

PROPOSAL FOR MINOR PROGRAM OF STUDY

1. **School/College:** Franklin College of Arts and Sciences
2. **Department/Division:** Anthropology
3. **Minor Name:** Forensic Science
4. **CIP:**
5. **Proposed Effective Date:** Fall 2026
6. **Which campus(es) will offer this program?** Athens

7. Program Description:

The proposed **Minor in Forensic Science** responds to growing student and employer demand for training that bridges science, law, and human behavior, fostering career readiness while enriching a wide range of existing UGA majors. The adjective “forensic” comes from the Latin word *forensis*, meaning “in open court” or “public,” and when used colloquially, usually refers to finding and reporting evidence to solve a crime. Like the term science, forensic science does not describe a single field so much as a collection of approaches for interpreting evidence in investigative and legal contexts, and its scope is too broad to be contained within a single department or curriculum. Meaningful education in forensic science therefore demands a multidisciplinary approach, one that allows students to explore the intersections of their primary field with forensic applications.

The proposed Minor in Forensic Science achieves this by providing a coherent yet flexible structure through which students from multiple majors can engage with complementary scientific, ethical, and analytical dimensions of forensic inquiry. Some examples include anthropology majors who typically focus on the human skeleton broadening their expertise through courses in entomology or soft tissue anatomy, chemistry students extending their knowledge into areas such as anatomy, physiology, and toxicology, pre-law students gaining practical insight into how evidence is recovered and interpreted through courses in archaeology, osteology, and criminology, and even art students deepening their understanding of anatomy, human form, and perception through coursework in osteology and forensic psychology. By bridging multiple disciplines through its list of electives and including a capstone course, the minor is able to function as a versatile complement to multiple majors, equipping students with the analytical and interpretive skills – and the formal credential – needed to engage with evidence-based inquiry across professional and academic contexts.

The proposed minor will be housed in the Department of Anthropology. Anthropology is a boundary-spanning department that is ideally poised to translate between the social and biological sciences without falling prey to the singularity of either mindset, while additionally recognizing the role the humanities play in forensics. It is anticipated that students from a wide range of backgrounds will be interested in the proposed minor. Forensic computing and cybersecurity, scientific illustration, forensic pathology and toxicology, crime scene investigation, and forensic archaeology and osteology, are some examples of areas of study whose students are expected to be interested in the proposed minor.

Appended to this document: Appendix A: Survey of Student Interest

8. Program of Study/Requirements:

The minor will consist of 18 hours of coursework. At least 9 hours must come from upper division courses (3000-4000). At least 15 of the 18 hours are to be taken in residence.

To preserve the interdisciplinary nature of the program of study, no more than 9 hours of coursework may be drawn from the same course prefix.

All courses used to satisfy the minor requirements must be completed with a grade of "C" (2.0) or better.

Prerequisite

SOCI 1101, Introductory Sociology (3 hours)

Required Courses (9 hours)

ANTH 2020, Forensic Anthropology (3 hours)

SOCI 3810, Criminology in Sociology (3 hours)

ANTH 4920, Capstone in Forensic Science (3 hours) – **NEW**

Electives (9 hours)

Select 9 hours from groups A, B, or C. When selecting courses, two of the three groups must be represented. At least one of the three courses must be upper-division (3000-level or above).

Group A: Medicine, physiology, and toxicology

BCMB3600, Genomics and Bioinformatics (3 hours)

BCMB4010/6010, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology I (4 hours)

BCMB4020/6020, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology II (3 hours)

BINF(PBIO) 4550/6550, Concepts in Bioinformatics and Omics (3 hours)

CBIO 3710, Principles of Physiology (3 hours)

CBIO 3800, Neurobiology (4 hours)

CBIO(IDIS) 4500/6500, Medical Parasitology (3 hours)

ECHD 3170, Drug and Alcohol Abuse Issues (3 hours)

ENTO 3645, Medical Entomology Lecture (3 hours)

