

SCF Fire Science Technology AS Degree F.A.Qs

What is this degree about?

The two year AS Degree is designed to allow Fire Fighters receive college credits towards a two year Fire Science Degree while they train to become Fire Fighters and advance in rank. The courses are aligned to the State Fire Marshall required courses for certificates, and meet the requirements of those courses. Our instructors at both the Technical College Level and the State College Level are certified to teach by the State Fire College and the National College Accrediting standards.

In our service area, Manatee Technical College and Suncoast Technical College provide local Firefighter I and II courses which qualify a student to become a Firefighter. To move up in rank within the fire service and earn higher pay, Firefighters take other courses to earn higher certificates. SCF partners with MTC and STC to provide these courses all for college credits which help Firefighters earn their first college degree, a two year Fire Science Technology AS. Degree. By the time they finish the degree they have earned a number of certificates and are well on their way to moving up in their departments to leadership positions.

How do I start my career to become a Fire Fighter?

The training of Fire Fighters is highly regulated and the standards are a part of Florida State Law, found in Administrative Regulations.
Every Fire Fighter needs to earn Basic Firefighter I and II Certifications by attending training at any Technical or State College in Florida or at the Florida Fire College located near Ocala. Once the Basic Fire Fighter certificate is earned the person can apply to any Fire Service in Florida to be a Fire Fighter..

The Basic Firefighter I and II certificates span general introductory skills firefighters need and the programs can be completed in a few months, or a much shorter time if they are intensive (all day every day for a few weeks, as at the state fire college).

Is that all I have to do?

In order to be eligible for the SCF Fire Science AS Degree, yes, but consider this: Over the last two decades fire fighters have been called upon to administer medical care to injured people. Very few Fire calls are purely for fires! *Fully 85-90% of firefighter calls include injuries to people. For this reason MOST fire departments require there be Paramedics on every fire call, and now require all fire fighters have at least an Emergency Medical Technician Certificate (EMT) as well as a Fire Fighter Certificate.* A few Fire Departments require all firefighters hired to also be full Paramedics. The training to be an EMT may add a few weeks or a couple of months to a fire fighters training, but ensures a wider choice of jobs in fire departments.

So, I have to start my education as a Fire Fighter at MTC or STC, right?

Actually, you can start college at SCF and earn non fire credits which are required in the Fire Science Technology AS Degree. There are five courses needed for the degree called General Education Courses and are required for any AS, AA, or Bachelor Degree. These can be earned before, during, or after Firefighter basic I and II training.

SCF Admission is simple and cheap, and only requires one course be taken every year to remain active. Our General Education courses are offered online if the student is attending MTC or STC at the same time and needs them to be online.

When am I eligible to start the SCF Program in Fire Science Technology AS Degree?

Once you have a high school degree or GED, and your basic Firefighter I and II Certificate you are eligible to begin the college program, and we will award you three credits, or one class towards the degree for your Certificates. Once in the program an advisor will help you plan your course of study depending on your choice of specialties in the Fire Service.

If I am already a Fire Fighter, how does this degree help my career?

If you are already working as a Firefighter, you know how to advance in rank within your department. All departments reward in some way completion of the additional courses needed to obtain higher Fire Certificates from the State Fire Marshall's Office. The courses in the Fire Science Technology AS Degree are the same courses needed to earn Fire inspector and Fire Officer I and II Certificates. They also provide the training needed to be a Fire Instructor.

In many Fire Departments, taking courses in a two year Fire Science Degree is reimbursed, and higher rank is awarded to those Officers and Fire Instructors who hold degrees.

Can students transfer in credits from Manatee Technical College and/or transfer in any kind of licensing for credits in this degree program?

The determination on whether you have already earned some of the credits required in this degree program will have to be made on a course by course basis:

- If you have already taken some of the courses required in this degree, and your courses were earned in an accredited college we can easily transfer them into this program.
- If your credits were earned at the State Fire College we can transfer them into this degree.
- If your credits were earned at MTC or STC during the time SCF offered the degree in the past and had an articulation agreement with those schools, we can transfer the credits into this degree.
 - If your credits were earned at MTC or STC during the years when SCF did NOT offer this degree, they will be individually evaluated to determine whether they were taught at the college level.
- If your credits (courses) were earned at a private non accredited fire school in Florida, they will have to be individually evaluated to determine whether the credits were taught at the college level, or not.

How many of the courses can be taken online?

If the State Fire College has approved the course to be taught online we will develop an online course. These courses need to be approved by the State Fire College also, so during the first year of the degree we will be developing the online courses. After that most of the courses will be online.

How do I get my transcripts sent to SCF for evaluation?

Official transcripts may be mailed, faxed, or emailed (registrar@scf.edu) to SCF **directly** from the other institution, or hand delivered if they are unopened and marked official. We require both High School transcripts and all prior colleges attended.

Who do I send the information about my past courses to at SCF?

The program manager of the Fire Science program will receive/review the content and instructor for the courses and and work with the student on CEL application for credits.

These applications must be signed by the student and the program manager before being sent to the Registrar's office for credit transfer (unless you are handling this a new way other then CEL process...? Either way, they do not bring/send their fire certificates here first, if they do, I will be sending them to the program manager to complete the proper paperwork and the student will have to make another trip to sign them and receive advisement)

Must I take a placement test for SCF admissions?

If you are a first time in college student and do not have current (2 years or newer) SAT, ACT, or PERT scores you must take the college placement test. If you have attended another university or accredited state/community college and have taken equivalent math and English/writing courses, you are not required to take a placement test. Equivalency of transfer students will be determined by the Registrar's office at the time of transcript evaluation.

Who is my advisor for this program/Who do I contact for program advisement or further information on the program?

The Program Manager of this Degree is TBD. They are qualified to teach Fire Courses and can advise you about the degree requirements.

Interim Program Manager: Barry Puett, (941) 752-5656, puettb@scf.edu.

Who do I contact to find out if my official High School or College transcripts have been received?

Contact the Registrar's office at 941-752-5060

Is there a Baccalaureate program that this degree will transfer on to?

Yes! SCF has offered a Bachelor's in Public Safety and Emergency Management which has two tracks, one in Public Safety Administration and one in Homeland Security. We plan to offer a third track soon which will consist of the courses needed for Fire Officer II and IV Certificates.

Is this a limited access program like the health AS degrees or can any student pursue this degree?

The Fire Science Technology AS Degree is an open access degree for any student who has the pre-requisite High School or GED, and Basic Fire Fighter Certificates.