

Forensic Science Minor

Demonstrate Mastery of Core Concepts Within the General Forensic Analyst Licensing Exam

Goal Description:

Students will demonstrate mastery of selected domains and core concepts within the General Forensic Analyst Licensing Examination.

Providing Department: Forensic Science Minor

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Mastery of Core Concepts

Learning Objective Description:

Concepts delivered in FORS 4380 introduce students to five of the seven domains within the General Forensic Analyst Licensing Examination: Brady/Michael Morton Act, Expert Testimony, Professional Responsibility, Human Factors and Root Cause Analysis. Students enrolled in this course will develop mastery of these components, evidenced by satisfactory overall performance in the course.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Performance in FORS 4380

Indicator Description:

Students enrolled in FORS 4380 shall demonstrate a thorough grasp of concepts pertaining to ethics and professional practice in forensic science, including specific domains within the General Forensic Analyst Licensing Examination.

Criterion Description:

More than 80% of students enrolled will perform satisfactorily, evidenced by a grade of C or higher.

Findings Description:

During this assessment cycle 167 students enrolled in FORS 4380 (an increase of >50% compared to last year). Of these, 100% received a satisfactory grade of A to C (85% A, 12% B, 3% C).

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

FORS 4380

Action Description:

Although this criterion was met, the Texas Forensic Science Commission revised the General Forensic Analyst Licensing Examination in 2021 and has identified new content for all of the examination domains. The new examination goes into effect January 2023. The course and the assessments within FORS 4380 must be revised accordingly.

Enhance and Develop Programming

Goal Description:

Enhance and develop academic programming to better serve SHSU students, improve workplace readiness, and deliver a contemporary curriculum.

Providing Department: Forensic Science Minor

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Expand Course Offerings

Performance Objective Description:

Expand course offerings and sections of courses to meet interdisciplinary needs and improve workplace readiness.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Expand Course Offerings

KPI Description:

Develop additional online courses and sections to meet the needs of students intending to pursue both investigative and laboratory-based careers related to forensic science.

Results Description:

During this year FORS 4317 (Applied Statistics for Forensic Science) was delivered in fall and summer. This course supports specific course requirements for some forensic disciplines in accordance with [§ 651.207 of the Texas Administrative Code](#) and covers the statistics domain within the General Forensic Analyst Licensing Examination. Two sections of the course were offered in order to ensure that students needing the course for graduation and employment eligibility in accredited forensic laboratories within the State of Texas were not impacted. The department added numerous new sections to existing courses to meet student demand. This becomes increasingly challenging due to limited instructional resources and SCH growth (>58% over two years).

During this assessment cycle a new course was also developed (FORS 3380 - Intro. Forensic Chemistry) for delivery in Fall 2022.

Attached Files

 [Minor SCH over Time.pdf](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Expand Course Offerings and Content

Action Description:

- 1.) Continue to develop course offerings to meet students needs and improve workplace readiness. Aim to deliver FORS 4330 (Fingerprint Examination) by summer 2022.
- 2.) Ensure that all existing online FORS courses cover materials required for the new General Forensic Analyst Licensing Examination which will launch January 2023.
- 3.) Aim to deliver sufficient sections of online courses so that graduation is not impacted and students are adequately prepared for the licensing examination.

Increase Enrollment

Goal Description:

Increase enrollment in the online forensic science minor.

Providing Department: Forensic Science Minor

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Enrollment Among Various Majors

Performance Objective Description:

Increase enrollment and expand the diversity of majors, specifically in the sciences.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Increase Diversity of Majors

KPI Description:

Increase the number of students majoring in science (e.g. chemistry, forensic chemistry, biology) in the online minor.

Results Description:

Students majoring in science but intending to pursue careers in traditional (laboratory-based) forensic science disciplines are subject to licensing pursuant to [Tex. Admin. Code Chapter 651, Subchapter C](#). The online forensic science minor contains specific courses that address topics within the scope of the General Forensic Analyst Licensing Examination. Currently the majority of students enrolled in the minor are majoring in criminal justice (60%). The number of students majoring in natural sciences increased to 30% from 14% last year. Of those, 15% majored in biological sciences and 14% in chemistry. This compares favorably with 11% and <5% during the previous assessment cycle.

Attached Files

 [Online Minor by Major.pdf](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Diversity of Majors

Action Description:

Continue to attract students majoring in natural sciences to the forensic science minor to prepare them for licensing requirements and improve workplace preparedness.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

The online forensic science minor supports students majoring in other departments that intend to pursue careers in investigative or laboratory-based forensic disciplines. It caters to a diverse group of students with science (e.g. biology, chemistry) and non-science (e.g. criminal justice) backgrounds. It is supported by a small number of faculty in a department with limited faculty resources. SCH growth in excess of 40% has been realized within less than five years and additional growth is expected.

The department must continue to identify instructional resources to support the delivery of these specialized courses that support workplace readiness and preparedness for mandatory licensing requirements in the State of Texas. Plans to develop and deliver course content in other formats to non-degree seeking students are also underway.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

SCH growth in the online forensic minor has been impressive and additional growth is expected. Additional instructional support is needed to support curricular updates resulting from the revised General Forensic Analyst Licensing Examination and the number of sections needed to satisfy student demand. Plans to develop and deliver course content in other formats to non-degree seeking students should be developed.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

The online forensic science minor has shown unprecedented growth (>58% over two years). Its potential to be developed into a certificate program for non-degree seeking students, or developed as part of the premium distance learning (PDL) initiative should be explored. Most importantly, existing courses covering the seven domains of the General Forensic Analyst Licensing Examination require updating prior to January 2023.