ENTO 4000/6000-4000L/6000L, General Entomology (4 hours)

EPID 4070, Fundamentals of Epidemiology (3 hours)

GENE 3200-3200D, Genetics (4 hours)

GENE 3220L, Genetics Problem Solving Laboratory (3 hours)

GENE 4200/6200, Advanced Genetics (3 hours)

GENE 4220L, Laboratory in Genetic Modeling (3 hours)

GENE 4230L, Evolutionary Biology Laboratory (3 hours)

GENE 4240L, Experimental Microbiome Genetics Laboratory (3 hours)

GENE 4500/6500, Human Genetics (3 hours)

MATH(BINF) 4780/6780, Mathematical Biology (3 hours)

NUTR 4510/6510, Nutrition Related to the Human Life Cycle (3 hours)

NUTR 4530/6530, Medical Nutrition Therapy II (4 hours)

NUTR 4570/6570, Inherited Metabolic Disorders (3 hours)
PBIO(CRSS) 4500/6500, Introduction to Gene Technology (3 hours)
PHAR 4010E, Introduction to Drugs, Biologics, and Devices Regulated by the FDA (3 hours)
VPHY 3108, Integrative Concepts in Physiology II (3 hours)
VPHY 4200/6200, Physiologic Basis of Diseases (3 hours)
VPHY 4300/6300, Endocrine Physiology (3 hours)
VPHY 4500/6500, Integrative Cardiovascular and Respiratory Physiology (3 hours)
VPHY 4600/6600, Physiological Toxicology (3 hours)

Group B: Criminology and society

ARST 3210, Color Photography (3 hours)
CSCI 4270/6270, Introduction to Computer Forensics (4 hours)
ECHD 4380/6380, Human Development and Mental Health (3 hours)
GEOG 2011-2011L, Introduction to Geographic Information Science (3 hours)
GEOG 3640, The Geography of Human Rights (3 hours)
GEOG 4631/6631, Race, Inequality, and the American City (3 hours)
GEOG 4640/6640, Population Geography (3 hours)
GEOG 4680/6680, Gender and Geography (3 hours)
HIST 3775, Crime, Punishment, and Human Rights (3 hours)
JOUR 3330, Introduction to Photojournalism (3 hours)
JURI 2990-2990D, Law, Justice, and the State (3 hours)
LING 4940/6940, Special Topics in Linguistics (3 hours)
MIST 5785, Applied Information Security (3 hours)
POLS 3600, Criminal Justice Administration (3 hours)
POLS 4900, Law Enforcement Administration (3 hours)
POLS(SOCI) 3700, Research Methods in Criminal Justice (3 hours)
PSYC 3230, Psychopathology (3 hours)
PSYC 3300, Social and Personality Development (3 hours)
PSYC 4200, Social Psychology (3 hours)
SOCI 3020, Lives in Time and Place (3 hours)
SOCI 3070, Juvenile Delinquency (3 hours)
SOCI 3100, Medical Sociology (3 hours)
SOCI 3340, Social Psychology of Race, Racism, and Discrimination (3 hours)
SOCI(ANTH) 3400, Environmental Sociology (3 hours)
SOCI 3830, Violence and Society (3 hours)
SOCI 3840, Family Violence (3 hours)
SOCI 4830, Sociology of Law (3 hours)

Group C: The human body in forensic context

ANTH 3210, Archaeology of Warfare (3 hours)
ANTH 3330, Displaced Peoples of the World (3 hours)
ANTH 3444, Ancient Human Health (3 hours)
ANTH 3540, Multicultural Health Care (3 hours)
ANTH 4025/6025, Stable Isotope Analysis in Anthropology (3 hours)

