (if it is an article), and the date. If the information is relayed in an interview or by letter, tell the individuals professional position and use the term *personal communication* in place of the title. An example of unpublished information is:

Smith, John P., Technical Service Engineer, Nuclear Missile Company, *personal communication*.

If you have personal knowledge of your topic as a result of personal experience, include that information in the paper.

Diagrams, charts, tables, and pictures may be included in addition to the text of the paper. They are best added as separate pages at the end of the report rather than trying to space them into the body of the text. When referring to a table, write *see Table 1* (Roman or Arabic number may be used) and when referring to a picture or diagram write *see Figure 1*. Give credit to the source if the table or figure is not original.

**If a proper bibliography is not included, the grade on the paper will be penalized by a minimum of 10 points.**

**English Composition:**

This is a chemistry/forensics course and the paper is on a scientific topic. You are, however, expected to write with proper organization, composition, spelling, and grammar befitting a college level report. It is suggested that you may want to have your paper reviewed by your English teacher before completing your final product.

**Binding:**

A single staple in the upper left hand corner of the report is sufficient for binding the pages together. Fancy report covers, spiral bindings, and other types of bindings are not necessary and do not improve your grade.

**Please submit a full copy of your report for your instructor.** Prepare summary copies for the class. If you submit an electronic copy, the electronic copy must be in Microsoft Word format, RTF format, or PDF format.

**Do not download material directly from the Internet or copy information directly from the case literature. Except for citations, you must put the information in your own words. Report information and references may be checked** by your instructor through a variety of Internet sources and resources. Please note that the college subscribes to turn-it-in.com, a service that checks papers against thousands of sources for plagiarism, as such, be sure to properly cite references for all information and quotations.

**Grades** are based on content and accuracy of information, relevance to chemistry, proper references and citations, and composition. Reports are evaluated "as is" and are not returned for correction or updating of information.

**Late reports** will be penalized:

**10 points the first 24 hours.**

**An additional 10 points until the next class period.**

**An additional 20 points** will be deducted until the third class period.

**After that, a grade of zero** will be recorded for the report.

**Not completing the required report can result in a failing grade for the course.**