Forensic Science, Ph.D.

Doctor of Philosophy

Degree Requirements

- **Credit Hours**: Graduate students in the Ph.D. program must successfully complete a minimum of 71 credit hours. Each student may apply a maximum of 31 credit hours of research toward the 71-hour requirement; the remaining 40 credit hours must be earned in graduate-level courses in Forensic Science.

- **Grade Point Average**: Students must earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0, and a GPA of 3.0 in coursework applied to the graduate program. A minimum grad of C- must be earned in coursework applied to the graduate program.

- **Program of Study**: The program also includes an oral qualifying examination, a dissertation proposal presentation, and an oral defense of the dissertation.

- **Oral Qualifying Examination**: Doctoral students must pass a comprehensive oral examination in the field of criminalistics to demonstrate their competency in the discipline and successfully defend the topic of their dissertation research.

- **Dissertation**: Students are required to complete a dissertation. Additional information, expectations, requirements, and timeline information is found in the Department's Graduate Student Handbook.

Curriculum Requirements

**CORE COURSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIS 501</td>
<td>Foundations of Criminalistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>FIS 502</td>
<td>Forensic Laboratory Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>FIS 602</td>
<td>Forensic Informatics</td>
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<tr>
<td>FIS 614</td>
<td>Trace Evidence Examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>FIS 620</td>
<td>Forensic Casework Practicum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIS 632</td>
<td>Advanced Forensic Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIS 703</td>
<td>Research Design in Forensic Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 512</td>
<td>Statistical Methods 2 *</td>
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</tbody>
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**Forensic Chemistry Requirement**

Select one of the following lecture and lab pairs:

- FIS 451 & FIS 452: Arson and Explosives Analysis and Arson and Explosives Analysis Lab
- FIS 460 & FIS 461: Analysis of Seized Drugs and Analysis of Seized Drugs Laboratory
- FIS 470 & FIS 471: Analytical Forensic Toxicology and Analytical Forensic Toxicology Laboratory

**ELECTIVES**

Select two from the following:

- FIS 610: Firearms Examination
- FIS 405: Latent Fingerprint
- Any FIS course at the 400 or above *
- Any BIOL, CHEM, or PHARM course at the 400 level or above *

**FORENSIC SEMINAR**

- FIS 796: Graduate Seminar **

**RESEARCH**

- FIS 797: Research

Total Hours 71

* Or equivalent graduate course approved by Graduate Studies Committee

** Each attempt at FIS 796 is worth one credit hour; students must successfully complete one credit per semester over six semesters.
Major Learning Outcomes

FORENSIC SCIENCE

As a result of completing the PhD in Forensic Science, students will be able to:

• Assess the value of evidence in different circumstances, propose best practices for its examination and demonstrate mastery in performing a variety of different examinations of evidence.

• Identify the limitations in the knowledge and capabilities of forensic science, formulate creative solutions and design and conduct scientifically sound experiments to overcome the identified limitations.

• Execute persuasive communications, in written and oral formats, of his/her test results and research discoveries.