



TEXAS TECH

UNIVERSITY.

**MASTERS OF FORENSIC SCIENCES PROGRAM
STUDENT HANDBOOK
2016-2017
(Spring 2017 Admission)**

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1. Introduction

The Masters of Forensic Sciences program, housed in the College of Arts & Sciences, Institute of Forensic Sciences, at Texas Tech University offers applied training in the multiple fields of forensic sciences.

This Master's program is firmly committed to the concept of balanced professional training. Based on a scientist-practitioner model of training, the Master's program strives to provide students with skills in the following areas: professional ethics, law and forensic sciences, statistical analysis of data, investigative skill, and the sciences specific to traditional fields of forensic work.

The forensic sciences graduate program is committed to fostering knowledge and an appreciation of the sciences specific to professional forensic activities. The program recognizes the importance of both personal and professional development as integral aspects of training forensic students. The program is generalist in nature; i.e., while remaining anchored in the basic values of the discipline, enough breadth and flexibility is available for students to tailor training experiences to match their interests as well as the demands of a complex job-market.

The program seeks to establish a training environment that is conducive to promoting a positive learning experience and that follows the ethical principles and guidelines of the profession in all areas of their scholarly, teaching, and applied activities. Students will experience a graduate training environment that is supportive of them and their work, which fosters collaboration among students and between students and faculty, and that teaches and models ethical behavior. Students in this training program are urged to obtain applied experience in a variety of settings and to seek out opportunities for collaboration.

1.1 Program Faculty

Robert D. Morgan, Ph.D.

Skelton Endowed Professor of Psychology. Oklahoma State University, 1999. Forensic psychology; diagnostic decision making; and new professional's issues.

Dr. Morgan is the **Director** of the Institute for Forensic Science. He can be contacted by email at robert.morgan@ttu.edu, or by phone at (806) 834-7117.

Paola Prada, Ph.D.

Research Assistant Professor. Florida International University, 2010. Chemical odor analysis and detection.

Dr. Prada serves at the **Lab Supervisor**. She oversees all operations of the Institute for Forensic Science laboratory, as well as ensures all students are in compliance with the necessary trainings for laboratory work. She can be contacted by email at paola.prada@ttu.edu, or by phone at (806) 834-0983.

Kathy Sperry, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Practice. Texas Tech University, 1993. Stalking; wrongful convictions.

Dr. Sperry serves as the program's **Internship Coordinator**, and will oversee all needed arrangements for internships and will advise on issues directly related to internships. She can be contacted by email at kathy.sperry@ttu.edu, or by phone at (806) 834-4309.

Megan A. Thoen, Ph.D.

Research Assistant Professor. Texas Tech University, 2013. Forensic psychology; mental health and well-being of offenders and law enforcement.

Dr. Thoen serves as the **Interim Graduate Program Director**. She can be contacted by email at megan.thoen@ttu.edu, or by phone at (806) 834-1687.

2. Overview of Requirements

The forensic sciences program is a Master of Science program.

Students have the option to choose from two tracks:

The Investigative Track is designed for students who have a social science background and who intend to work in a non-laboratory setting.

- If the Thesis option is elected, only 33 course work hours plus 6 hours of Thesis hours are required for graduation (this must include all required core courses).
- If the Internship option is elected, 45 course work hours are required for graduation (this must include all required core courses).

The Scientist Track is designed for students who have a strict science (i.e., chemistry, biology, etc.) background who wish to work in a traditional laboratory setting. For this track, 36 course work hours plus 6 hours of Thesis hours are required for graduation (this must include all required core courses).

For both tracks, students must achieve a grade of B or above in all required courses. If the student fails to do so, he/she must retake the course. Students who fail to meet the policy and deadlines for thesis defense and internship paper presentation will be delayed in the graduation process.

3. Thesis/Internship Advisor

Each student in the forensic sciences program has access to a thesis/internship advisor. Advisors must be selected by completing Thesis/Internship Advisor Selection form by the 8th week of the first semester of beginning the program. The advisor is chosen by the student from faculty in their primary area of emphasis.

Advisors guide the student on his or her curricular plans during the student's graduate career. This advisor also will aid the student in participating in research activities related to the thesis. Students in the Investigative track who choose the internship option will coordinate their comprehensive written exam through their advisor.

4. Basic Plan for the Master's Degree

There are two basic plans for Master's degree work:

The Investigative Track:

- If the Thesis option is elected, 30 course work hours plus 6 hours of Thesis hours are required for graduation (this must include all required core courses).
 - If the Internship option is elected, 30 course work hours plus 6 hours of Internship hours are required for graduation (this must include all required core courses). A comprehensive written exam specific to the student's core area of study is required in lieu of the thesis.
- The Scientist Track:
 - For this track, 36 course work hours plus 6 hours of Thesis hours are required for graduation (this must include all required core courses).

Filing the Official Degree Program. During the first semester of enrollment, the student should submit to the dean of the Graduate School a "Program for the Master's Degree and Application for Admission to Candidacy" as prepared by an official representative of the proposed major department (i.e., advisor). Delay in submission of a degree program may result in postponement of admission to candidacy and graduation. Forms for the "Program for the Master's Degree and Application for Admission to Candidacy" are available from the Graduate School at www.gradschool.ttu.edu.

When students' "Degree Plan" is approved by the Graduate School, they are expected to follow it as the basis of all subsequent enrollments. Substitution of courses can be made only on the written recommendation of the department and approval of the graduate dean.

