

Online Professional Certificate in Forensic Psychology



Find Your Niche in the Criminal Justice System with SDSU's Online Professional Certificate in Forensic Psychology

Ideal for Professionals in Social Work, Intelligence, Nursing, Public Health, Paralegal, and Psychology

The field of forensic psychology examines the intersection between human behavior and the law. In partnership with SDSU's department of psychology, and the Homeland Security graduate program, SDSU World Campus offers this comprehensive online program specifically designed for professionals at the forefront of dealing with all aspects of criminal behavior. The justice system increasingly relies on forensic psychology skills to help solve crimes and prevent future criminal behavior. This certificate provides students with the knowledge and skills being sought by employers.

Program Overview

- Estimated Cost: \$3,495
- Min. Completion Time: 8 Months
- Course Format: Online

Program Highlights

- Eight-week courses
- Authorized by SDSU's College of Sciences
- Earn 3 professional development credits per course
- Instructors are content specialists with real-world experience
- Complete in as few as eight months or take up to two years
- \$699 per course

Certificate Requirements

To earn the Professional Certificate in Forensic Psychology, you must successfully complete two (2) core courses and three (3) electives. If your background is unrelated to forensic psychology, we highly recommend you begin with the core courses.

Course Schedule

Spring 2020

- Fundamentals of Forensic Psychology* | Jan. 6–March 7
- Expert Witness Courtroom and Deposition Testimony | March 9–May 3

Summer 2020

- Mental Health and Criminal Justice* | May 4–June 28
- Challenges and Psychological Components for Active Shooter Identification | July 6–August 30

Fall 2020

- Fundamentals of Forensic Psychology* | August 31–Oct. 25
- Cyberpsychology | Oct. 26–Dec. 20

*If you've completed relevant coursework and/or have three years of related professional experience, one of the core courses can be waived.



SDSU World Campus is a state-approved provider for the Federal Workforce Investment Act for this program.

For more information, email forensic.certificate@sdsu.edu or call (619) 594-3946.

Online Professional Certificate in Forensic Psychology

Courses Descriptions

Core Courses

Fundamentals of Forensic Psychology

This course is intended to introduce students to the wide-range field of forensic psychology and is designed to consider the relationship between psychology and law by showing how psychological research and theory can inform the legal process. This course will examine the position and responsibilities of forensic psychologists in police work, criminal investigation, investigate behavioral analysis, threat assessment, eyewitness identification, school bullying, mental defenses and competency issues, sexual abuse issues, juvenile forensics and death penalty cases, and jury selection.

Mental Health and Criminal Justice

This course provides an overview of the psychological disorders across a lifespan, including their diagnosis, etiology, and treatment. This course will emphasize empirical research methods and findings, although case examples and general theoretical perspectives are covered as background. A combination of lecture, class discussion, and video will be used.

Elective Courses

Police and Correctional Psychology

In this course you will learn about the intersection of mental health, the practice of psychology and two major forensic fields. By the end of the course students will have learned about many topics in both forensic fields including: Police Interviews, Domestic Violence, Use of Force, Suicide and Law Enforcement, Cops in Trouble, Restorative Justice, Peer Support, Complex Trauma and Grief, Critical Incidents, Psychological Disorders Involved in Crime, Type of Forensic Evaluations Inmates in Jail Undergo, Family Crimes, Malingering, Sex Crimes, Stalking and Harassment, Death Penalty, Crime Victims and Gangs.

Cyberpsychology

Cyberpsychology is an emerging field that blends developing technology and psychological concepts. Cyberpsychology is the study of how humans are impacted by technology, how individuals interact on the Internet, and the effect of cyberspace interactions on mental health. This class will focus on these issues as well as online identities, cyberbullying, online dating, and cybercrime.

Forensic Psychological Assessment and Report Writing

This course is intended to introduce students to the components of forensic psychological assessment, including record review, clinical interviews, collateral interviews, and testing. This course will also introduce students to elements of forensic psychological reports, addressing format, content, and clarity. The factors that lend themselves to both "strong" and "weak" assessments and reports will be discussed, as will the ethics of forensic assessment and report writing and the inherent biases of the examiner. This course will help prepare students to communicate with the courts in writing and offer well-supported findings on which future expert witness testimony may be based.

Expert Witness Courtroom and Deposition Testimony

This course is intended to introduce students to the fundamentals of expert witness testimony. Students will learn the roles and responsibilities of expert witnesses, how to prepare for testimony, and what to expect from direct and cross-examination.

Challenges & Psychological Components for Active Shooter Identification

This course is tailored to engage the participant's subconscious, allowing implicit action to occur when the brain is faced with alarming circumstances. It enhances a person's awareness, improves their mood, and most importantly, enables them to perform at a level of proficiency they would not otherwise be capable of. This mental state of cognizance is what we strive to instill in all our participants enrolled.

For more information, email forensic.certificate@sdsu.edu or call (619) 594-3946.