ANTH 4100/6100, Evolution and Human Behavior (3 hours)
 ANTH 4200/6200, Field Methods in Archaeology (3-6 hours)
 ANTH(ECOL) 4210L/6210L, Zooarchaeology (4 hours)
 ANTH 4230/6230, Archaeological Theory (3 hours)
 ANTH 4240/6240, Laboratory Methods in Archaeology (3-6 hours)
 ANTH 4265/6265, Bioarcheology (3 hours)
 ANTH 4500/6500, Molecular Past (3 hours)
 ANTH 4540/6540-4540L/6540L, Health, Biology, and Culture (3 hours)
 ANTH 4620, Applied Anthropology (3 hours)
 ANTH 4730L/6730L, Human Osteology (4 hours)
 ANTH 4740/6740, Primate Ecology and Evolution (3 hours)
 ANTH 4755/6755-4755L/6755L, Archaeological Science (3 hours)
 ANTH 4790/6790, Human Adaptation (3 hours)
 ANTH 4850, Archaeology and Society (3 hours)
 ARGD 3310, Techniques and Topics in Science Illustration (3 hours)
 ARGD 3320, Design in Scientific Illustration (3 hours)
 ARGD 3330, Color Techniques in Scientific Illustration (3 hours)
 ARST 2000, Introduction to Figure Drawing (3 hours)
 ARST 2800, Introduction to Digital Imaging (3 hours)
 ARST 3010, Advanced Drawing (3 hours)
 ARST 3130, Introduction to Figure Painting (3 hours)
 ARST 3145, The Figure as Subject and the Narrative Impulse (3 hours)
 ARST 3150, Figure Painting (3 hours)
 ARST 4020, Figure Drawing/Anatomy (3 hours)
 CBIO 2200-2200L, Anatomy and Physiology I (4 hours)
 CBIO 2210-2210L, Anatomy and Physiology II (4 hours)
 CBIO 3010-3010L, Functional Human Anatomy (4 hours)
 CBIO 3200L, Medical Anatomy (1-3 hours)
 CRSS(FANR) 3060, Soils and Hydrology (3 hours)
 AND CRSS(FANR) 3060L, Soils and Hydrology Laboratory (1 hour)
 CRSS 3540, Soil Morphology and Interpretation (3 hours)
 ENTO 3140-3140L, Insect Natural History (4 hours)
 GEOL 3010-3010L, Earth Materials (4 hours)
 GEOL 3020-3020L, Surficial and Near-Surficial Processes (4 hours)
 GEOL 4010-4010L, Life and Ecologies of the Past (3 hours)
 GEOL 4410/6410, Introduction to Research in Archeogeology (1-3 hours)
 CRSS(GEOL) 4540/6540-4540L/6540L, Pedology (3 hours)
 GEOL 4550/6550, Clay Mineralogy and Geochemistry (3 hours)
 GEOL(ANTH) 4340/6340, Archaeometry (3 hours)
 GRNT 3100E, Early Life Influences on Aging (3 hours)
 PBIO 4650/6650-4650L/6650L, Plant Biodiversity (4 hours)
 PBIO 4800/6800, Environmental DNA (eDNA): One Mixture, Multiple Meanings (4 hours)
 PMCY 4050/6050, Human Anatomy (3 hours)
 VPAT 5321, Veterinary Forensics and Forensic Pathology (1 hour)
 VPHY 3100, Elements of Physiology (3 hours)

VPHY 3107-3107D, Integrative Concepts in Physiology I (4 hours)
VPHY 3107L, Integrative Concepts in Physiology Laboratory (1 hour)

Explanation of Required Courses:

ANTH 2020: Forensic anthropology is an applied sub-discipline of physical anthropology that deals with the recovery, analysis and identification of human remains in a medico-legal setting. Students will be introduced to the history and basic principles of forensic anthropology, including the techniques used for the determination of age, sex, ancestry, and stature for skeletal remains; trauma analysis; fragmentary remains analysis and field recovery techniques. Additionally, pertinent topics, such as post mortem interval, taphonomic and diagenetic effects on the skeleton, and the application of forensic anthropology to mass disasters, human rights work and the identification of POW-MIAs will be discussed.

