- The Department of Foreign Languages offers a credit by examination program for elementary and intermediate classes in French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish only. Information about the program is available in the Department of Foreign Languages.

Forensic and Investigative Science

Suzanne Bell, Director
Keith Morris, Assistant Director

Degree Offered

Bachelor of Science

Nature of Program

The Forensic and Investigative Science (FIS) program comprises three areas of emphasis (forensic examiner, DNA-biology, and chemistry/toxicology.) Each provides a strong background in the physical and biological sciences associated with forensic science. The program is fully accredited by the Forensic Education Programs Accreditation Commission (FEPAC).

Because of the unique nature of the program and forensic science employment, strict policies and procedures apply related to issues that could affect a student's ability to obtain a background check. These policies are available from the program office and faculty.

Admission Requirements

Students interested in the FIS program will be admitted as pre-program majors as freshmen and sophomores. Outstanding freshman may be admitted as direct admits if they meet the requirements for admissions to the Honors College. Strong high school preparation in biology, chemistry, physics, algebra, trigonometry, and pre-calculus is recommended. Computer literacy is essential. Students who wish to enter the program must apply for admission and must have completed or be enrolled in courses listed below under the pre-program requirements. Because of the individualized instruction in classrooms, laboratory courses, and internships, enrollment is limited. Applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 in the pre-program requirements and no less than a C in any required course. Other requirements include a letter of recommendation focusing on personal integrity and character and an extensive written assignment. In accordance with the unique nature of the program, a statement related to a drug-free lifestyle is required. Following the submission of all appropriate data, the Forensic Identification Admissions Committee will interview qualified students. Admission to the limited number of places in the three FIS areas of emphasis will be on a competitive basis. Prior to applying for acceptance into the major (typically done at the end of the sophomore year), transfer students must have completed or be in the process of completing a one-year residency at the WVU Morgantown campus. Students must have completed or be enrolled in FIDP 201 *Introduction to Forensic Science.* Additional information and criteria for selection are available from the program areas.

Degree Requirements

The first two years of study are virtually identical to that taken by biology, chemistry, and other majors allowing for easy transition to one of these majors should the student elect not to pursue a degree in forensic science. The final two years are composed of specific courses related to the chosen area of emphasis as well as courses taken by all FIS students. Courses taken by all students include *Court Testimony* (FIDP 406), *Evidence and Law* (FIDP 404), *Introduction to Microscopy* (CHEM 310), *Laboratory Quality Assurance* (FIDP 480), *Technical Writing for Forensic Science* (FIDP 305) or *Technical and Scientific Writing* (ENGL 305), *Forensic Journal Club* (FIDP 408), and the *Forensic Capstone* (FIDP 410) course. A four-year plan of study for each area of emphasis is available from the academic advisor.

Required Pre-Program Coursework

Pre-program courses include: BIOL 115, 117, and 219; CHEM 115, 116, 233, 234, 235, 236; ENGL 101 and 102; MATH 155 and 156; PHYS 101 and 102 or PHYS 111 and 112; SPA 270; STAT 215; and FIDP 201. Students interested in the forensic chemistry option are strongly encouraged to take the PHYS 111/112 series.

Internship

Early in the semester following acceptance into the major, the student will submit an application for placement in an approved internship site. Few if any internships are available in Morgantown. The placement coordinator, working with the assistant director, will submit the student's internship application materials to the requested site(s) for review. The host agency reserves the right to reject any student's application. The anticipated length of internships will be 12 weeks or a minimum of 460 hours. Although some internships may be paid, most are not and students must plan to have the resources necessary to support themselves during this experience. The internship course is grades on the S/U scale.

Performance Requirements

Students must maintain a minimum overall GPA of 2.75 and complete all required courses each term with a grade of at least a C (or P in courses offered only on a pass/fail grading basis or S in courses offered on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory grading basis); required courses offered for a letter grade that students have chosen to take on a pass/fail basis cannot be applied to the degree. A student who does not meet these requirements may be placed on probation, suspended, or dismissed from the program. The forensic identification program reserves the right to suspend or dismiss any student who does not perform at an overall level considered satisfactory. WVU reserves the right to modify the program as needed. The information contained herein is presented as a general guide to assist students in preparing their course of study. Students should work closely with the program's advisor when registering for courses to assure that program requirements are being met.

Suggested Curriculum

First Year

First Semester	Hrs.
BIOL 115	4
CHEM 115	4
MATH 155	4
SPA 270	3
Total	**15**

Second Semester	Hrs.
BIOL 117	4
CHEM 116	4
ENGL 101	3
MATH 156	4
GEC Elective	3
Total	**18**

Second Year

First Semester	Hrs.
BIOL 219	4
CHEM 233/235	4
PHYS 101/111	4
STAT 215	3
GEC Elective	3
Total	**18**

Second Semester	Hrs.
CHEM 234	3
CHEM 236	1
FIDP 201	3
PHYS 112 or 102	3
ENGL 102	3
GEC Elective	3
Total	**16**

Third- and fourth-year courses are determined by the student's selected area of emphasis (forensic examiner, forensic biology, or forensic chemistry and toxicology. Students interested in the chemistry and toxicology track are strongly encouraged to take the calculus-based physics series (PHYS 111/112).