

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING THE PUBLIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Q: Who can benefit from the Bachelor of Applied Science program in Public Safety Administration?

A: This program prepares graduates for entry-level positions in law enforcement, fire services, corrections, emergency medical services, emergency administration management, and industrial security enterprises in government and private sector agencies. The program also prepares graduates for career promotions and advancement in all the public safety industries in which a high level of understanding of organizational dynamics and interpersonal skills are involved.

Q: What is the difference between a Bachelor in Science and a Bachelor of Applied Science?

Essentially, there are no major differences between these two degrees. The importance of a Bachelor's degree lies in providing the foundation for a graduate degree. SPC chose to award a BAS to maximize the transfer of credits from AS to BAS. Many graduates of the BAS program in Public Safety Administration have continued on to graduate school to study criminal justice, law, and public administration.

Q: How do I gain admission to the program?

A: Students are admitted to the PSA program in one of two ways. They can either enter with an Associate in Arts (A.A.) degree or with an Associate in Science (A.S.) degree in a public safety area.

Q: I have my A.A. degree, what will my degree program consist of?

A: Since you are entering with an A.A. degree (all of your general education is complete), you will have to complete 24 lower division credits in a public safety area, the 42 credits for the major, the CLAST, and the foreign language requirement.

Q: I have my A.S. degree in a public safety discipline, what will my degree program consist of?

A: Since you are entering with an A.S. degree (in a public safety discipline), you will have to complete the rest of your general education requirements, the 42 credits for the major, the CLAST, and the foreign language requirement.

Q: What is the CLAST?

A: The College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST) is a Florida mandated examination required for advancement to upper division (baccalaureate) courses and degrees. Students may earn exemption from the English Language Skills, Reading and Essay subtests of the CLAST by earning a minimum GPA of 2.5 in two approved general education composition classes. Students may earn exemption from the math subtest of the CLAST by earning a minimum GPA of 2.5 in two approved general education math classes. If you have an A.A. degree from Florida you are also exempt from the CLAST. If your A.A. is from out of state (conferred after 9/1/82), you must either qualify for the GPA exemption, or pass the CLAST. If you have a BS or BA from in or out of state, you are exempt from CLAST.

Q: What is the foreign language requirement?

A: If you have not successfully completed two consecutive years of the same foreign language in high school, you will need to complete 8 credits (2 semesters) of one foreign language at the college level.

If you took 2 years in high school, you must submit your high school transcript for validation of completion of this requirement. American Sign Language courses can be taken to complete the foreign language requirement. If you earned an accredited AA or bachelors degree prior to 9/1/89, you are exempt from the foreign language requirement.

Q: Speaking of credit, can I get credit for work experience or past certifications?

A: The Experiential Learning Program (ELP) is St. Petersburg College's method for the analysis and awarding of college credit based upon past work and certifications. If you are interested in finding out more about this program and if you qualify for it, please contact the PSA Baccalaureate Specialist for further details.

Q: How is the program offered?

A: All courses for the Bachelor of Applied Science in Public Safety Administration are offered online to accommodate the busy schedule of our students who work in the public safety sector.

Q: How much time during the week will I need to spend on my courses?

A: Expect to spend between 7 and 15 hours a week to complete course activities, papers, projects and other requirements. The fully online option has the convenience of allowing students to complete their course work at any time of the day or night that is compatible with their schedule. Students do not have to spend any time on campus.

Q: Do I need special computer training to succeed in online courses?

A: You do not need proof of specialized computer training to succeed in our online courses. However, it would be helpful if you have a working knowledge of the following:

- Email including sending attachments
- Accessing and browsing the web
- Basic computer functions like copying and pasting text as well as backup procedures
- Be able to "bookmark" or set as a "favorite" your class home page, and other frequently visited websites
- Create, name, save, and move files and folders around on your computer
- Use of word processing

Q: Do I have to have a particular type of computer and software in order to take online courses?

A: SPC has an informational page on the particular [computer hardware needs](#) for online courses. The computer software that is required for completion of writing and project assignments is Microsoft Word 98 or higher (with PowerPoint): Microsoft Office for Students and Teachers OR Microsoft Office Professional are both excellent choices to purchase if necessary.

Q: What online program does SPC use for the PSA courses?

A: ANGEL (A New Global Environment for Learning) is the chosen learning management system at St. Petersburg College for all online courses. ANGEL provides faculty a place to make content easily available to students. ANGEL also has a variety of online tools to facilitate communication between the instructor and both online and face-to-face students. At the New Student Orientation (which can be attended person or viewed online), you will be given a thorough orientation to ANGEL and online learning.

ADMISSIONS INFORMATION

Q: Now that I am excited, when can I apply to the program?

A: The program will offer courses and admit new students every semester- fall, spring and summer. There is currently no application deadline, but please apply early to ensure that your paperwork and transcripts are processed on time. Applying early also helps guarantee a spot in your preferred classes.

Q: Do I still submit an application and transcripts if I was once an SPC student?

A: If you've been an SPC student in the last year and none of your pertinent information has changed, then you only need to complete the Baccalaureate Application Supplement. If your information has changed since you've been an SPC student or if you haven't taken a class with us in the past year then you'll need to complete the SPC Application for Admission and check "Readmit". The application fee is not required. You must also complete the Baccalaureate Application Supplement. Central Records should have transcripts for all former SPC students unless you took classes after attending the college. You will be notified if we do not have them.

Q: When will I hear if I am admitted to the program?

A: Your application/s will go to our Central Records office while awaiting your transcripts. Once your transcripts have been evaluated, your file will be sent to the Baccalaureate Specialist who will then notify you of your acceptance status. If you would like to check on your transcripts or application at Central Records you can call 727-341-3121 or email Proctor.Debbie@spcollege.edu.

Q: How much is tuition and how can I find out about financial aid?

A: Tuition is currently \$80.95 per credit hour for Florida residents and \$305.01 per credit hour for non-residents. We encourage you to ask your employer if he/she will reimburse you for some or all of your educational expenses. The financial aid website is <http://www.spcollege.edu/central/SSFA/index.asp>. There you can find financial aid and grant and loan information along with contact information for different counselors.

Q: How many courses should be taken at a time?

A: Most students are working full time and will be most comfortable with 1-2 courses per semester.

Q: How much time does each course take?

A: The normal rule of thumb is to allow 3 hours per week per credit hour. This time will include the weekly chats as well as study, reading and homework.

Q: As an international student, how do I get my transcripts evaluated?

A: If your credits are from institutions outside the USA then the transcripts need to be evaluated by an approved agency before being sent to SPC. Please refer to the web page at <http://www.spcollege.edu/central/international/>.

Q: Do I really need my high school transcript? I graduated 30 years ago!

A: If you have an Associate in Arts (AA) degree, you will not need copies of your high school transcript. However, if you had at least two years of foreign language in high school, you will want to request copies of your transcript because it will show proof that you met the foreign language requirement to graduate from the baccalaureate program. If you have an Associate in Science (AS) degree, then you are required to have a high school transcript on file.