This course establishes the scientific foundation of the minor, focusing on human anatomy, human variation, and data analysis. The course introduces human remains as evidence in medicolegal settings, methods for recovery and scientific study of human remains, and implementation of forensic anthropology fieldwork in medicolegal contexts, including interactions between field researchers, laboratory researchers, law enforcement, expert witnesses, victims, and other stakeholders.

SOCI 3810: This course surveys the descriptive, empirical, and theoretical issues in the study of crime and delinquency. It will consider the roles of social, cultural, economic, political, psychological, and biological factors in causing criminal behavior. Students will be exposed to the major theoretical perspectives in the field, as well as to the critiques and policy implications of these perspectives.

This course is an introduction to foundational information regarding deviance, criminal behavior, social control institutions, law, and ethics.

ANTH 4920: A three-credit capstone course taken in a student's final year that focuses on professional development and career options, and synthesis of the curriculum, including a capstone thesis. The capstone course offers situates each student's disciplinary focus within the larger sequence of scientific forensic inquiry, from evidence collection to legal interpretation. A capstone thesis sees students (1) synthesize the courses they took in fulfillment of the minor and their major field of study, and (2) articulate that curriculum within a scientific, applied framework germane to forensic science and with desired potential career pathways. The course and thesis provide an opportunity for reflection, research and synthesis across disciplines, reinforcing critical thinking, scientific communication, and ethical reasoning. As a community, students have an opportunity to learn about the particular curricula pursued by their peers toward appreciating the breadth of forensic studies and complementarity of its many specializations. Rounding out the curriculum, the capstone prepares students for graduate study or entry into forensic and related professional fields.

TOTAL HOURS: 18

Appendix A: Survey of Student Interest

In September 2025, a QuestionPro survey was administered to UGA undergraduate students by emailing a survey link to academic advisors in allied fields representing STEM fields, social sciences, and humanities, business, and law, for distribution within their departments. The survey questions are appended below. The survey received 136 completed responses. Results indicate that a Minor in Forensic Science is desired by students, and would likely quickly enroll a large number of existing students from multiple colleges.

Students expressed strong interest in forensic science and the proposal to offer a degree program, with 98.7% of respondents answering “Yes” when asked if UGA should offer a degree program in forensic science (1.3% responded “Maybe,” and none responded “No”). Although most respondents are from the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences, a strong level of interest was demonstrated by students of diverse backgrounds. Nine colleges and 39 different majors are represented by respondents (Figs. B1, Table B1). Of the respondents, 21% are seniors, 32% juniors, 21% sophomores, and 23% freshmen. Respondents indicated a wide range of intended career paths (Fig. B3).

