FORENSIC SCIENCE

Graduate Program Head  Wendy Hanna-Rose
Program Code  FRNSC
Campus(es)  University Park (M.P.S.)
Degrees Conferred  Master of Professional Studies (M.P.S.)
The Graduate Faculty  View (https://secure.gradsch.psu.edu/gpms/index.cfm?searchType=fac&prog=FRNSC)

The Master of Professional Studies (M.P.S.) in Forensic Science is an inter-college degree program housed in the Eberly College of Science and includes ties with Departments of Anthropology, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Chemistry, Entomology, Psychology, and Sociology. The program is offered by Penn State Graduate Faculty members, with enrollment by mentors from the academic faculty, public crime laboratories, and private forensic laboratories. The curriculum is designed to provide students with innovative, hands-on, and multidisciplinary learning approaches to educate and train them in crime scene investigation, the science behind forensics, courtroom proceedings, and the ethical and social issues that they will be exposed to when they join the forensic community. In addition, the program will develop teamwork and communication skills, which will be important when working actual cases in a crime laboratory.

Admission Requirements

Applicants apply for admission to the program via the Graduate School application for admission (http://gradschool.psu.edu/prospective-students/how-to-apply). Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-300 Admissions Policies (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies).

The master’s degree in Forensic Science is appropriate for students with a baccalaureate degree in the biological sciences, chemistry, or a related field of study. Applicants are required to have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) in their undergraduate degree. GRE scores are required, with a score of 1100 (old system) or 306 (new system) to be competitive. In addition, each applicant is asked to provide a personal statement of interests and objectives, a statement of their definition of the word “ethics” and two letters of reference. Letters of reference can be submitted by the student’s undergraduate adviser, research adviser, and/or an instructor for an upper level course taken as part of their major. An applicant may be asked to go through an interview process conducted by members of the forensic science faculty. Admission to the program is based upon a thorough review of all applicant qualifications, and the best-qualified applicants will be accepted up to the number of spaces available for new students.

Degree Requirements

Master of Professional Studies (M.P.S.)

Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-700 Professional Degree Policies (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies).

Chemistry Emphasis

A minimum of 41 credits are required for completion of the program, with at least 19 credits from courses at the 500 and 800-level, and at least 6 credits at the 500 level. Students are required to take 27 credits from the core courses listed below and 11 additional credits of Chemistry course work. Elective credits are from courses which are determined based on interest and career track. FRNSC 801 will serve as the capstone course for completion of the M.P.S. in Forensic Science.

Biology Emphasis

A minimum of 42 credits are required for completion of the program, with at least 20 credits from courses at the 500 and 800-level, and at least 6 credits at the 500 level. Students are required to take 27 credits from the core courses listed below and 12 additional credits of Biology coursework. Elective credits are from courses which are determined based on interest and career track. FRNSC 801 will serve as the capstone course for completion of the M.P.S. in Forensic Science.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FRNSC 400</td>
<td>Courtroom Proceedings and Testimony</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRNSC 410</td>
<td>A Scientific Approach to Crime Scene Investigation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRNSC 411</td>
<td>Criminalistics: Trace and Impression Evidence</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRNSC 413</td>
<td>Criminalistics: Biology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRNSC 415</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRNSC 475</td>
<td>Forensic Science Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRNSC 532</td>
<td>Drug Chemistry and Toxicology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRNSC 541</td>
<td>Forensic Seminar Series</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRNSC 561</td>
<td>Ethics in forensic Science</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRNSC 894</td>
<td>Research Projects in Forensic Science</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Courses

Select one of the following emphases: 11-12

Forensic Chemistry Emphasis

CHEM 425W  Chromatography and Electrochemistry
CHEM 500  Seminar in Chemistry
FRNSC 831  Forensic Chemistry II

Forensic Biology Emphasis

BMB 400  Molecular Biology of the Gene
BMMB 590  Colloquium
FRNSC 821  Forensic Molecular Biology II

Electives

Select at least 3 credits of the following: 3

CRIM 406  Sociology of Deviance
CRIM 423  Sexual and Domestic Violence
CRIM 425  Organized Crime
CRIM 432  Crime and the American Court System
CRIM 453  Women and the Criminal Justice System
PSYCH 471  Psychology of Adjustment and Social Relationships

Culminating Experience

FRNSC 801  Criminalistics III 4

Total Credits 41-42

1 FRNSC 801 serves as the capstone course for completion of the M.P.S. in Forensic Science.
Student Aid
Graduate assistantships available to students in this program and other forms of student aid are described in the Tuition & Funding (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-funding) section of The Graduate School’s website. Students on graduate assistantships must adhere to the course load limits (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gsad/gsad-900/gsad-901-graduate-assistants) set by The Graduate School.

Courses
Graduate courses carry numbers from 500 to 699 and 800 to 899. Advanced undergraduate courses numbered between 400 and 499 may be used to meet some graduate degree requirements when taken by graduate students. Courses below the 400 level may not. A graduate student may register for or audit these courses in order to make up deficiencies or to fill in gaps in previous education but not to meet requirements for an advanced degree.

Forensic Science (FRNSC) Course List (https://bulletins.psu.edu/university-course-descriptions/graduate/frnsc)

Contact
Campus University Park
Graduate Program Head Wendy Hanna-Rose
Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or Professor-in-Charge (PIC) Jack Hietpas
Program Contact Maria Rosario Long
329 Whitmore Laboratory
University Park PA 16802
mrd1@psu.edu
(814) 867-2465
Program Website View (http://forensics.psu.edu)