

Forensic Science

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Administered by the International Forensic Research Institute (IFRI), the Master of Science in Forensic Science is an interdisciplinary program designed to prepare students for careers in local, state and national forensic science laboratories. The program may also be suitable preparation for doctoral instruction in several disciplines.

Admission Requirements

To be admitted into the Master's degree program in Forensic Science, a student must:

1. Hold a Bachelor's degree in a relevant discipline from an accredited college or university.*
2. Have a 3.0 GPA in upper-level course work and a combined score (verbal and quantitative) of 1000 or higher on the Graduate Record Exam.
3. Two letters of recommendation of the student's academic potential.
4. Be accepted by a faculty sponsor.
5. Receive approval from the Graduate Committee.
6. International graduate student applicants whose native language is not English are required to submit a score for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). A total score of 80 on the iBT TOEFL or 6.5 overall on the IELTS is required.

*Minimum requirement is the equivalent of a bachelor's degree in biology, chemistry or related science approved by the graduate committee. It is recommended that students have the equivalent of a minor in chemistry before taking the required courses.

Degree Requirements

The Master of Science in Forensic Science consists of a minimum of 32 credits, including a thesis based upon the student's original research or completion of an independent study report option.**

A maximum of six credits of post-baccalaureate coursework may be transferred from other institutions, subject to the approval of the Graduate Committee. The graduate committee will consist of the Graduate Program Director and a member from each of the following departments: Chemistry, Biology, Criminal Justice and Psychology. The thesis committee shall consist of the research advisor (normally the faculty sponsor), and at least two additional committee members who have some expertise in the graduate student's research area. All members must hold graduate faculty status.

Required Courses

BSC 5406	Forensic Biology	3
CHS 5542	Forensic Chemistry	3
CHS 5531	Forensic Analysis	3

BSC 5931	Thesis Proposal	1
	or	
CHM 6935	Thesis Proposal	1
	or	
	approved cognate ¹	
BSC 5975	Thesis Defense Seminar	1
	or	
CHM 6971	Thesis Defense Seminar	1
	or	
	approved cognate ¹	
BSC 6971	Thesis	6
	or	
CHM 6970	Thesis	6
	or	
	approved cognate ¹	

Electives² 15

¹Equivalent courses in the student's area(s) of thesis concentration may be substituted upon approval by the thesis committee in consultation with the Graduate Program Director (i.e., CCJ, GLY, PHY, PSY). ²At least fifteen credits of additional graduate-level courses, workshops and laboratories (excluding research and seminar) from participating departments approved by the thesis committee in consultation with the Graduate Program Director. [Consult the Director for a selected list of Chemistry, Biology, Earth Sciences, Criminal Justice, and Legal Psychology courses].

**A report option is available for students with at least one year of forensic science lab work experience. Students approved for this option can replace "Thesis" with "Independent Study in Forensic Science (CHS 6905)" and the two additional required courses "Analytical Toxicology (CHS 5539)" and "Advanced Quality Control (STA 5664)".

Graduation Requirement

A grade of "C" or higher must be obtained in all courses with a cumulative average of 3.0/4.0 or higher, and presentation and submission of a satisfactory research thesis to the Thesis Committee.