Forensic and Fraud Examination

Degree Offered

- Master of Science

Nature of the Program

The 30 credit-hour program is comprised of a core curriculum of forensic and fraud examination classes centered on data analytics for success in this career path. Students complete an intensive 12-month program with online classes and two required residencies. The core curriculum is paired with a focused selection of online MBA courses to create a well-balanced approach to the field. Courses build throughout the program to incorporate previously acquired skills and allow students to immediately put those skills to use through hands-on experiential learning. During the residencies, students will evaluate a simulated crime scene in order to make a pitch to a prosecutor as to whether or not an indictment should be pursued and serve as an expert witness in moot court. Content incorporates auditing, information technology, financial, and managerial accounting, etc. particularly as these topics interface with forensic and fraud examination material.

Admissions

Admission to the MS-FFE or FAFE Certificate programs is determined by a committee including accounting faculty members. The committee acts upon individual applications within a short period of time after receipt of the completed application.

Academic Requirements

The Admission Committee seeks applicants with a bachelor's degree who possess a minimum overall GPA of 2.9 and a 500 on the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT). Exemption from the GMAT requirement is available for applicants with a current Certified Public Accountant (CPA) certificate, a related Certification by an approved credentialing body, a law degree, or two years of relevant accounting or forensic work experience.

Prerequisite Courses

- ACCT 201 Principles of Accounting
- ACCT 311 Intermediate Accounting
- ACCT 322 Accounting Systems
- ACCT 451 Auditing Theory

The prerequisites may be taken at any accredited institution of higher education including online courses. Two years of related professional experience may be substituted for the prerequisite courses. The program admissions committee will assess prior experience.

International Students

International students who are required to take the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) examination should note that the Department of Accounting requires a minimum of 250 (computer scoring) or 600 (paper scoring).

Application

Apply to the MS in FFE program or the FAFE Graduate Certificate program using the West Virginia University Application for Graduate Admission. This can be accomplished online.

- Official transcripts from all prior academic work must be forwarded to the WVU Office of Admissions and Records
- Applicants round out their profile with other evidence provided in their résumé. The resume should include enough information for the admissions committee to trace the applicant's entire professional work history and should indicate any relevant affiliations.

Additionally, applicants have the option of submitting:

- Letters of recommendation (up to three): We recommend that references provide some information that is not found in the other materials being submitted. Anecdotal comments from the reference writer's shared experience is encouraged.
- Statement of Purpose, a short essay in which an applicant reflects on the expected contribution of the MS in FFE degree (or FAFE Certificate) to the applicant's future and the special characteristics that the applicant brings to the program. We are interested in value-added experiences, both from the program to the student and from the individual student to the program.

Forensic and Fraud Examination Master of Science Requirements

Overall 3.0 GPA required.

Minimum grade of C required in all courses applied toward the degree.
### Major Learning Outcomes

**FORENSIC AND FRAUD EXAMINATION**

After completing the program, graduates will be able to:

- Discuss the impact of legal, societal, and ethical considerations on business decision-making and strategic planning in forensic and fraud examination, and how civil litigation and fraud interact with and impact the global economy.
- Explain how money laundering schemes and policies influence organizations around the world from a microeconomic perspective, and how these issues affect economic profitability and success.
- Evaluate financial reports focusing on fraudulent financial statements and the associated nuances regarding fraud examination.
- Evaluate evidentiary material associated with asset misappropriation (i.e., theft of assets) and complete fraud examinations that meet judicial standards of investigation.
- Complete examination of facts and circumstances associated with fraud acts and other financial violations of the law with the goal of remediating those issues based on investigative outcomes.
- Discuss and apply the various investigative tools in forensic and fraud examination across different industries.
- Develop an analytical skill set including the utilization of electronic techniques and data mining software used to assist forensic professionals and fraud examiners in developing litigation.
- Develop anti-fraud knowledge, skills, and abilities that address the issues of prevention, deterrence, and detections of financial shenanigans.

### Graduate Certificate in Forensic Accounting and Fraud Examination (FAFE)

Overall 3.0 GPA required.

Minimum grade of C required in all courses applied toward the certificate.
CERTIFICATE CODE - CG31

A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACCT 581</td>
<td>Fraud Investigation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCT 582</td>
<td>Fraud Data Analysis</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCT 583</td>
<td>Fraud: Criminology/Legal Issues</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCT 584</td>
<td>Advanced Fraud Investigation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Hours</td>
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<td>12</td>
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</tbody>
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* The program also requires students to attend two on-campus residencies.

