## J24 Education and Training in Forensic Document Analysis Offered as an Elective Course to Undergraduate Forensic Science Students in Turkey

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**Learning Overview:** After attending this presentation, attendees will understand how an elective course in the field of forensic document analysis is offered in Istanbul to undergraduate forensic science students by academicians with a professional expertise in the field of more than 20 years.

**Impact on the Forensic Science Community:** This presentation will impact the forensic sciences community by presenting the details about the one-and-only document analysis teaching and training program at an undergraduate level in Turkey.

In Turkey, as with every developed country, it is necessary to instruct any interested candidate well equipped with knowledge and experience in forensic science at the undergraduate level to prepare them for conducting scientific research, for developing novel methods and instruments, or for future positions, such as private or government crime laboratories. Transforming our expert establishments, whether private or governmental, and our crime laboratories into organizations that are accredited and well-known in Europe and around the world, and also enabling the export of high technology heavily depends on the aforementioned. The Forensic Science program under Uskudar University's Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences is the first and still the only one in Turkey, offering BSFS degrees. The learning content was prepared in accordance with the Forensic Science Education Programs Accreditation Commission (FEPAC). FEPAC is a body of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS), founded in 1948, which currently has more than 6,500 members and is the only association in the world that accredits undergraduate and graduate education.

Efforts to strengthen the reliability of the methods of forensic practitioners have led to attempts to create standardized teaching and training programs, especially in the field of pattern recognition. Document analysis/signature identification is one of them. An elective course is offered at the fifth and sixth semester to teach the basics of this field and train the students accordingly. The course does not train the student as a document examiner and in no way certifies or qualifies the student to conduct questioned document analysis for the court. The syllabus encompasses: (1) the functions and responsibilities of questioned document examiners in the criminal justice system; (2) the process for obtaining exemplars, types of document examination (e.g., handwriting, typewriting, inks, erasures) collection and preservation of evidence as well as courtroom procedures; (3) theoretical and practical aspects of handwriting as forensic evidence; and (4) production of normal and false handwriting, variables in handwriting production, standards of comparison, identification theories, examination methodologies, expression of conclusions, and challenges to professional practice. Students have hands-on training according to the best practice manuals, standards, and guidelines published by the Scientific Working Group for Forensic Document Examination (SWGDOC), American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) E1732, and European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI) and learn the operation and practical use of various instrumentation used in the field such as the Video Spectral Comparator (Foster & Freeman VSC 8000), Leica® Z6 Stereo Macroscope, and Leica® FSC Comparison Microscope.

**Document Analysis, Signature Identification, Forensic Science Education**



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