Approval of a "Degree Plan for the Master's Degree" does not, however, constitute admission to candidacy for a master's degree. It merely signifies that the proposed program will be acceptable if the student satisfies all Graduate School regulations and all of the requirements connected with the degree program.

Admission to Candidacy. Every applicant for a master's degree is required to make formal application for admission to candidacy for the master's degree as soon as 9 to 12 semester hours of the master's degree work, excluding leveling courses, have been completed. This application is submitted to the dean of the Graduate School on the form entitled "Program for the Master's Degree and Application for Admission to Candidacy." Admission to candidacy will be granted at such time as all of the following requirements have been met:

- All conditions relating to admission to the program have been met.
- At least 9 semester hours of the graduate work required for the master's degree have been completed (exclusive of transfer and extension courses).

- All required leveling work has been completed with B or better grades.
- An average grade of 3.0 or better has been maintained in all courses comprising the official program exclusive of leveling work.
- The general field of the thesis has been stated and approved, if applicable.
- Work to date is acceptable to the departments concerned, as attested by their approval of the application for admission to candidacy.
- The entire program conforms with the general requirements of the Graduate School and the requirements of the particular degree.

Annual Review. Annual reviews for the forensic sciences program will take place in April. Any student not making satisfactory progress toward the degree may be placed on probation and given conditions to stay in the program. Continued unsatisfactory progress in any area of graduate work will be cause for dismissal.

Transferred Work. There is no automatic transfer of credit toward a master's degree, but, in general, work completed in residence at another accredited graduate school may, on the recommendation of the departments concerned, be accepted for as much as 6 semester hours toward a master's degree. Work completed at another graduate school with a grade less than B will not be accepted. Transfer credit will not alter a student's grade point average at Texas Tech.

Grade Requirement for Graduation. For the master's degree in forensic sciences, the minimum requirement for graduation is an average of 3.0 in the major subject and an overall average of 3.0 on all courses, exclusive of the thesis, comprising the official program for the degree.

Time Limit. With the exception of certain specially approved programs, work credited toward a master's degree must be completed within six years. Students whose graduate study at Texas Tech is interrupted by military service will be granted an extension of time for the period of their military duty, not exceeding five years.

5. Program Registration and Course Requirements

All students are required to complete a series of laboratory safety requirements for the Institute of Forensic Sciences by the 4th week following their beginning the program. Access to areas that will be used for some of the required courses require this training. For questions related to these requirements, contact the Lab Supervisor (currently Dr. Paola Prada). A listing of the requirements can be found in section 15 of this handbook.

5.1 Course Requirements for the Program Core

5.1a Scientist Track

Students in the Scientist track must take at least 33 hours from the core curriculum, including a statistics, research methods, and a law course. The remaining coursework requirements are satisfied by selections from a broad list of approved electives. For this track, 33 course work hours plus 6 hours of Thesis hours are required for graduation (this must include all required core courses).

Core Curriculum

Forensic Courses (All required)

- FSCI 7000 – Research: Intro to Forensic Sciences
- FSCI 5352 – Ethics in Forensic Sciences
- FSCI 5353 – Research Methods in Forensic Science
- FSCI 5350 – Crime Scene Investigation
- FSCI 5354 – Introduction to Forensic Drug Chemistry
- FSCI 5355 – Instrumental Methods for Trace Evidence Analysis
- FSCI 5360 – Report Writing and Expert Testimony
- ENTX 6351/6352 – Analytical Toxicology Lecture and Lab

Statistics Courses (Only one required)

- BIOL 6309 – Advanced Topics in Quantitative Biology
- STAT 5302 – Applied Statistics I

Law Course (Required)

- FSCI 5331 – Advanced Topics in Forensic Science: Forensic Science and the Law

Elective (minimum of 3 credits)

The student's selections for elective courses should be based on their desired area of focus such as toxicology, chemistry, biology, etc. Students should refer to the list of possible elective courses provided by the program prior to the beginning of each semester for suggestions, and confirm selection of electives with their advisor.

5.1b Investigative Track

Students in the Investigative track must take at least 24 hours from the core curriculum, including a statistics, research methods, and law course. Similar to the Scientist track, the remaining coursework requirements are satisfied by selections from a broad list of approved electives. If the Thesis option is elected, 39 course work hours plus 6 hours of Thesis hours are required for graduation. If the Internship option is elected, 45 course work hours are required for graduation.

Core Curriculum

Forensic Courses (All required)

- FSCI 7000 – Research: Intro to Forensic Sciences
- FSCI 5352 – Ethics in Forensic Sciences
- FSCI 5353 – Research Methods in Forensic Science
- FSCI 5350 – Crime Scene Investigation
- FSCI 5351 – Serial Crime
- FSCI 5355 – Instrumental Methods for Trace Evidence Analysis
- FSCI 5360 – Report Writing and Expert Testimony

Statistics Courses (Only one required)

- PSY 5480 – Experimental Design
- SOC 5331 – Quantitative Methods in Sociology
- STAT 5302 – Applied Statistics I

Law Course (Required)

- FSCI 5331 – Advanced Topics in Forensic Science: Forensic Science and the Law

Elective (minimum of 3 credits)

The student's selections for elective courses should be based on their desired area of focus such as psychology, sociology, etc. Students should refer to the list of possible elective courses provided by the program prior to the beginning of each semester for suggestions, and confirm selection of electives with their advisor.

6. Financial Assistance

Note: All material in this section is subject to changes as our administration implements recent legislation and directives from the State of Texas. Check and double-check before acting on any information about financial assistance.

