

# NURSING FORENSICS, CERTIFICATE

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Requirements for an undergraduate certificate may be completed at any campus location offering the specified courses for the certificate.

## Program Description

This 12-credit certificate introduces students to forensic health sciences, forensic nursing, and the nursing role in the scientific investigation of violence. Through this course series, nurses gain foundational forensics knowledge and skills, including evidence collection and preservation; forensic documentation; recognition of domestic violence, assault, and stalking; related public policy and regulatory guidelines; and legal and ethical issues. This program prepares nurses to provide care that is more specialized for victims and perpetrators of physical, psychological, and social violence or abuse.

## What is Nursing Forensics?

Violence impacts our communities at a local, national, and global level. It's an unfortunate reality that a high number of patients who access healthcare services are the victims of violence, abuse, or neglect. When these victims enter the healthcare system, professionals trained in forensic nursing are often their first line of defense. In addition to providing routine medical care, forensic nurses must understand the legal and ethical implications of treating victims of violence and abuse. Forensic nurses must be skilled at injury identification, evaluation, and documentation. Proper observation, collection, and preservation of evidence is often critical in determining the legal outcome of traumatic events. Penn State's Nursing Forensics certificate provides nurses with the knowledge and skills to effectively help these patients.

## You Might Like This Program If...

You are interested in working with victims who have experienced violence or trauma. Forensic nurses are vital in bridging the gap between medical care and the legal system. Students will learn to identify signs of violence, understand the resources and interventions available to help, and provide compassionate care while preserving physical evidence that may assist in criminal investigations. Enrollment in this certificate allows Nursing students to gain an additional area of concentration while pursuing their degree. This certificate introduces forensic nursing and may serve as a starting point for SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) certification (<https://www.forensicnurses.org/page/aboutSANE/>).