Academic Standards

Students in the Master of Science in Forensic and Fraud Examination program are subject to the following performance standards:

1. Students are required to maintain a 3.0 or better overall GPA for all courses completed as a master's student at WVU.
2. A student whose cumulative grade point average falls below 2.75 will be placed on probation. If the average is not brought up to 2.75 by the end of the following semester, the student will be suspended from the program. The suspension will last one year and the student will be eligible to re-engage in courses after that time period.

COURSES

ACCT 501. Accounting/Economic Decision Making. 3 Hours.
PR: Admission into the Master's of Professional Accountancy program. This course exposes students to the theory and application within the accounting profession of the topics of corporate governance, economic theory, financial management, cost accounting, and strategic planning, particularly as it relates to decision making.

ACCT 511. Financial Accounting Theory and Practice. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Comprehensive examination of financial accounting theory as established by the opinions, statements and interpretation of professional organizations with special emphasis on their application and problem solving.

ACCT 512. Mergers and Acquisitions. 3 Hours.

ACCT 521. Information Technology Auditing. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Information technology auditing techniques, issues, and current topics, including risk assessment, general and application control testing, computer assisted audit tools and techniques, and testing of databases and local area networks.

ACCT 522. Electronic Commerce and Internet Security. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Electronic commerce business models. Real options evaluations, accounting distinctions, and case analysis of Web-based business models, with emphasis on the Internet security risks to the integrity of financial information.

ACCT 541. Federal Tax Research and Writing. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Study of federal tax authorities and hierarchy, the research resources available, development of federal tax research and writing skills, and the application thereof.

ACCT 542. Advanced Federal Corporate Tax. 3 Hours.
PR: ACCT 441 with a minimum grade of C- and ACCT 442 with a minimum grade of D- or consent. An advanced study of federal income taxation for corporations and shareholders, including: corporate operations, corporate formation and capital structure, distributions to shareholders, acquisitions and liquidations, and reorganizations.

ACCT 543. Advanced Federal Partnership Tax. 3 Hours.
PR: ACCT 441 with a minimum grade of C- and ACCT 442 with a minimum grade of D- or consent. An in depth study of federal income taxation for business entities taxed as partnerships as well as a comparative study of the taxation of other flow-through entities. Specific topics include: partnership tax operations, tax partnership formations and capital structure, distributions to partners, special allocations, and a comparative analysis of partnerships and non-partnership flow-through entities.

ACCT 551. Assurance Services and Professional Standards. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Professional objectives, principles, and standards for assurance services, including risk assessment, attestation reports, and related communications. Case studies covering sampling, professional ethics, legal liability and reporting.

ACCT 556. Fraud Detection and Deterrence. 3 Hours.
PR: Restricted to MPA Students. The auditor's responsibility with respect to fraud detection and investigation and management's responsibility for fraud deterrence and implementation of effective prevention measures. Identification, analysis and examination of fraud using actual and simulated data.
ACCT 561. Governmental and Not-for-Profit Accounting. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Theory and practice of accounting for governmental and not-for-profit entities with an emphasis on the conceptual foundation of fund accounting, budgetary control and accountability.

ACCT 571. Accounting/Business Consulting. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Translating complex information into critical knowledge for engagements beyond basic financial/managerial accounting, assurance, and tax services. Consulting experience examined through exposure to consulting professionals, cases and/or a business simulation.

ACCT 580. Accounting for Forensic and Fraud Investigators. 3 Hours.
A basic introduction to financial and managerial accounting, auditing, and technology applicable to accounting, and the relationship of those areas with forensic accounting and fraud examination.

ACCT 581. Fraud Investigation. 3 Hours.
PR: Restricted to FAFI students. Types of fraud, documents, sources of evidence, and analysis of internal and external fraud schemes with an emphasis on the skills needed to identify and investigate fraud.

ACCT 582. Fraud Data Analysis. 3 Hours.
PR: Restricted to FAFI students. Computer-aided data analysis techniques for detecting and investigating fraud cases, issues related to the collection and use of digital evidence, and collection of data from electronic devices.

ACCT 583. Fraud: Criminology/Legal Issues. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Theories of criminal behavior, laws, rules of evidence, rights of persons under interrogation and interviewing, report writing and ethics, as these topics relate to forensic accounting with a focus on the behavioral aspects of fraud.

ACCT 584. Advanced Fraud Investigation. 3 Hours.
PR: ACCT 581 and ACCT 582. Major fraud case investigation with an emphasis on forensic and litigation support aspects, including presentation of cases in moot court setting.