6.1 Office of Student Financial Aid

Students interested in applying for financial aid should get a copy of the current Student Financial Aid Handbook and should obtain appropriate forms from the Office of Financial Aid (310 West Hall, 742-3681). Often such materials must be filed by April 15th of the year proceeding the period for which financial aid is being sought. Usually this includes completing TTU's institutional application form. An American College Testing Family Financial Statement may be required from your parents or guardian to establish eligibility for the broadest possible range of scholarship, grant, and loan programs. Work study eligibility is established in a similar manner. Consequently, such prospects should be pursued at the earliest possible time. The same office also maintains current listing of employment opportunities to which you may be referred.

6.2 Scholarships and Awards

Each year the Graduate School at Texas Tech grants numerous scholarship and fellowship awards. Applications are due in February. Visit <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/funding/scholarships.php> for detailed information on application requirements.

On occasion, other scholarships and other awards may be available through the Institute of Forensic Sciences (i.e., the Hillcrest Foundation Scholarship in Forensic Science, travel awards for presenting research at conferences, and awards for funding thesis research). Please be attentive to relevant notifications of scholarship and award availability.

7. Thesis

7.1 General Information

For students in the Scientist Track, completion of a Thesis is required. For students in the Investigative Track, they may choose to complete a Thesis OR complete an internship and comprehensive examination.

The Thesis is a "capstone" experience designed for the graduate students in forensic sciences as their terminal project. We hope it will be an interesting, challenging, and educational experience for all students. This project is intended to demonstrate the students' knowledge of forensic sciences in their area of specialization. Students will develop a research project based on sound methodologies and practices.

The Thesis serves three purposes:

1. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the essential issues in forensic sciences as they relate to the student's area of specialization.
2. Demonstrate the integration of knowledge and skills through analytical and critical thinking.
3. To demonstrate independent and in-depth research into an area of specialization. This includes the application of scientific knowledge as it relates to their field of specialization.

7.2 Policies and Procedures

The student must be enrolled in FSCI 6000 (6 credit hours) and have completed the series of courses for each track as listed below **prior** to beginning their Thesis. Students who enroll in FSCI 6000 must be majors in the Forensic Sciences Master's program and demonstrate a high degree of interest in forensic sciences in various settings, as well as exhibit a professional attitude toward forensic sciences.

Scientist Track: FSCI 7000 (Intro to Forensic Science), FSCI 5353 (Research Methods), ENTX 6351/6352 (Analytical Toxicology Lecture and Lab), FSCI 5350 (Crime Science Investigation), FSCI 5352 (Ethics), and FSCI 5331 (Advanced Topics in Forensic Science: Forensic Science and the Law)

Investigative Track: FSCI 7000 (Intro to Forensic Science), FSCI 5353 (Research Methods), FSCI 5351 (Serial Crimes), FSCI 5350 (Crime Science Investigation), FSCI 5352 (Ethics), and FSCI 5331 (Advanced Topics in Forensic Science: Forensic Science and the Law)

In rare cases, students may petition the program faculty to waive the completion requirement for some courses.

Students intending to graduate in May are required to have their thesis data collected by the preceding December. This will allow for adequate time for writing the thesis with committee input. The thesis defense and the completion of the final thesis draft must follow the university timeline for a May graduation. It is the student's responsibility to meet these deadlines. Please understand that **most faculty are on a 9 month appointment**, so your advisor and committee members may not be available for thesis defense and committee work during the summer.

Procedures:

The student must select a committee of three faculty for the presentation of the thesis research; two of which must be Ph.D. professors. A committee member chosen from outside TTU must be approved by program faculty. Once the committee has been selected, the student must complete the Thesis/Internship Committee Selection departmental form by the 8th week of the student's second semester in the program.

Initial development of the thesis topic must be done in conjunction with the Advisor (or Principal Investigator, if other than the Advisor). Follow up meetings will proceed with the objective of developing a concrete thesis topic. The student must finalize the thesis topic in consultation with their thesis committee the semester prior to enrolling in thesis hours and prior to beginning the thesis.

Additionally, prior to the start of the thesis, the student must submit a research prospectus (5 pages maximum) to the thesis committee outlining:

- The significance of the thesis and how it relates to the forensic sciences
- Provide a brief background literature review
- Provide and discuss the research question or hypothesis
- Discuss intended methodology

The Advisor (or Principal Investigator, if other than the Advisor) will inform the student of the necessary completion of any environmental, health and safety certifications. Completion of all necessary certifications, and/or training must be done prior to the start of the research project. Copies of the certifications and proof of training must be given to the Advisor (or Principal Investigator, if other than the Research Advisor). Any approval needed to be obtained through the university, such as with the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) or the Human Research Protection Program (HRPP)/(IRB), will be completed in conjunction with the Advisor (or Principal Investigator, if other than the Advisor). A copy of the approved protocol will be given to the Advisor.

Upon finalizing the research prospectus, the student will then send the finalized version to the thesis committee for approval. The student will confirm their approval of their prospectus with the completion of the Thesis Prospectus Approval Form.

The thesis project should be written in the publishing style of specific to the field of research and follow the citation and reference style of major journals in the field. The length of the thesis is subject to the topic and what is required to show completion of the

research.

The student must file a "**STATEMENT OF INTENTION TO GRADUATE**" form, including the official title of thesis. The student must submit this form to the Graduate School office the semester they intend to graduate by the deadline specified by the Graduate School. Submission of this form is the responsibility of the student.

