

LAW ENFORCEMENT

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE AT SPC

South Plains College offers two separate courses of study on its Levelland Campus and Reese Center for students interested in developing careers in the field of law enforcement. As part of a standardized curriculum for college programs throughout Texas, SPC offers criminal justice and law enforcement tracks in the discipline.

The criminal justice track is specifically designed to enable students to meet prescribed degree requirements for transfer into a bachelor's degree program in criminal justice. The law enforcement track is a two-year program designed to assist students in achieving an associate's degree as well as groom students for entry into our law enforcement academy. This track will challenge students to prepare for their career mentally, physically and psychologically as well as provide resources to take the state licensing examination to become a Texas peace officer. Graduates may seek employment with local, county, state and federal law enforcement agencies.

Quality instruction and excellent teaching facilities provide you a first-class education in law enforcement. SPC's law enforcement faculty are professionals who have worked many years in education but also in the field as peace officers.

The law enforcement educational facility at SPC is exceptional. The program's classrooms, laboratories and offices are housed in the Law Enforcement Technology Building on the SPC campus. A 75-foot indoor pistol range highlights the program and allows students to receive excellent instruction in the use of firearms. The firing range is equipped with stationary shooting booths and enables instructors to simulate multiple shooting situations. In addition, the building houses reality-based training environments including a fully padded mat room for sharpening defensive skills as well as a simulator that puts students in a realistic environment involving use of force situations. Students in the program are afforded personalized, hands-on instruction designed to help them become effective peace officers.



ASSOCIATE DEGREE OPTIONS

Depending upon your educational goals, you have the option of enrolling in either the criminal justice track or law enforcement track at South Plains College. Students who enroll in the criminal justice curriculum complete up to 60 semester hours of specialized course work and receive an associate of arts degree. They are then eligible to transfer to a university where they complete requirements for a bachelor's degree in criminal justice or law enforcement.

Students in the law enforcement technology track enroll in a two-year program that awards an associate of applied science degree. After completion of 60 semester hours of selected course work, which includes 24 hours of basic peace officer academy instruction and training, a student will be eligible to take the state license examination to become a Texas peace officer and begin a career in one of the many areas associated with law enforcement.

Students enrolled in either the criminal justice or law enforcement tracks work individually with faculty members to plan their course of study, making sure it fits their career goals. The two programs share a common core curriculum that includes the following courses:

- *Introduction to Criminal Justice*
- *Legal Aspects of Law Enforcement*
- *Police Systems and Practices*
- *Correctional Systems and Practices*
- *Juvenile Justice System*
- *Criminal Investigation*
- *Court Systems and Practices*
- *Fundamentals of Criminal Law*

In addition to completing the South Plains College Basic Peace Officer Academy, students choosing the law enforcement track also complete additional academic courses in English, sociology or psychology, communications, computer fundamentals, creative arts and Language, Philosophy, and Culture. This course work provides you a firm academic foundation upon which to build your career. For more specific information pertaining to the two programs in law enforcement, please consult the current General Catalog.

An Enhanced Skills Certificate is also available to qualified students in the law enforcement technology program.

BASIC PEACE OFFICER ACADEMY

South Plains College is authorized to direct a Basic Peace Officer Academy for persons 21 years of age or older who want to obtain a Texas peace officer license and begin a career in law enforcement. In addition, applicants should contact the Academy Coordinator for specific entrance requirements.

The academy meets state-mandated curriculum requirements standardized by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE). SPC offers two academy formats, one during the summer and one at night. Students enrolled in the summer academy attend classes daily. Check with the Academy Coordinator for course availability and scheduling of either academy.

The program includes an academic course structure that is similar to the program's law enforcement track. Students also participate in physical fitness activities that enhance law enforcement skills and training. Upon completion of the TSI waived course of study, students are awarded a certificate of proficiency in law enforcement.



CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION (CTE) COURSES

SPC serves as the educational entity in offering specialized career and technology education programs. Students enrolled in specific CTE programs offered through affiliated high schools receive semester credit hours for courses identified in the agreement made between the participating high school and SPC.

LAW ENFORCEMENT CLUB

One of the most active clubs on campus is the Law Enforcement Club, comprised of students enrolled in law enforcement and criminal justice classes. The club plans social and recreational activities and sponsors appearances by guest lecturers and law enforcement practitioners as well as other local universities that students can transfer into upon completion at SPC. In addition, the club has participated in educational tours at the DPS regional crime lab, county jails, and state prison system institutions as well as other agencies such as federal training facilities and state training academies. The club promotes the law enforcement profession through a number of community service activities and works to generate funds for law enforcement scholarships on campus.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Career opportunities in the fields of law enforcement and criminal justice are excellent. More than 95 percent of the graduates from South Plains College's law enforcement program find gainful employment in one of four major career areas: enforcement, security, the courts, and corrections.

Jobs can be found with juvenile and adult probation agencies, the Texas Department of Public Safety, and municipal and county law enforcement agencies. Other areas of specialization include jobs as school resource officers, caseworkers, private security personnel, hospital security, district attorney investigators, warrant officers, vice and narcotics, and many others.

In order to enter the field of law enforcement in Texas, you must meet minimum employment requirements. These requirements may include that you:

- Be at least 21 years of age.
- Possess a college-level associate degree, if younger than 21.
- Have no convictions for a Class A misdemeanor or felony offense.
- Have no convictions for a Class B misdemeanor offense in the past 10 years.
- Possess good mental and physical health.
- Meet varying eyesight standards.
- Have good moral character.
- Possess a valid Texas driver's license with minimum violations.
- Be a U.S. citizen.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Prospective students who plan to enroll are encouraged to apply for scholarships offered at SPC. A list of scholarships is available by contacting the Office of New Student Relations. Scholarship applications are due March 1.

FOR MORE INFO:

Kenton J. Burns

Chairperson of the Professional Services and Energy Department

Assistant Professor of Law Enforcement Technology

Levelland Campus

806.716.2557

kburns@southplainscollege.edu

Prospective Students: You may view SPC's Annual Security Report and Fire Safety Report online at https://myspc.southplainscollege.edu/ICS/Safety_and_Health/Annual_Security_Report.jnz.

Printed copies are available upon request from the Vice President of Student Affairs, 806.716.2360. This contact information should only be used to obtain these reports.

South Plains College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Vice President for Student Affairs • South Plains College • 1401 College Avenue, Box 5 • Levelland, TX 79336 • 806.716.2360