

MAJOR

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN FORENSIC SCIENCE

SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

524 West 59th Street, New York, NY 10019 ■ New Building, 05.66.06 ■ 212-237-8892

www.jjay.cuny.edu/department-sciences

See all major requirements at: www.jjay.cuny.edu/forensic-science-major-resources

WHAT WILL YOU LEARN IN THIS MAJOR?

Forensic science is the application of science to matters of legal concern. It encompasses the analysis of physical evidence in its many forms, and applies scientific principles to reconstruct the events that occurred before and during the commission of a crime.

Scientific problem-solving is a key component of these processes. As a result, students in the Forensic Science Program at John Jay College undergo extensive training in the core sciences of chemistry, biology, and physics in their first two years of the program. Students then complete coursework in the legal aspects of scientific evidence before moving on to a specialization.

The major with three tracks (Criminalistics, Toxicology, and Molecular Biology) at John Jay College is grounded in practical hands-on experience and all students are required to complete an undergraduate research project or external laboratory internship. Students will learn the theory and techniques necessary to master the laboratory sciences, field investigation and expert testimony requirements of a successful graduate.

IN THIS MAJOR YOU WILL ■■■

Take intensive chemistry and math classes, along with courses in biology, physics, law.

Do hands-on laboratory work.

Write lab reports and research papers.

Use instruments such as GC, (Gas Chromatography), HPLC (High Performance Liquid Chromatography), UV/Vis (Ultraviolet-visible spectroscopy).

Complete a research project or external laboratory internship.

Specialize in one of the following program tracks: toxicology, criminalistics, molecular biology.

FIRST COURSES IN THE MAJOR ■■■

Entering students admitted to Forensic Science take two semesters of biology, chemistry, and calculus courses. The science courses they start with are determined by their math placement or by biology/chemistry courses transferred in from other colleges.

All students not admitted to the major upon admission to John Jay should see the Admission Requirements section of the Forensic Science major resource webpage.

“Before coming to JJC, I hated labs. I couldn’t imagine how performing random tasks on bench could have any use in my life. At JJC, however, every lab session is like performing actual investigation—an evidence to analyze and evaluate based on forensic principles covered in the lecture. The labs are agonizingly intense, but you are thoroughly prepared for anything. Not surprisingly, I had no difficulty transitioning to a competitive Ph.D. program; I can proudly say that my lab techniques are one of the best among my peers.”

— Jiwon Seo, 2016

“John Jay has given me the tools to reach my goal of attending graduate school. The knowledge I gained from my classes, hands on experience through research, and connections I made with my professors, allowed me to challenge myself to become a better scientist.”

— Victoria DePrimo, 2017

WHAT CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS WILL YOU DEVELOP IN THIS MAJOR?

- Strong observation skills
- Scientific analytical ability
- Data interpretation
- Scientific problem-solving
- Ability to experiment intelligently with different scientific techniques
- Ability to document the transfer, storage, and analysis of evidence carefully and precisely
- Application of scientific principles to criminal and legal situations
- Effective communication skills to describe and explain complex science to non-scientists in the legal system

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES WILL THIS MAJOR OFFER YOU?

- Research and internship opportunities
- Work with/learn from experts in the field
- Program for Research Initiatives in Science and Math (PRISM): PRISM provides opportunities for forensic science majors to participate in faculty-mentored research projects in areas like criminalistics, molecular biology, chemistry, toxicology, and computer science. PRISM students attend monthly meetings, seminars, and a short research course to promote their development as scientists. PRISM also supports student travel to scientific conferences, technical trainings and professional development events, and also funds the purchase of supplies and equipment for student research projects.

THIS MAJOR CAN BE A GREAT FOUNDATION FOR A WIDE RANGE OF JOBS, BUT SOME POSSIBILITIES TO CONSIDER ARE:

- Crime Lab Specialist
- Medical Examiner
- Federal/State Investigator
- Pharmaceutical Scientist
- Research Scientist
- Scientist Administrator
- Teacher

Forensic Science can be excellent preparation for science graduate programs and medical school.