About the Minor

The Forensic Studies Minor is a new, non-science minor offered by the Justice Studies Department and the Forensic Science Program. The Minor is primarily designed for students interested in crime scene investigation, and its purpose is to provide formal academic training in this area. Topics include evaluation, documentation, and preservation of physical evidence; the requirements of the forensic laboratory; forensic analytical processes and methods; limitations of physical evidence; scientific thinking; and probative value of evidence in court. The Minor allows students to take courses in their area of interest (Forensic Science) without the heavy chemistry and biology course load of the major.

Courses Needed to Obtain Minor in Forensic Studies

Core (9 units)

- FS 11 (3) - Survey of Forensic Science
- FS 161 (3) - Crime Scene Investigation
- FS 162 (3) - Forensic Science Applications

Electives (6 units from the following list)

- FS 160 (1-5) - Special Topics in Forensic Science
- FS 163 (3) - Fingerprint Science
- FS 164 (3) - Crime Scene & Evidence Photography
- FS 165 (3) - Forensic Biometrics
- JS 143 (3) - Criminal Evidence and Procedure
- JS 185 (3) - Special Topics in Justice Studies*
- ANTH 157 (3) - Forensic Anthropology
- ENT 106 (3) - Forensic Entomology
- PHIL 133 (3) - Ethics in Science
- PHIL 160 (3) - Philosophy in Science
- PHOT 110 (3) - Black and White Photography
- PSYC 110 (3) - Abnormal Psychology
- PSYC 129 (3) - Neuroscience
- PSYC 153 (3) - Psychology of the Courtroom

*Pre-approval of Special Topic is required.

Steps to Complete the Minor

1. Declare the Minor: Submit “Request for Addition/Change of Major/Minor” form (on SJSU Registrar’s website) with any required documents to a department advisor.
2. Take the Classes: Choose courses as specified by the “Forensic Studies Minor Form” (on Dept. website) and log course completions on form.
3. Apply for Graduation: When applying for graduation, submit a completed “Forensic Studies Minor Form” to a department advisor.

Forensic Studies Program

Forensic Science is an applied science, and as such has broad application in many fields. The Minor in Forensic Studies has practical applications in the areas of law, law enforcement, engineering, computer science, accounting, chemistry, biology, nursing, medicine, psychology, anthropology, and photography. The Minor provides a potentially useful credential for students pursuing careers or scholarship in all of these fields. A few examples: Anthropology majors could use their Forensic Studies training when excavating clandestine gravesites and documenting human remains; Justice Studies majors could apply their Forensic Studies training when evaluating physical evidence in police work and court rooms; and Nursing majors with a Minor in Forensic Studies could use the credential in the fairly modern field of Forensic Nursing, in which nurses play a major role documenting injuries and collecting forensic evidence in hospitals.

Examples of Careers Related to Forensic Studies Minors

- Biotechnology, chemical and pharmaceutical industries
- Crime scene investigation
- Forensic science/Criminalistics
- Law and related fields
- Teaching/Research
About the Department
Justice Studies is an interdisciplinary area of inquiry that focuses on interrelated criminal and social justice concepts from the lens of humanities, law, and behavioral, social, and natural sciences.

The Department offers 2 MS degree programs, 2 "justice studies" majors, 2 "forensic science" majors, 4 minors, and a certificate in Collaborative Response for Victims of Family Violence.

The Department of Justice Studies at San José State University organizes its curricula around 5 academic pillars:
• Criminal Justice Studies
• Criminology
• Forensic Science
• Legal Studies
• Human Rights

Our Mission
The Department of Justice Studies embraces an interdisciplinary approach to engage students in critical analysis of justice systems in practice, policy, and research. We equip students to be leaders, professionals, and agents of change in justice-related institutions and in diverse local and global communities.

Our Values
Our foremost desire is to foster just societies. We value intellectual curiosity, lifelong learning, honesty, fairness, and ethical consideration of our actions. We embrace diversity, inclusion, civility, and sustainable practices as foundations for strong communities. We commit ourselves to promoting global understanding and respect for cultural differences. We honor our relationships with students, colleagues, alumni, and community partners who work with us to achieve our mission.

Affiliated Student Organizations
• Alpha Phi Sigma Iota, Chapter
• Chi Pi Sigma Fraternity
• Justice Studies Task Force
• Forensic Science Students Club (FSS)
• Students for Firearms Safety

Courses in GE or SJSU Studies
• Area B4: JS 15
• Area D3: JS 25
• Area S: JS 132, JS 136
• Area V: JS171
• Area Z: JS 100W

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