The student must submit the thesis paper to all committee members at least two weeks prior to the date they plan to give their oral defense. **Students who fail to meet the policy and deadlines for thesis defense and internship paper presentation will be delayed in the graduation process.** Students are also required to present their research findings to their committee. This presentation is open to all university faculty, staff, and students. Presentations must be scheduled within the guidelines as set forth by the TTU academic calendar to fulfill requirements for graduation during the intended semester. If the student plans to present at the Institute for Forensic Sciences, students should be sure to coordinate the date of presentation with Ms. Priscilla Reid to ensure availability of the classroom.

As the thesis presentation is open to all, an announcement must be posted as IFS and emailed to all FSCI students and faculty at least two weeks prior to the presentation. See the "ANNOUNCEMENT OF THESIS DEFENSE AND INTERNSHIP PAPER FORMAT" in section 15 of this handbook. Coordination of emailing and posting the announcement can be completed through Institute for Forensic Science office staff.

After the thesis defense, the student, in conjunction with the Advisor, must obtain committee signatures on the **ORAL DEFENSE** and **THESIS DISSERTATION APPROVAL FORM** and submit the form to the Graduate School prior to the deadline set by the academic calendar during the semester of graduation.

Additional changes suggested by committee members must be completed and resubmitted to the committee for approval. After receiving final approval from the committee of the changes, the student must submit a .pdf file of the thesis to the ETD site for official review and to the Graduate School Thesis Coordinator prior to the deadline set by the academic calendar during the semester of graduation.

The student must pay the Thesis-Dissertation fee, if applicable, which must be submitted to Student Business Services prior to the deadline set by the academic calendar during the semester of graduation.

Final grade for thesis hours (A or B) will be initiated through the chair of the student's committee and submitted to Registrar's final grade roll at the end of the semester. **Grades for thesis credits will be "CR" until the final semester.**

8. Non-thesis Option: Internship and Comprehensive Exam

Students opting out of completing a thesis must complete an internship (with an internship paper and presentation of that paper) and a comprehensive written exam in their primary area of emphasis.

The internship is a “capstone” experience for the graduate students in the forensic sciences. We hope it will be an interesting, challenging, and educational experience for all students. The internship allows the student to work and learn outside of the classroom at an approved site selected by the faculty and student. The internship will also extend a service to the host site/facility by providing a new source of practical experiences, leadership, and potential candidates for employment.

The internship serves three purposes:

- To offer students the opportunity to learn new information and skills outside of the classroom.
- To teach students how to apply the knowledge and skills learned through the forensic sciences curriculum courses to "real life" situations.
- To understand the student's level of preparation to enter professional practice in the forensic sciences arena.

8.1 Internship Site

The chosen site must be involved in the areas of crime laboratory work, criminal justice, crime scene investigation, or other areas related to the forensic sciences. The student needs to be supervised on a day-to-day basis by an experienced, qualified professional employed by the facility. The students should be interacting with real, not simulated, situations.

The student may choose to apply for an internship in Lubbock or elsewhere. Students may pursue internships at any approved location in the United States. Arrangements can be made for internships to be done outside of the U.S. These situations are treated on an individual basis. Most internship locations, unfortunately, do not pay a stipend. However, there are locations that will pay a stipend and/or may offer other benefits such as housing. It is permissible to accept an internship that is paid or includes benefits.

8.2 Enrollment

Each student must enroll in FSCI 6031 (6 credit hours) and have completed the series of courses for their track prior to beginning an internship at an approved site. This opportunity is available during one long semester or two summer sessions and must be completed within the final semester in which the student is enrolled in the internship. A minimum of 160 clock hours must be completed for the internship. Approximately 10% of the total hours can be used to prepare the written report.

Students intending to graduate in May are required to have their internship completed by the preceding December. This will allow for adequate time for writing the internship paper. The presentation of the internship paper to the committee and the completion of the comprehensive exam must follow within the university timeline for a May graduation. It is the student's responsibility to meet these deadlines. Please understand that **most faculty are on a 9 month appointment**, so your advisor and committee members may not be available for committee work during the summer.

8.2a Prerequisites and Requirements for Enrollment

Students who enroll in FSCI 6031 must be majors in the Forensic Sciences Master's program and demonstrate a high degree of interest in forensic sciences in various settings, as well as exhibit a professional attitude toward forensic sciences. Students registering for internship credits must have completed the series of courses for their track as listed below **prior** to their start of internship.

Scientist Track: FSCI 7000 (Intro to Forensic Science), FSCI 5353 (Research Methods), ENTX 6351/6352 (Analytical Toxicology Lecture and Lab), FSCI 5350 (Crime Science Investigation), FSCI 5352 (Ethics), and FSCI 5331 (Advanced Topics in Forensic Science: Forensic Science and the Law)

Investigative Track: FSCI 7000 (Intro to Forensic Science), FSCI 5353 (Research Methods), FSCI 5351 (Serial Crimes), FSCI 5350 (Crime Science Investigation), FSCI 5352 (Ethics), and FSCI 5331 (Advanced Topics in Forensic Science: Forensic Science and the Law)

8.3 Procedures

It is the responsibility of the student and Internship Coordinator, to locate an internship site. Students should set up a meeting with the Internship Coordinator at least one semester prior to the semester in which the internship is to discuss the internship and the type and location of the internship. The intern must be supervised by an employee at the approved site who has the degree, licensure, and/or certifications to adequately supervise and work with the student.

The student must select a committee of three faculty for the review of the internship paper and comprehensive examination; two of which must be Ph.D. professors. A committee member chosen from outside TTU must be approved by program faculty. Once the committee has been selected, the student must complete the Thesis/Internship Committee Selection departmental form by the 8th week of the student's second semester in the program.