Figure B1 – Primary college of 136 respondents

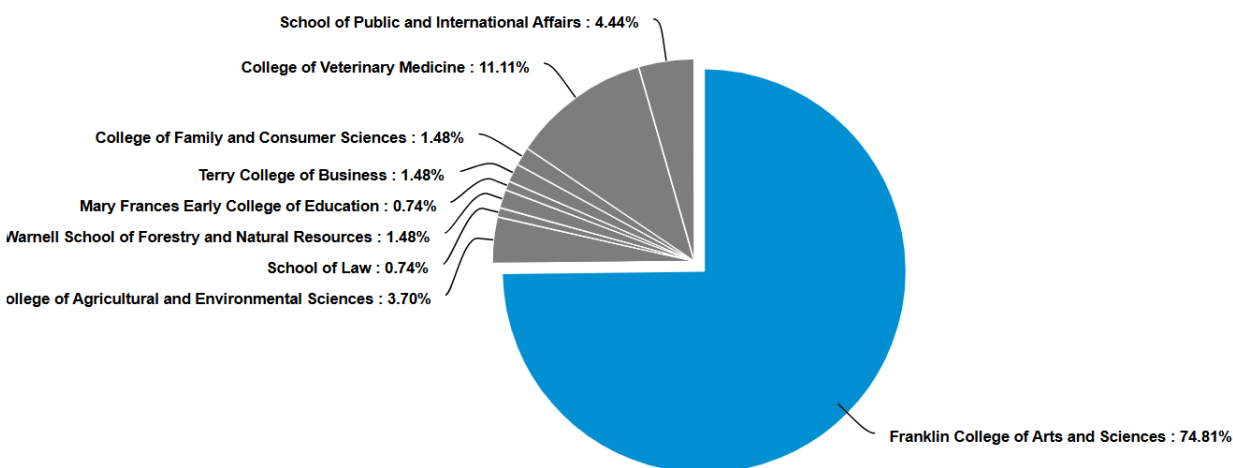
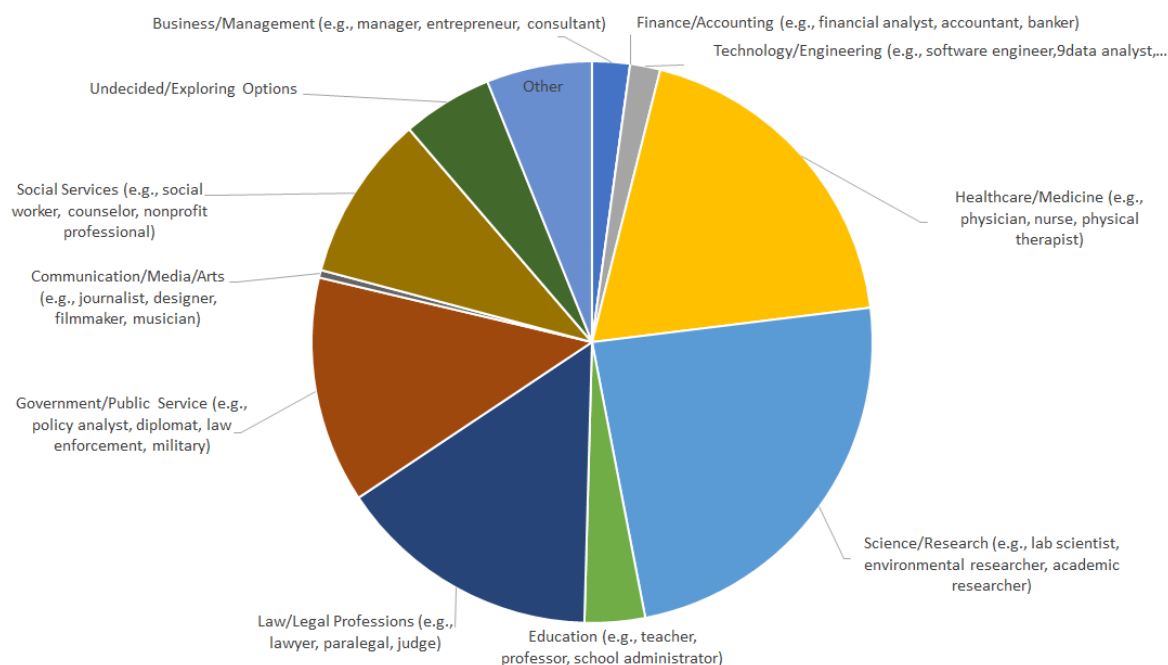


Table B1 – Majors represented by 136 respondents

Major	%	Major	%	Major	%	Major	%
Criminal Justice	23%	Chemistry	2%	Bioinformatics	1%	Social Psychol	1%
Psychology	12%	Hum Dev Fam Sci	2%	Philosophy	1%	Computer Sci	1%
Biology	12%	Microbiology	1%	Internt'l Affairs	1%	French	1%
Biomed Physiol	10%	Comm Studies	1%	Romance Lang	1%	Ecology	1%
Sociology	9%	Spanish	1%	Human Resources	1%	Business Mgmt	1%
Anthropology	5%	Mgmt Inform Syst	1%	Undecided	1%	Military Sci	1%
Biochemistry	3%	Economics	1%	Wildlife Science	1%	German	1%
Political Science	3%	English	1%	Linguistics	1%	Russian	1%
Biotechnology	2%	Cellular Biology	1%	Crimology	1%	Genetics	1%
Molecular Bio	2%	Regenerative Bioscience	1%	Exercise Sport Sci	1%		0%

Figure B3 – Intended career paths of 136 respondents



Most respondents (59%) are pursuing a single major, and 55% are pursuing at least one minor. Fifty-one percent indicate that their current curriculum offers enough flexibility to take electives in other departments or colleges (45% are not sure, and 5% indicated “No”).

