As the scientific reliability of friction ridge evidence continues to be challenged, friction ridge examiners must be prepared to defend their science in the courtroom. Not only do examiners need to be able to discuss topics such as ACE-V, validation, error rate, and standards in an admissibility hearing, but they also need to be prepared to respond during cross-examination of trial testimony. The recent National Academy of Sciences report entitled “Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward,” identified perceived weaknesses in the forensic sciences and has already generated challenges in the courtroom. It is now more important than ever for fingerprint examiners to effectively communicate why, and demonstrate how, friction ridge science is reliable.

This 24-hour course of instruction is designed for friction ridge examiners. Through presentations and group discussions, students will learn how to explain the ACE-V methodology and demonstrate the scientific reliability of friction ridge evidence during direct testimony, as well as how to formulate responses to defense-related arguments in preparation for cross-examination testimony.

**Schedule**

**Day 1**

8:00 am Welcome and introductions

8:30 am Legal background for expert testimony
   - U.S. v. Frye
   - Federal Rule of Evidence 702
   - Daubert v. Merrell Dow Pharmaceuticals
   - Kumho Tire v. Carmichael
   - General Electric v. Joiner

9:15 am Steps leading to a Daubert hearing

9:30 am Break

9:45 am Breakdown of Daubert defense motion

10:15 am Discussion of issues raised in Daubert defense motions
10:30 am Overview of National Academy of Sciences Report
“Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward”

11:30 am Lunch

12:45 pm Read latent print section of NAS Report Chapter 5

1:15 pm Discussion of issues raised in NAS Report

4:00 pm Homework – read the following articles:


Day 2

8:00 am Preparing for a Daubert direct testimony

9:45 am Break

10:00 am Discuss cross-examination topics (including responses, references, and research)

11:30 am Lunch

12:45 pm Cross-examination topics cont.

1:45 pm Break

2:00 pm Other stuff you should know, but doesn’t really fit anywhere else

Adverse decisions
Madrid
Testifying to verification (6th Amendment, hearsay, and bolstering)
MN v. Hull
The Fingerprint Sourcebook
Homework – read the following articles:


**Day 3**

8:00 am  Analysis

9:45 am  Break

10:00 am  Distortion video

10:30 am  Analysis exercises

11:30 am  Lunch

12:45 pm  Comparison

1:00 pm  Evaluation

1:15 pm  Verification and Blind Verification

1:45 pm  PowerPoint charts presentation

2:00 pm  Break

2:15 pm  Critics

2:45 pm  Final questions

4:00 pm  Final thoughts