All communication with prospective internship sites must come from the Internship Coordinator. The student will need to submit a curriculum vitae and cover letter stating their internship/career objectives to the Internship Coordinator. Students may be

requested to interview for an internship position either in person or by phone. Criminal history **may** be checked by the internship site.

All arrangements for internships must be made with the program Internship Coordinator **BEFORE** beginning any internship hours. Failure to comply may result in some hours not counting towards the internship requirements.

For instructions regarding the internship paper, see 8.5 Internship Paper Requirements.

8.4 Student, Site and Advisor Responsibilities

8.4a Student Intern Responsibilities

- Student will set up a schedule with the Site Supervisor who will be supervising them at the site/facility.
- Dress neatly, professionally, and appropriately according to the Site Supervisor's instructions.
- Complete and keep track of all hours.
- Arrive on time for the entire duration of the internship hours. Students must not leave scheduled hours early or without approval from Site Supervisor.
- If, for a legitimate reason, the student cannot attend that day, they must call in before the scheduled time of arrival to let the Site Supervisor know.
- Keep all information concerning legal matters confidential. Interns may be asked to sign a "confidentiality" statement.
- Accomplish tasks and assignments as outlined for intern by the Site Supervisor of the facility.
- Complete all TTU requirements for the internship experience.
- Talk to Site Supervisor in advance concerning closures for holidays... Just because TTU may have a holiday, the internship facility may follow another calendar.
- Students should contact the Internship Coordinator immediately if the student is experiencing any difficulties with the internship or in completing the internship requirements.
- Every student enrolled in an internship needs to have a functioning TTU e-mail address. Students must check their e-mail on a daily basis for communication from the Internship Coordinator or their academic advisor and respond in a timely manner.

8.4b Site Supervisor Responsibilities

- Act in the capacity of a Supervisor responsible for teaching, guiding, and evaluating the performance of the intern.
- Collaborate with the intern in helping to select an internship paper topic, as part of the internship requirements.
- Make contact with the Internship Coordinator immediately if there is a problem or concern with the intern.

- Complete the Evaluation Form (a copy is provided in section 15 of this handbook) for the student intern at the end of the internship and return directly to the Internship Coordinator either by email or mail to the Institute for Forensics Science:

TTU Institute for Forensic Sciences
4434 South Loop 289
Lubbock, TX 79414

8.4c Internship Coordinator Responsibilities

- Meet with or email the student at least once in the semester prior to the beginning of the internship to discuss all aspects of the internship.
- Contact Site Supervisor concerning the progress of intern.
- Give their Site Supervisor the Evaluation Form to complete.
- Communicate regularly with intern via e-mail.
- Evaluate written assignments and review internship evaluations received for each student.
- Assign the grade for the internship course as CR for semesters prior to the presentation of the internship paper.

8.5 Internship Paper Requirements

This document must be research oriented or an extensive literature review. The research portion should contain a purpose statement, observations or the problem, and potential solutions. If it is a comparative analysis, it should be clearly stated, with results and significance of the comparison to the field of forensic sciences. A literature review should also have the same basic format; purpose, identifications of problem or problems, and potential solutions. A small portion of your paper should be an overview of your experience, the relationship to forensic sciences, and how you expect the internship to assist you in the future.

The internship paper must be submitted to the committee at least two weeks prior to the last day for submitting intent to graduate for the semester. **Students who fail to meet the policy and deadlines for thesis defense and internship paper presentation will be delayed in the graduation process.** You are responsible for determining this date from the academic calendar, “last day to submit final draft” <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/officialpublications/calendar/>. The committee will need time to review the document and the student will need time to respond to suggestions and corrections. First drafts of the internship paper will not be accepted during this time.

The internship paper must be written in the style specific to the field of research and follow the citation and reference style of major journals in the field. The length of the internship paper is subject to the topic and what is required to show completion of the project. Additional paper changes suggested by committee members must be completed and resubmitted to the committee for approval. After receiving final approval from the committee of the changes, the final version of the internship paper must be submitted by

the date set forth by the TTU academic calendar to fulfill requirements for graduation during the intended semester.

The internship paper must be emailed to the student's committee and received prior to the date outlined above. If emailed, be sure to confirm receipt of the email. Final copies of the paper must be submitted to both the Internship Coordinator and to the Graduate Program Director for the student's file. If mailed, students should use the address of the Institute of Forensic Science:

TTU Institute for Forensic Sciences
4434 South Loop 289
Lubbock, TX 79414

In cases that require the Internship Coordinator to submit a "change of grade" form (i.e., the student has an "CR"), the final internship paper document is due 3 weeks prior to the change of grade deadline as mandated by Texas Tech University.

As the internship paper presentation is open to all, an announcement must be posted as IFS and emailed to all FSCI students and faculty at least two weeks prior to the presentation. See the "ANNOUNCEMENT OF THESIS DEFENSE AND INTERNSHIP PAPER FORMAT" in section 15 of this handbook. Coordination of emailing and posting the announcement can be completed through Ms. Priscilla Reid.

8.6 Comprehensive Examination

If the student has completed an internship as part of the requirement for graduation then the student is required to also pass a comprehensive exam.

The comprehensive examination must take place before the internship presentation has occurred. The internship paper presentation should take place no sooner than 14 days after the comprehensive exam has occurred.

