

# FORENSIC SCIENCE M.S.

Degree: Master of Science  
<https://www.towson.edu/fcsm/departments/chemistry/grad/forensic/>

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## Mission Statement

The mission of the Master of Science in Forensic Science Program is to provide students with a comprehensive and in-depth study of major areas of forensic science that will allow them to compete for positions in forensic science beyond the entry level.

The program is based on an application-focused curriculum that provides the student an advanced educational background and the development of laboratory skills. The program's mission is further enhanced through active forensic research, internships and collaborative learning experiences with accredited forensic laboratories.

## Program Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives of the Towson University Master of Science in Forensic Science Program is to prepare students for positions as working forensic scientists in business, industry and government careers. To meet these goals, the program combines chemistry, biology and specialized forensic science course work to provide students with advanced scientific and laboratory training in major areas of forensic science including crime scene analysis, forensic DNA analysis and trace evidence/toxicology analysis.

## General Information

The Master of Science in Forensic Science program is a FEPAC-accredited program that is both molecular biology/biochemistry-based, focusing on forensic DNA analysis, or chemistry-based, focusing on toxicology, drug and trace evidence analysis. This program has the support of and benefits from a wide variety of talented faculty members from the department of Chemistry as well as forensic professionals serving as adjunct faculty. The program is rich with laboratory experience, capped with a research project, internship in a forensic laboratory or a thesis.

The program provides advanced education in the scientific and laboratory problem-solving skills necessary for success in a modern forensic laboratory. The program combines this rigorous training with exposure to the breadth of forensic science disciplines, including forensic science practice, law and ethics. The program is intended for students who are interested in working as forensic scientists in the field. The flexible degree program is also designed to meet the professional development needs of forensic scientists now employed in Maryland and the mid-Atlantic region.

The curriculum ensures that each student:

- Develops an understanding of the areas of knowledge that are essential to forensic science, including crime scene investigation, physical evidence concepts, law/science interface, ethics and professional responsibilities, quality assurance, analytical chemistry and instrumental methods of analysis, microscopy, molecular biology, toxicology, forensic biology, DNA technologies and biostatistics.

- Acquires skills and experiences in the application of basic forensic science concepts, analytical chemistry and forensic DNA knowledge to problem solving.
- Is oriented in professional values, concepts and ethics.
- Demonstrates integration of knowledge and skills through a capstone experience, such as a seminar, a research project, an internship or thesis.

## Qualifications for a career and/or internship in forensic science

Prospective students should be aware that background checks, driving records, drug tests, polygraph, and medical or physical examinations similar to those required of law enforcement officers are likely to be a condition of employment and/or internships. Please refer to: NIJ Report NCJ 203099, pp. 7-10 for additional information.

## Admission Requirements

- A B.S./B.A. in biological sciences, chemistry or forensic chemistry from a regionally accredited college or university is required for full admission. Students with a B.S./B.A. in a natural science with two terms in general chemistry, organic chemistry and general physics, and at least one term in general biology, analytical chemistry, statistics, biochemistry, molecular biology and genetics can be considered for admission.
- A GPA of 3.00 in previous science course work and an overall GPA of 3.00 are required for full admission. GPA calculations for admissions may be based upon the last 60 units of undergraduate and post-baccalaureate study. Students having a GPA of 2.75-2.99 may be considered for conditional admission. Full admission will be granted after students achieve a GPA of 3.00 in their first 9 graduate units taken at Towson University.
- Graduate application, application fee and official transcripts.

## Application Deadline

This program admits students for the fall and spring terms only.

Priority will be given to students whose application and transcripts have been received by June 15 for fall admission and November 1 for spring admission.

Students who miss the priority deadline may contact the program director via email at [mprofil@towson.edu](mailto:mprofil@towson.edu) to inquire if space is still available for the forthcoming term.

## Non-immigrant International Students

**Program Enrollment:** F-1 and J-1 students are required to be enrolled full-time. The majority of their classes must be in-person and on campus. See the list of programs that satisfy these requirements, and contact the International Student and Scholars Office with questions.

**Admission Procedures:** See additional information regarding Graduate Admission policies and International Graduate Application online.

\*\*See **Exceptions to Policy** in Graduate Admissions.

## Degree Requirements

All students complete 37 units of graduate work with 9 units being chosen from either the Forensic DNA track or the Forensic Chemistry track. No more than three courses may be taken at the 500 level.

Code	Title	Units
<b>Required Courses</b>		
FRSC 600	FORENSIC SCIENCE AND LAW	3
FRSC 601	FORENSIC MOLECULAR BIOCHEMISTRY	3
FRSC 602	FORENSIC CHEMISTRY	3
FRSC 604	CRIME SCENE AND IMPRESSION EVIDENCE	3
FRSC 797	GRADUATE SEMINAR FOR FORENSIC SCIENCE	1
<b>Track Specific Coursework (see below)</b>		<b>9</b>
<b>Elective Courses</b> <sup>1</sup>		<b>9</b>
Select 9 additional units from the following:		
FRSC 610	FORENSIC SEROLOGY	
FRSC 620	DNA TECHNOLOGIES	
FRSC 621	ADVANCED DNA TECHNOLOGIES	
FRSC 622	ADVANCED SEQUENCING METHODS	
FRSC 640	CHEMISTRY OF DANGEROUS DRUGS	
FRSC 650	FORENSIC MICROSCOPY	
FRSC 660	DEATH ANALYSIS IN FORENSIC SCIENCE	
FRSC 670	FORENSIC ANALYTICAL METHODS	
FRSC 690	FORENSIC TOXICOLOGY	
BIOL 602	MOLECULAR BIOLOGY	
BIOL 614	APPLIED BIOTECHNOLOGY	
Up to 6 elective units from other disciplines may be taken with permission from the FRSC director.		
<b>Capstone Courses</b>		<b>6</b>
A total of 6 units from the following: <sup>1</sup>		
FRSC 787	GRADUATE INTERNSHIP IN FORENSIC SCIENCE (0-3)	
FRSC 880	RESEARCH PROJECT IN FORENSIC SCIENCE (0-6)	
FRSC 897	FRSC THESIS (6)	
<b>Total Units</b>		<b>37</b>

<sup>1</sup> Students must consult with the program director prior to selecting their electives. Students in either track may select courses from the alternate track toward electives.

<sup>2</sup> 6 capstone units can be earned by taking FRSC 787 plus FRSC 880, two semesters of FRSC 880, or FRSC 897

## Forensic Chemistry Track

Code	Title	Units
FRSC 640	CHEMISTRY OF DANGEROUS DRUGS	3
FRSC 650 or FRSC 690	FORENSIC MICROSCOPY FORENSIC TOXICOLOGY	3
FRSC 670	FORENSIC ANALYTICAL METHODS	3
<b>Total Units</b>		<b>9</b>

- Students will learn to apply their knowledge of analytical chemistry, molecular biology, population genetics, forensic biology, forensic DNA technology and statistics in a forensic setting.
- Students will gain advanced skills in instrumental methods, microscopy, serology, DNA analysis, quality assurance and the ethical and legal requirements applicable to the examination of physical evidence and courtroom testimony.
- Students will develop written and oral communication skills for presentation of analytical findings and courtroom testimony.
- Students will be able to make a professional presentation of their research findings in a symposium/seminar format.

## Forensic DNA Track

Code	Title	Units
FRSC 610	FORENSIC SEROLOGY	3
FRSC 620	DNA TECHNOLOGIES	3
FRSC 621	ADVANCED DNA TECHNOLOGIES	3
<b>Total Units</b>		<b>9</b>