When asked to explain what would be most desirable, a major or a minor, most respondents (n=99 students) indicated that both should be offered. However, a minor is seen as the most immediately useful option (n=26 students, versus n=7 indicating preference for a major).

The most common reason (n=41 students) for preferring a minor in forensic science was to complement and enrich a student’s major. Criminal Justice (CJ), Psychology, and Biomedical Physiology were commonly-mentioned as majors that stand to benefit from a forensic science minor that pulls the overall degree program in the direction of the forensic sciences.

- “CJ is very broad as it is so I think specifying it with programs like this would better prepare those who wish to go into the field”
- “I have dreamt of being a prosecutor and later a judge for many years. Having a background knowledge of forensic science would help me understand evidence, fingerprinting, and other scientific applications that would help bridge the understanding in deciding a case and what evidence it goes with”
- “[A minor in forensic science] expands upon an area of interest from students at UGA allowing them to pursue a degree closer to their desires”

Several students mentioned that they desire more training in STEM fields in a focused way that allows them to pursue forensic science without declaring a new major (“A minor would be desirable in

combination with my CJ major in order to open me to new areas without having to add a bio or chem major”).

The second most common reason (n=32 students) for wanting a program in forensic science was to prepare students for graduate school or for jobs. Students indicated, on the survey, interests in careers in law enforcement, forensic psychology, pathology, and crime labs, and desire training for these careers (see Fig. 3B). However, students mentioned that to secure the academic or professional positions they seek, they currently try to cobble together something resembling a forensic science degree from existing degree programs – for example, combining a CJ major with a Biological and Medical Anthropology minor, or a Psychology major with a CJ minor. As a minor (versus as a certificate, which is a credential in a broader sense, but not in the same academic or professional category as degrees), the program would meet student demand for formal credentials that enhance their competitiveness for graduate programs and employment.

At least two important interpretations stem from student’s remarks about offering forensic science as a minor. First, students acknowledge that forensic science is a broad field with many subdisciplines (“Forensics is a field that spans multiple different majors with students from multiple areas of study wanting to solely focus of forensic science”). An important consideration in structuring a curriculum must be versatility to allow specialization within multiple majors. Second, students also value opportunities to bridge disciplines (“We have the resources and amenities to support a law school, stem labs, and the new medical school, yet we don’t offer any studies that combine these fields”), and a prominent theme in why students support a forensic science degree program is the interdisciplinary training it provides. Forensic science bridges law, medicine, biology, chemistry, anthropology, criminal justice, sociology, psychology, and more. Students responded that they like how a forensic science program could serve as a link between UGA’s existing strengths. One of the survey questions asked if students’ intended career paths require interdisciplinary training that spans the natural sciences, social sciences, and/or humanities, to which 12% responded “No,” and 88% responded “Yes.” Students do not wish to lose the interdisciplinarity of forensic sciences, broadly, and a multidisciplinary program is seen as value added over individual minors housed within individual departments (“I would like hands-on experience geared towards forensics and the opportunity for learning based on that rather than having to narrow down the degree into multiple parts of forensics”). Importantly, given the strong desire for forensic science to bolster career prospects, the degree credential of a minor ensures this effort is recognized by potential employers and graduate schools.

A multidisciplinary minor addresses these considerations best, as it is a formal credential that enhances a major field through both greater specialization in that field, and greater connectivity with allied fields.