The format of the exam will be written and will consist of questions taken from the course work and area of focus specific to the student's education and career path. It may also include questions specific to the internship experience. These questions will be drafted by the student's internship committee. Students are required to notify their internship committee at least 8 weeks prior to their intended comprehensive exam date to ensure the committee has adequate time to prepare the student's reading list. The committee chair will provide the student a required reading list (agreed upon by all committee members) at least 6 weeks prior to the scheduled examination date. If the student plans to complete their examination at the Institute for Forensic Sciences, students should be sure to coordinate the date of examination with IFS staff to ensure availability of a testing room.

Students should prepare for the exam by completing the assigned reading list, and discussing the exam format and question areas with each committee member.

The committee chair is charged with administering the exam and coordinating the grading of the answers to the questions by the committee members. The focus of the exam will in part test the students' knowledge on how forensic sciences are applied to subject areas (for example, chemistry, biology, DNA, anthropology, criminology, toxicology, psychology, etc.).

Questions will cover two general areas, the applied nature of the work and theoretical issues. No more than 5 questions per section should be required. The exam will be scheduled for 6 hours total, broken up into two three-hour sections. Students can choose to complete the exam in one day or two. Answers will be typed on a laptop provided by the committee for the sole purpose of the exam. Access to Internet will not be allowed but textbooks and class notes can be used by the student. References and citations should be used, appropriately.

Students who fail the written comprehensive exam will be allowed to retake the exam after a minimum of 4 months have passed in accordance with TTU policy. If a student fails the comprehensive examination they will be released from the graduate program without a degree.

9. Probation, Remediation and Dismissal Policy

The forensic sciences faculty wants students to successfully complete the Master's program and become active professionals in the field of forensic sciences. To that end, faculty members routinely monitor the progress of students and prepare a formal evaluation of students' progress at the end of each academic year. The primary purpose of this evaluation is to facilitate academic, professional, and personal growth to provide feedback in a timely manner. The faculty has a duty to recognize and respond to problematic, inadequate, or impaired student performance. Additionally, the faculty must ensure that due process is accorded to all parties during the evaluative process as well as when concerns regarding student performance and progress arise that result in a need for corrective action(s).

It is rare that students are dismissed from the Master's program. Moreover, dismissal of a student from the Forensic Sciences program is a serious and significant event for both the student and the faculty. Dismissal from the program is likely when faculty concludes that a student has failed to demonstrate a minimum level of competency in either academic or practical skills, or in other critical areas of ethical or professional conduct. That said, in most instances a student would first be subject to a probationary period with a remediation plan. The student's advisor and Graduate Program Director will meet with the student to discuss the remediation plan and to communicate conditions for remaining enrolled in the master's program. The ultimate decision to dismiss a student, who fails to remediate, is a decision that rests with the faculty of the Forensic Sciences Program along with consultation from the department chair. In some cases, other units of the University may be involved in this decision such as the Office of Student Conduct or Graduate School. Also see: Academic Probation or Suspension, Operating Policy and Procedure 64.04: <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/opmanual/OP64.04.pdf>

9.1 Inadequate Academic Performance

The Graduate Catalog specifies the circumstance under which students may be put on probation, suspended or dismissed for academic reasons (see <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/officialpublications/catalog/GradEnrollment.php>). Students are placed on academic probation by the Graduate School whenever their cumulative graduate GPA drops below 3.0. Students on academic probation have two consecutive semesters to raise the graduate GPA to 3.0 or above and thus return to good standing. Failure to do so will result in the student being placed on academic probation by the Graduate School.

In addition, program faculty may recommend placing a student on probation when he or she fails to fulfill the program's academic requirements, or whose work over a period of time shows a demonstrable lack of progress towards the degree. Usually this action would be initiated by the student's advisor and communicated in writing to the student by the Graduate Program Director. Continual failure to maintain good academic standing may result in dismissal from the program.

9.2 Behavior Unbefitting a Scholar or Researcher

Probation, suspension or dismissal from a program also may result for violation of accepted norms of scholarly and/or professional behavior. In this regard students are required to become familiar with the TTU Student Handbook and Code of Conduct http://www.depts.ttu.edu/dos/docs/entire_student_handbook.pdf, the Office of Student Conduct's policy on academic integrity <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/studentconduct/academicinteg.php>, the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) Ethics Code <http://aafs.org/about/aafs-bylaws/article-ii-code-ethics-and-conduct>, and the TTU Human Research Protection Program <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/vpr/irb/index.php>. For concerns regarding misconduct in research or scholarly activity, consult TTU Operating Policy and Procedure 74.08 <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/opmanual/OP74.08.pdf>.

Violations of the rules, regulations, and principles in these documents are considered to be very serious matters. When a faculty member has evidence of cheating, plagiarism, faking data, sexual harassment, mistreatment of research subjects or students, or any other similar or related violation, he/she will report the matter fully in writing to the Graduate Program Director who will bring the matter to the attention of the department chair.

The Graduate Program Director will convene a committee of at least three faculty members, ordinarily including at least one from the student's program, to investigate the matter. The committee chair will provide a copy of the faculty member's report to the student and instruct the student that he/she may submit a written response to the report, if she/he desires, that will be forwarded to the review committee. If the committee finds that the evidence of a violation is insufficient to bring to the attention of the full faculty, no report will be made unless the complaining faculty member still wishes to pursue the matter.

If the committee (or the faculty member acting on his/her own) finds sufficient evidence of a violation, a report on the matter and a recommendation regarding probation, suspension or dismissal will be issued in writing to the full faculty and the student concerned. The student may at that point, file a statement which will be issued to the full faculty. The report to the full faculty and the action taken by the faculty with respect to the student's status in the program or department are in addition to any sanctions imposed by the faculty member (e.g., a grade of F in a course). If a student is not satisfied with the action of the faculty, he/she may appeal the decision (see section 10.4 below).

