

Forensic Psychology

As an interdisciplinary major, Forensic Psychology is the study of both psychology and criminal justice. The program offers training in psychological theory, research methods and the application of psychological principles to specific areas of the legal system. The major provides an interdisciplinary background appropriate for students who intend to pursue careers in psychology, social work and criminal justice professions. Students also have opportunities for research and practical experience both in the classroom and outside of it through independent study, community internships and laboratory practicum experiences.

Contact us

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Visit the Psychology Department Web site at www.sau.edu/psychology
For general information about St. Ambrose or how to apply:
Admissions Office
563/333-6300 or 800/383-2627
email: admit@sau.edu
www.sau.edu

Degrees offered and required credit hours

St. Ambrose offers two degrees in Forensic Psychology: a bachelor of arts and a bachelor of science.

The bachelor of arts degree in Forensic Psychology is primarily for students who plan to enter the job market immediately after graduation. The BA in Forensic Psychology requires 51 credit hours of psychology, criminal justice and sociology, 33 of which must be at the 300 level or above.

The bachelor of science degree in Forensic Psychology is intended for students who are contemplating advanced work in psychology, social work or criminal justice, or a related field, and for students entering the work force immediately after graduation. While the BA degree offers more flexibility, the BS degree more adequately prepares students for graduate school and ensures a broad background in the scientific bases of psychology.

The requirements for a bachelor of science in Forensic Psychology are 55 credit hours that include courses in psychology, criminal justice and sociology.

Program highlights and courses

The Forensic Psychology major at St. Ambrose focuses on exposure to research methodology and statistical analysis to develop the broad problem-solving skills necessary in psychology and criminal justice.

A typical major's course of study should start with Introductory Psychology and Criminal Justice, followed by coursework in applied statistics for the sciences and psychology research methods. These courses will provide students with knowledge of fundamental principles of behavior and serve as preparation for the 300-level courses.

Courses include: Psychology and the Law, Psychology of Criminal Behavior, Criminal Law and Procedure, Criminological Theory, The Constitution and Criminal Justice, Drugs and Society, Social Psychology, Theories of Counseling, Abnormal Psychology, Personality Theories, and Psychological Tests and Measurements.

See our course catalog at www.sau.edu/catalog for a full description of required and elective courses.

Resources and co-curricular activities

The Psychology Department sponsors a chapter of Psi Chi, the national honor society in psychology, which plans both academic and social events throughout the year. The department also sponsors the Psychology Club that works with Psi Chi, which is open to all students.

Career prospects

Although many Forensic Psychology graduates may pursue post-baccalaureate education, a bachelor's degree prepares you for such professions as employment counselors, corrections or police officers, interviewers, personnel analysts, probation officers and writers.

About the faculty

Robin Anderson PhD, Professor

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Prof. Anderson has been a member of the psychology faculty since 1990 after receiving her PhD in the areas of social psychology and health and behavioral science from the University of Iowa in 1989. Her research interests include cognitive processes in stereotyping, gender issues, and stress and coping.

Judith Correa Kaiser PhD, Associate Professor and Chair

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Prof. Correa Kaiser's research interests include multi-cultural counseling, sexual harassment and psychological disabilities in post-secondary education. A licensed clinical psychologist in Iowa and Illinois, she received her PhD in clinical psychology from Florida State University in 1994. She has taught at St. Ambrose since 1995.

Carol DeVolder PhD, Associate Professor

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Prof. DeVolder began teaching at St. Ambrose in 1997. She obtained her PhD from the University of Iowa in 1993. Her research interests include neurological substrates of learning and memory and experimental neuropsychology. She is also the faculty advisor for SAU's Psychology Club. Primary classes taught at St. Ambrose include Behavioral Neuroscience, Neuroanatomy and Neurophysiology, Behavioral Pharmacology, Psychology of Sensation and Perception, and Introduction to Psychology.

Andrew Kaiser PhD, Associate Professor

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Prof. Kaiser was instrumental in forging the new Forensic Psychology major, which combines the disciplines of psychology and criminal justice. In addition to Forensic Psychology, Prof. Kaiser is interested in issues related to adults with disabilities. Prof. Kaiser is Past President of ILLOWA Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD). He received his PhD in clinical psychology from Florida State University and has taught at St. Ambrose since 1995.

Kathleen Trujillo PhD, Associate Professor

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Prof. Trujillo received her PhD in experimental psychology with emphasis in adult development and aging from the University of Southern California and has been at St. Ambrose since 1994. Her research interests are age differences in the motivation to exercise, time perspective and credit card debt in college students.

Mary Waterstreet PhD, Professor

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Prof. Waterstreet teaches Introductory Psychology, Human Motivation, Personality Theory, Learning and Memory, Psychological Tests and Measurements, and History and Systems of Psychology. She holds a PhD in school psychology from the University of Georgia (Athens) and has taught at St. Ambrose since 1984.