UGA’s institutional reputation was given as a reason to offer a degree in forensic science. UGA was seen by respondents as a large, well-resourced public university that “should already have” a forensic science program. Students mentioned it as a gap in UGA’s offerings compared to peer institutions, and some students even reported peers leaving UGA or attending other schools, such as the University of Tennessee, because UGA doesn’t offer any degree program in forensics. Students believe it would attract new applicants and increase UGA’s competitiveness.

In sum, students overwhelmingly see a forensic science minor as a way to build transferable skills, such as critical thinking, observation, and communication, regardless of their specific intended career path, while also gaining specialized technical training to complement existing majors in the event that their careers are directly aligned with forensics. The mix of broad intellectual skills and hands-on applied skills is a strong selling point for creating the program.

QuestionPro Survey Questions

UGA is considering offering a new multidisciplinary degree (Minor, Major) in Forensic Science, and is seeking input from existing UGA students. Forensic science spans the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities in legal contexts, and offers training that may be broadly useful for many career paths. All responses will remain confidential and secure. Thank you for offering your input via this brief survey, which will be used to gauge interest, and help shape the structure of the potential program. The survey should take about 5 minutes to complete.

Which of the following best describes you?

1. UGA undergraduate student
2. UGA graduate student
3. UGA faculty/staff
4. Other

Forensic science is an interdisciplinary field that applies scientific methods to questions of law and public interest. Do you think UGA should offer a degree (Major, Minor) in Forensic Science?

1. Yes
2. Maybe
3. No

Please explain your answer, including whether a Minor, Major, or Both are desirable.

Is Forensic Science of personal or professional interest to you?

1. Yes - Personal interest
2. Yes - Professional interest
3. No

What is your current intended career path? (You may select more than one, if applicable)

1. Business/Management (e.g., manager, entrepreneur, consultant)
2. Finance/Accounting (e.g., financial analyst, accountant, banker)
3. Technology/Engineering (e.g., software engineer, data analyst, mechanical engineer)
4. Healthcare/Medicine (e.g., physician, nurse, physical therapist)
5. Science/Research (e.g., lab scientist, environmental researcher, academic researcher)
6. Education (e.g., teacher, professor, school administrator)
7. Law/Legal Professions (e.g., lawyer, paralegal, judge)
8. Government/Public Service (e.g., policy analyst, diplomat, law enforcement, military)
9. Communication/Media/Arts (e.g., journalist, designer, filmmaker, musician)
10. Social Services (e.g., social worker, counselor, nonprofit professional)
11. Skilled Trades/Technical Professions (e.g., electrician, mechanic, technician)
12. Undecided/Exploring Options
13. Other

Does your intended career path require interdisciplinary training that spans the natural sciences, social sciences, and/or humanities?

1. Yes, training in two or more of these areas is helpful for my intended career.
2. No, training in just one of these areas is sufficient for my intended career.

What are some useful skills you would expect to gain from coursework in forensic science, regardless of your intended career path?

What is your primary College? (Select one)

1. Franklin College of Arts and Sciences
2. College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
3. School of Law
4. College of Pharmacy
5. Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources
6. Mary Frances Early College of Education
7. Graduate School
8. Terry College of Business
9. Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication
10. College of Family and Consumer Sciences
11. College of Veterinary Medicine
12. School of Social Work
13. College of Environment & Design
14. School of Public and International Affairs
15. College of Public Health
16. Odum School of Ecology
17. College of Engineering
18. Morehead Honors College
19. School of Medicine

Are you pursuing one or more major/minor? Select all that apply:

1. One major
2. More than one major
3. One minor
4. More than one minor

Please write your major(s)/minor(s) here:

If you are pursuing any Certificates at UGA, please write them here:

What is your anticipated graduation date (semester/year)?

1. Fall 2025
2. Spring 2026
3. Summer 2026
4. Fall 2026
5. Spring 2027
6. Summer 2027
7. Fall 2027
8. Spring 2028
9. Summer 2028

10. Fall 2028
11. Spring 2029
12. Summer 2029
13. Other

Do you have flexibility in your degree trajectory to take electives in other departments or colleges?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Maybe/Not Sure