Forensic Science, BS

For students dreaming of investigating crime scenes or analyzing DNA in a lab, ASU’s West campus offers the forensic science program. By combining study in biology, chemistry and oral communication with hands-on investigation into real-life cold cases, students will be uniquely prepared to enter the career field upon graduation.

Program Description

Forensic science is the study and application of scientific methods to matters of law. The BS program in forensic science emphasizes laboratory coursework in chemistry and biology as both areas provide essential experience with techniques commonly used in crime labs.

Rigorous coursework in the natural and mathematical sciences is required to ensure graduates are competitive in the workforce. The program is enhanced by a focus on oral communication skills that help prepare graduates for the multifaceted, transdisciplinary aspects of careers in forensic science, such as providing articulate expert witness testimony.

If a student is interested in pursuing a career as a forensic DNA analyst, nine cumulative hours of coursework in biochemistry, molecular biology and genetics are required, and coursework in population genetics is desirable. Students should note that the addition of these courses to the academic program may mean the student would have more than 120 credit hours. Employers may require documentation for completed coursework, such as an official course syllabus.

Forensic science students may apply for and participate in internships sponsored by metropolitan Phoenix area crime labs or other crime labs around the country. Internships are competitive, and the application process takes time. Generally, fall semester internships require application in the spring semester prior, and spring or summer semester internships require application by the start of the preceding fall semester. Internship positions are unpaid and require concurrent enrollment in FOR 484 Internship. Also, students must have a faculty mentor and abide by all internship standards of the school and those of the organization providing the internship. Students may also participate in cutting-edge research with a faculty mentor either as a volunteer in the faculty member's lab or by registering for FOR 499 Individualized Instruction. For more information, students should see an academic advisor.

Job applicants and students seeking a volunteer or internship position within a crime lab are required to undergo an extensive background check that includes a polygraph exam, fingerprinting and drug testing.
Actions that can disqualify an applicant include recent or past illicit drug use (this includes marijuana), felony convictions and drunk driving convictions.

At a Glance

- **College/School:** New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences
- **Location:** West campus
- **Additional Program Fee:** Yes
- **Second Language Requirement:** No
- **First Required Math Course:** MAT 210 - Brief Calculus
- **Math Intensity:** Moderate

Required Courses (Major Map)

- [2020 - 2021 Major Map](#)
- [Major Map (Archives)](#)

Admission Requirements

**General University Admission Requirements:**

All students are required to meet general university admission requirements.

[Freshman](#) | [Transfer](#) | [International](#) | [Readmission](#)

Change of Major Requirements

A current ASU student has no additional requirements for changing majors.

Students should refer to [https://changingmajors.asu.edu/request](https://changingmajors.asu.edu/request) for information about how to change a major to this program.

Transfer Options
ASU is committed to helping students thrive by offering tools that allow personalization of the transfer path to ASU. Students may use the Transfer Map search to outline a list of recommended courses to take prior to transfer.

ASU has transfer partnerships in Arizona and across the country to create a simplified transfer experience for students. These pathway programs include exclusive benefits, tools and resources, and help students save time and money in their college journey. Students may learn more about these programs by visiting the admission site: https://admission.asu.edu/transfer/pathway-programs.

Global Opportunities

Global Experience

With over 250 programs in more than 65 countries (ranging from one week to one year), study abroad is possible for all ASU students wishing to gain global skills and knowledge in preparation for a 21st-century career. Students earn ASU credit for completed courses, while staying on track for graduation, and may apply financial aid and scholarships toward program costs. https://mystudyabroad.asu.edu/

Career Opportunities

Scientific and technological advances in the field of forensic science, as well as continually increasing caseloads in law enforcement, are projected to increase the number of forensic science technicians needed over the next decade. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that between 2016 and 2026, employment of forensic science technicians will increase 17%, an average increase much greater than most occupations.

Forensic science program graduates are prepared to enter the workforce with crime labs and private forensic science labs at the local, state and federal levels. Graduates also are prepared for graduate programs in forensic science, law school, medical school and related fields.

Career examples include but are not limited to those shown in the following list. Advanced degrees or certifications may be required for academic or clinical positions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career</th>
<th>*Growth</th>
<th>*Median Salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biological Scientist (General)</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>$76,690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Growth Rate</td>
<td>Average Salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological Technician</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>$43,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Technician</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>$47,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemist</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>$74,740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Trial Manager</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>$118,970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime Scene Investigator</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>$57,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Sciences Manager</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>$118,970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Scientist</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>$74,540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Scientist</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>$82,090</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Data obtained from the Occupational Information Network (O*NET) under sponsorship of the U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration (USDOL/ETA).

** Bright Outlook  Green Occupation

**Contact Information**

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