



**2017-2018 Academic Year
Office Science and Technology
Placement ID: FASA**

Research/Topic Area: *Research Examining Forensic Analyses on Sexual Assaults*

Program Overview: Forensic science plays a vital role in the criminal justice system by providing scientifically based information through the analysis of physical evidence. During an investigation, evidence is collected at a crime scene or from a person, analyzed in a crime laboratory and then the results presented in court. Each crime scene is unique, and each case presents its own challenges. Currently, many jurisdictions are looking at the issue of sexual assault evidence that has not been submitted to a crime lab for testing. It is unknown how many unanalyzed sexual assault kits (SAKs) there are nationwide. In 2010, NIJ — in partnership with the Office on Violence Against Women — brought together sexual assault nurse examiners, crime laboratory directors, cold case detectives, prosecutors and victim advocates from across the country to discuss the challenges surrounding untested SAKs. [See a full report of the meeting \(pdf, 59 pages\)](#). In 2011, NIJ also published a special report in response to the recent discoveries of thousands of untested SAKs in police evidence rooms nationwide. [The Road Ahead: Unanalyzed Evidence in Sexual Assault Cases \(pdf, 29 pages\)](#) explores a wide range of issues, including how untested SAKs affect various stakeholders in the nation's criminal justice system: the police and crime laboratories; the courts; victim service agencies; policymakers at the federal, state and local levels; and the victims. Recently, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Laboratory have formed a partnership to help address one of the most difficult and complex issues facing our nation's criminal justice system: unsubmitted sexual assault kits (frequently referred to as untested).

Research assistant project task responsibilities will include but are not limited to:

- Compiling, summarizing, revising, or making use of complex, technical, or specialized literature.
- Extracting and compiling a range of data from written sources, from individuals (questionnaires and interviews), and from one or several given databases.
- Assisting in research design strategies (e.g., developing intramural research questions, proposals, procedures, and tools/instruments) including assisting in preparing materials (e.g., study proposal/design, protocols, and human subjects' and privacy certificates) for Institutional Review Board review for intramural studies.
- Assisting research staff with data collection and analyses efforts related to forensic analyses on sexual assault
- Processing and summarizing data using scientific or statistical techniques.
- Assisting in data interpretation and analyses to generate reports/papers.
- Conceptualizing and drafting publications (such as technical, scientific reports, peer reviewed journal articles, NIJ publications, and trade magazine articles).
- Drafting and presenting presentations at conferences.



- Assisting with coordination of research activities and participating at intra- and interagency working groups (e.g., presenting updates on select research efforts, taking meeting notes, or drafting meeting summaries).

Candidate Eligibility Criteria

- Demonstrated knowledge of intermediate to advanced research and evaluation methods and analysis *required*.
- Demonstrated knowledge of the U.S. criminal justice system *preferred*.
- Demonstrated experience related to physical science, social science and data collection *preferred*.

General Required Qualifications

- **Education and/or Experience**: Doctoral students working toward a terminal doctoral degree
- **Statistical Methods Skills**: Very good to advanced understanding of statistical principles and research methods (quantitative and qualitative).
- **Computer Skills**: Working knowledge of computers and standard software such as Adobe Professional, Excel, Internet Explorer, Outlook, Windows operating systems, Word, and PowerPoint required. Proficiency using R, SPSS, SAS, or Stata. Knowledge of Access a plus.
- **Reasoning Ability**: Ability to work independently, accurately, and in a timely manner.
- **Communication Skills**: Ability to communicate orally and in writing to prepare comprehensive research reports, proposals, and presentations and make recommendations to accomplish and enhance project objectives.
- **Certifications, Licenses, Registrations**: Human Subjects (HS) Protection training is required. NIJ research assistants must take annual HS training onsite at the Office of Justice Programs. RAs also must successfully complete [CITI training](#).
- **Background Check**: Candidates must complete all required U.S. Department of Justice profile and pre-screening paperwork with all security reviews and background investigations (such as credit and criminal investigations) resulting in a favorable adjudication.
- **Citizenship**: Candidates must be U.S. citizens.

Work Location: Primary work location will be at . Local travel in the [National Capital Region](#) may be needed to attend meetings and visit offsite research facilities.