



Questioned Documents Section – 2010

J12 Status of Graduate Studies in Forensic Document Examination at Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences

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After attending this presentation, attendees will be aware of the current status of graduate studies in forensic document examination at Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences including a Graduate Certificate and Master of Science in Forensic Science degree.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by presenting the Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences initiative to academically support the next generation of forensic document examiners.

In the academic year 2003-04, Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences launched an online graduate studies program in the forensic examination of questioned documents and added a track in questioned documents to a master's degree. The goal was twofold: academically support traditional forensic document examination training regimens, and further academic acceptance of forensic document examination as a forensic science discipline. In the ensuing five academic calendar years, 26 individuals have successfully completed a total of 150 credit hours in courses specific to document examination, and six individuals have completed a master's degree with a specialization in the field.

Improvements to the program have brought about several changes, including a Graduate Certificate in Forensic Document Examination, awarded upon completion of four online academic courses specific to the discipline; a substantial tuition waiver for participating governmental employees; an additional online course covering historical aspects of forensic document examination; the establishment of forensic document examination as an academic track in the Master of Science in Forensic Sciences degree; and course revisions to reflect the latest published texts, articles and empirical studies in the discipline.

All courses are offered entirely online and require no attendance on campus. The Graduate Certificate consists of 12 credit hours and can be completed in 3 to 4 semesters. The certificate courses are: Forensic Examination of Questioned Documents; Forensic Handwriting Examination; Technical Aspects of Forensic Document Examination; and Historical Aspects of Forensic Document Examination. The Master of Science in Forensic Sciences degree with an option in forensic document examination consists of 39 credit hours including the certificate courses and can be completed in 7 to 13 semesters. A comprehensive examination is required. Applicants must meet minimum qualifications for admission to the Graduate College at Oklahoma State University, which include a grade point average of 3.0 or above. Participation also requires associated training or experience and the approval of the lead instructor for forensic document examination courses.

Students who are employees of city, county, state, and federal agencies with the United States can receive a partial tuition waiver. Verification of employment is required. Students enrolled in the Master of Science in Forensic Science degree with the forensic document examination option who reside in the Academic Common Market (ACM) States may qualify for in-state tuition. ACM States besides Oklahoma are: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. Permission from the governing college board in those states is required.

Education, Forensic Document Examination, Graduate Studies