Students who are placed on probation or deemed to engage in behavior deemed "unbefitting a scholar or researcher" are at risk of losing departmental funding for a specified period of time to be determined by the Graduate Program Director.

9.3 Continued Unsatisfactory Performance in Internship

Students who continue to receive an unsatisfactory performance evaluation from their Internship Coordinator or the faculty member assigned to the internship experience may, upon review by the faculty, be dismissed from the program for failure to meet the program's minimal level of competency in practical forensic work. A student may also be dismissed for an ongoing failure to accept supervision.

9.4 Criminal Behavior

Students whose conduct in or outside the program has resulted in a felony conviction that would prevent work as a forensic scientist will be dismissed from the program (TTU OP 34.25).

10. Student Rights and Responsibilities

Students in the Master's of Forensic Sciences Program have the right to be treated with respect. Program faculty members aim to work together with a sense of collaboration and mutual consideration. However, despite the best efforts of both students and faculty, occasionally circumstances may occur in which the imbalance of power or other factors negatively affect student welfare or put students at risk. An example of such circumstances includes cases of scientific misconduct, sexual harassment, discrimination, employment-related concerns, and academic matters. It is the responsibility of all program members to establish and maintain a professional climate within which a student problem or complaint can be promptly identified, presented and discussed and given fair, timely consideration without fear or recrimination or retribution.

10.1 The Student Handbook and Code of Conduct

The Student Handbook and Code of Conduct http://www.depts.ttu.edu/dos/docs/entire_student_handbook.pdf outlines university policies and guidelines pertaining to academic integrity, student conduct, disciplinary sanctions and procedures, grievances, discrimination, sexual harassment and drug and alcohol policies. The Master's of Forensic Sciences Program abides by the guidelines and sanctions set forth in this handbook.

10.2 Informal Resolutions

When a student experiences difficulties with another student, a faculty member, a staff member, or a supervisor, the student should first discuss the problem with the person involved when this is possible. If the student prefers, he or she can talk with his or her advisor or Graduate Program Director, about the problem the student is having with someone else. It is important to recognize however, that situations cannot be addressed sufficiently if the student is unwilling to disclose who the source of the complaint is. Students may also contact the Student Resolution Center located in 232E of the Student Union Building, 742-SAFE. The center can help students address issues pertaining to policies and procedures, grading issues, interpersonal disputes and unfair treatment. The center does not participate in formal grievance processes and does not levy sanctions to involved parties. See <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/studentresolutioncenter/>

10.3 Grade appeals

A student who wishes to appeal a final course grade should first consult with the course instructor, then with the department chairperson, and then, if the matter remains unresolved, with the dean of the college in which the course is offered. A grade appeal must be filed in the office of the dean of the college in which the course is offered within 45 days of the start of the next long semester after the term in which the disputed grade was received. Copies of the grade appeals policy can be obtained from any academic dean's office or from the Center for Campus Life. Also see Student Grade Appeal, Operating Policy and Procedure 34.03 <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/opmanual/OP34.03.pdf>

10.4 Student Grievance Procedures

If a graduate student believes that he or she has been the subject of improper or irregular demands or procedures there are several avenues of redress. The TTU Student Handbook defines a grievance as “a formal complaint pertaining to adverse actions taken on the basis of the student’s protected status or other violation of law or TTU policy...” Student grievances are applicable to situations such as unlawful discrimination, sexual harassment, unresolved employment disputes, and evidence of prejudicial or capricious assignment of grades by an instructor. Grievance investigations are non-adversarial in nature. See Part III and Part VI of the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct for information regarding TTU grievance policies and procedures for reporting a grievance. For information concerning Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action issues students should consult TTU Operating Policy and Procedure 40.01 <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/opmanual/OP40.01.pdf> . For issues other than admission to the Graduate School and academic dishonesty refer to Graduate Student Appeals, Operating Policy and Procedure 64.07 <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/opmanual/OP64.07.pdf> .

11. Professional Issues and Student Conduct

11.1 Class Attendance

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and meetings with faculty. Class attendance is similar to job attendance and is not optional. You may not be allowed to register for a course if you plan to miss more than 10% of class time for reasons other than emergencies. Such emergencies must be documented and presented to the course instructor as soon as possible. Should a situation arise such as a prolonged illness, you may be required by the instructor to withdraw from the course. It is ultimately up to the instructor to determine whether you will be allowed to register for the course, or be required to withdraw from the course.

11.2 Professional Decorum

Students are expected to behave in a professional manner. The University has policies regarding student conduct on and off campus. Likewise, the university can enforce its own judicial policies and sanctions “when a student’s conduct directly, seriously or adversely impairs, interferes with or disrupts the overall mission, programs or other functions of the university.” Students should familiarize themselves with these policies which are found in Part X of the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct http://www.depts.ttu.edu/dos/docs/entire_student_handbook.pdf.

11.3 Membership and Participation in Professional Organizations

Students are encouraged to become student affiliates with relevant professional organizations such as the AAFS, as well as other organizations relevant to students’ interests. Affiliation with national organizations affords exposure to trends at the national level and contemporary issues of major import to the profession. Membership in professional organizations also affords students the opportunity to present their research to the larger scientific community. Membership is reviewed by the AAFS committee October 1 of each year; any application that come after that date will have to wait until October 1 of the following year to be reviewed.