ACCT 585. Forensic and Fraud Examination Advanced Analytical Techniques. 3 Hours.
ACCT 585. Forensic and Fraud Examination Advanced Analytical Techniques. PR: ACCT 580. An examination and use of advanced analytical techniques with respect to three forensic accounting and fraud examination special topics: civil litigation support and damage claims, valuations and financial statement fraud.

ACCT 591A-Z. Advanced Topics. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. Investigation of advanced topics not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

ACCT 592A-Z. Directed Study. 1-6 Hours.
Directed Study, reading, and/or research.

ACCT 593A-Z. Special Topics. 1-6 Hours.
A study of contemporary topics selected from recent developments in the field.

ACCT 594A-Z. Seminar. 1-6 Hours.
Seminars arranged for advanced graduate students.

ACCT 595. Independent Study. 1-6 Hours.
Faculty supervised study of topics not available through regular course offerings.

ACCT 691A-Z. Advanced Topics. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. Investigation of advanced topics not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

ACCT 692A-Z. Directed Study. 1-6 Hours.
Directed Study, reading, and/or research.

ACCT 693A-Z. Special Topics. 1-6 Hours.
A study of contemporary topics selected from recent developments in the field.

ACCT 694A-Z. Seminar. 1-6 Hours.
ACCT 694Z. Seminar. I, II, S. 1-6 hr. Special seminars arranged for advanced graduate students.

ACCT 695. Independent Study. 1-6 Hours.
Faculty supervised study of topics not available through regular course offerings.

ACCT 696. Graduate Seminar. 1 Hour.
PR: Consent. Each graduate student will present at least one seminar to the assembled faculty and graduate student body of his or her program.

ACCT 697. Research. 1-15 Hours.
PR: Consent. Research activities leading to thesis, problem report, research paper or equivalent scholarly project, or a dissertation. (Grading may be S/U).

ACCT 698. Thesis or Dissertation. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. This is an optional course for programs that wish to provide formal supervision during the writing of student reports (698), or dissertations (798). Grading is normal.
ACCT 699. Graduate Colloquium. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. For graduate students not seeking coursework credit but who wish to meet residency requirements, use the University's facilities, and participate in its academic and cultural programs. Note: Graduate students who are not actively involved in coursework or research are entitled, through enrollment in their department's 699/799 Graduate Colloquium to consult with graduate faculty, participate in both formal and informal academic activities sponsored by their program, and retain all of the rights and privileges of duly enrolled students. Grading is P/F; colloquium credit may not be counted against credit requirements for masters programs. Registration for one credit of 699/799 graduate colloquium satisfies the University requirement of registration in the semester in which graduation occurs.

ACCT 711. Behavioral Accounting Research. 3 Hours.
This is a doctoral-level course designed to familiarize students to various behavioral topics within the accounting literature. The goal of the course is to survey some of the major theories, issues, and empirical findings within the behavioral-accounting literature. This approach is designed to build a foundation upon which the student may consider their own areas of research.

ACCT 712. Archival Accounting Research. 3 Hours.
PR: Admission to PhD program and STAT 511. This doctoral-level course is designed to familiarize students to various capital markets topics within the accounting literature. The goal of the course is to survey some of the major theories, issues, and empirical findings within the archival literature. This approach is designed to build a foundation upon which the student may consider their own areas of interest.

ACCT 713. Forensic Accounting and Fraud Examination. 3 Hours.
This course familiarizes students with various special topics as it relates to forensic accounting and fraud examination. It surveys some of the major theories, issues, and empirical findings within and without the accounting literature.

ACCT 794A-C. Seminar. 1-6 Hours.

ACCT 795. Independent Study. 1-9 Hours.
Faculty-supervised study of topics not available through regular course offerings.

ACCT 797. Research. 1-15 Hours.
PR: Consent. Research activities leading to thesis, problem report, research paper or equivalent scholarly project, or a dissertation. (Grading will be S/U.).

ACCT 798. Thesis or Dissertation. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. This is an optional course for programs that wish to provide formal supervision during the writing of student reports (698), or dissertations (798). Grading is normal.

ACCT 799. Graduate Colloquium. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. For graduate students not seeking coursework credit but who wish to meet residency requirements, use of the University's facilities, and participate in its academic and cultural programs. Note: Graduate students who are not actively involved in coursework or research are entitled, through enrollment in their department's 699/799 Graduate Colloquium to consult with graduate faculty, participate in both formal and informal academic activities sponsored by their program, and retain all of the rights and privileges of duly enrolled students. Grading is P/F; colloquium credit may not be counted against credit requirements for masters programs. Registration for one credit of 699/799 graduate colloquium satisfies the University requirement of registration in the semester in which graduation occurs.