12. Additional Student Resources

Student Disability Services

<http://www.depts.ttu.edu/students/sds/>

335 West Hall

Phone: 806-742-2405

E-mail: sds@ttu.edu

University Writing Center

<http://uwc.ttu.edu/>

Phone: 806.742.2476

Texas Tech University Student Health Center

<http://www.ttuhsu.edu/studenthealth/>

Appointment Line: 806-743-2848

Administrative Line: 806-743-2860

Pharmacy: 806-743-2636

Address: Student Wellness Center, 1003 Flint Ave

University Career Center

<http://www.depts.ttu.edu/careercenter/>

Wiggins Complex

Phone: 806-742-2210

13. Statement on Revised Policies

University, Graduate School, Department and Program requirements evolve and change, and are incorporated into periodic revisions of this handbook. Thus, it is possible that there will be important changes that occur before a complete revision of this handbook. Should this occur the Graduate Program Director will make every effort to inform you of these changes, but in no case will the department or any of its programs be bound to follow an erroneous statement or policy, and students are required to bring their program of studies in line with correct requirements as quickly as possible. Please be attentive to relevant mailings and notifications.

14. Required Safety Guidelines and Program Forms

IFS Laboratory Safety Guidelines

Last Updated: January 13, 2017

In an effort to be in compliance with TTU's Environmental Health and Safety, all faculty, staff and students need to understand the safety policies and procedures delineated by the University. Hence, please find in the matrix below, the safety trainings that need to be completed prior to the start of any research/class activities at the Institute.

IFS Required Safety Trainings

Training	Recurrence
Biological Safety	Before beginning job duties and every 2 years thereafter.
Hazard Communication	Before beginning job duties and annually thereafter.
Laboratory Safety	Before beginning job duties and every 2 years thereafter.
Safety Awareness	Before beginning job duties and annually thereafter.

To enroll in trainings, please visit <http://www.dept.ehs.ttu.edu/ehs/ehshome/training> fill out the enrollment form and email it to: ehs.safety.training@ttu.edu. Once enrolled, the individual will receive a notification by email from customerservice@learnatvivid.com. This is the third party vendor that hosts these trainings.

Once completed, certification of completion for each training must be emailed to the Laboratory Supervisor, Dr. Paola Prada at paola.prada@ttu.edu.

THESIS/INTERNSHIP ADVISOR SELECTION
Departmental Form

The deadline to submit this form is by the 8th week of the first semester of beginning the program.

A. For Student

I choose the following faculty as my- Circle one: INTERNSHIP / THESIS advisor

Faculty Name: _____

Student Name: _____ R Number: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

B. For Internship / Thesis Advisor*

Signature

Internship/Thesis Advisor's name

Date

*In accepting this student you will take on the responsibilities of being the student's internship/thesis advisor. As the student's internship/thesis advisor you are also expected to direct and monitor their internship/thesis progress through periodic meetings, progress reports, and/or by meeting with their corresponding committee.

C. Graduate Program Director's Approval

Graduate Program Director's Name _____ Date _____

Graduate Program Director's Signature _____

THESIS/INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE SELECTION
Departmental Form

The deadline to submit this form is by the 8th week of the second semester of the program.

A. For Student

Program Starting Date (Month/Year): _____

Student's Name: _____ R Number: _____

Student's Email: _____

Circle One: Master's Thesis / Internship Committee: (**3 members**)

B. For Committee Members

1. Advisor (chair): _____ Signature: _____

2. Member: _____ Signature: _____

3. Member: _____ Signature: _____

By signing the above form, each member agrees to take active part in the progress of the thesis/internship project and work alongside chair of the committee into overseeing progress of the mentioned student.

C. Graduate Program Director's Approval

Graduate Program Director's Name _____ Date _____

Graduate Program Director's Signature _____

THESIS PROSPECTUS APPROVAL FORM

THESIS TITLE

by

Name, degree

A Thesis Proposal

In

FORENSIC SCIENCES

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
of Texas Tech University in
Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for
the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Approved

Name, Ph.D. (Chair)

Name, Ph.D.

Name, Ph.D.

Date

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF THESIS DEFENSE/INTERNSHIP PAPER FORMAT
(To be posted at IFS and emailed to all FSCI students/faculty 3 weeks prior to
defense/presentation)**

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THESIS DEFENSE/INTERNSHIP PAPER PRESENTATION

Name, degree.

Paper Title

Thesis/Internship Committee

Name, Ph.D. (Chair)

Name, Ph.D.

Name, Ph.D.

Location

Date

Time

Insert abstract here.

SUPERVISOR EVALUATION OF INTERN FORM

Intern Name: _____

Name of Internship site: _____

Name of Supervisor/Title: _____

Address of site: _____

To the supervisor: Please evaluate the performance of the intern by circling the appropriate response under each of the areas below. Your personal comments concerning the intern or the program are encouraged.

Evaluation Ratings

N/A 1 Poor 2 Fair 3 Average 4 Good 5 Excellent

Personal Qualities						
Dresses appropriately & neatly	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Acted professional	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Shows Initiative	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Accepts Criticism	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrates enthusiasm	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Is punctual & dependable	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Work with individual						
Demonstrates knowledge of forensic principles	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Gives corrective feedback	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Establishes rapport	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Works well with other outside professionals	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Professional Qualities						
Establishes rapport with personnel & supervisor	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrates adequate knowledge	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Communicates well	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Seeks new knowledge	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Management						
Manages time efficiently	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Care in use of equipment and facilities	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Promptness, neatness, and adequacy of records and reports	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Uses good judgment in making decisions	N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Additional Comments: _____
