

Wildland/Wildlife Law Enforcement
Associate of Applied Science | 72 credits

Campus: Vermilion

First Year

FALL SEMESTER 2026 – 18 credits	Prerequisites	Credits	Hr Lc/Lb
COMM 1220 – Interpersonal Communication (MnTC Goal 1)		3	
ENGL 1231 – College Composition 1 (MnTC Goal 1)	(CLW)	4	
NRT 1211 – Forest Field Skills	(CLR, MATH 0100)	3	(2/2)
PDEV 1130 – Employment Strategies		1	
PHED 1650 – Physical Fitness, Wellness, and Nutrition		1	(0/2)
SOC 1310 – Introduction to Criminal Justice (MnTC Goals 5 & 9)	(CLR)	3	
WILD 1265 – Introduction to Wilderness and Park Management	(CLR, CLW)	3	
SPRING SEMESTER 2027 – 17 credits	Prerequisites	Credits	Hr Lc/Lb
CRJS 1412 – Criminal Investigations	(SOC 1310)	3	
ENGL 1240 – Technical Report Writing (MnTC Goal 1)	(ENGL 1231)	3	
HLTH 1515 – Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drug Education	(CLR)	2	(1/2)
MATH 1220 – College Algebra (MnTC Goal 4)	(MATH 0300)	3	
SOC 1200 – Introduction to Sociology (MnTC Goals 5 & 7)	(CLR)	3	
WILD 1420 – Wilderness Topics	(ENGL1511; WILD1265)	3	
SUMMER TERM 2027 – 4 credits	Prerequisites	Credits	Hr Lc/Lb
CRJS 2220 – Law Enforcement and Resource Protection Internship*	(CRJS 1412; ENGL 1240; 2.0 GPA)	4	

*Students seeking federal positions are encouraged to complete two qualifying internships in consecutive years, for potentially higher placement on the pay scale (see program coordinator for specific details). The degree requirement is met with four internship credits total.

Second Year

FALL SEMESTER 2027 – 17 credits	Prerequisites	Credits	Hr Lc/Lb
BIOL(NRT) 1255 – Dendrology and Plant Ecology (MnTC Goal 3)	(CLR, CLW)	3	(2/2)
CRJS 2212 – Criminal Evidence and Procedure	(SOC 1310)	3	
EMSV 1400 – Emergency Medical Responder (EMR)	(CLR)	3	(2/2)
GENS 1171 – Computer Applications: Word Processing		1	
GENS 1172 – Computer Applications: Spreadsheets	(MATH 0100)	1	
PSYC 1215 – General Psychology (MnTC Goals 5 & 7)	(CLR)	3	
SOC 2335 – Crime and Delinquency (MnTC Goals 5 & 9)	(CLR)	3	
SPRING SEMESTER 2028 – 16 credits	Prerequisites	Credits	Hr Lc/Lb
CRJS 2213 (LAW 1520) – Criminal Law / MN Statutes / Traffic Law	(SOC 1310)	4	
CRJS 2214 (LAW 1528) – Community Policing	(SOC 1310)	3	
NRT 1226 – Principles of Wildlife Management	(BIOL 1255; BIOL 1265 or WILD 1265; NRT 1211)	3	(2/2)
SOC 1210 – Social Problems (MnTC Goals 5 & 8)	(CLR)	3	
PHIL 1230 - Ethics (MnTC Goal 6-T/A & 9)	(CLR, CLW)	3	

Additional Recommended Courses

EMSV 1490 – EMT Bridge (particularly for those seeking federal employment), PHED 1150 – Weight Training, and PREC 1255 – Search Management Systems.

Additional Recommended Certificates

In order to be MN POST eligible, students must also complete a Minnesota POST skills program, which for the Vermilion campus is the 19-credit Park Ranger Law Enforcement Academy certificate offered fall semester. Refer to separate check sheets to learn more about several certificates which provide the Wildland/Wildlife Law Enforcement AAS student with additional skills, and may increase employment opportunities: Park Ranger Law Enforcement Academy, Wildlife Ecology, Backcountry Guide, Emergency Medical Services, and/or Wilderness Emergency Medical Services.

Program Description

The Wildland/Wildlife Law Enforcement AAS degree program prepares students for several career tracks in natural resources law enforcement, and it meets the academic requirements of the Professional Peace Officer Education Program (PPOE) established by the Minnesota Board of Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST). Students who wish to become peace officers must complete a state-certified law enforcement program that includes both the academic curriculum and law enforcement skills/clinical training (fulfilled by the additional Park Ranger Law Enforcement Academy certificate).

This two-year degree program also provides the natural resource education necessary for careers with the four federal land management agencies, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the National Park Service (NPS), the US Forest Service (USFS), and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Students considering careers in law enforcement need to be aware that in order to enter the police profession, specific standards and requirements must be met. Admission into the required PPOE skills training not only requires completion of an associate's degree, but it also requires meeting physical fitness standards, passing a psychological evaluation, and passing drug, medical, and background/criminal history screening. Additionally, a graduate must pass the POST examination for licensing in Minnesota in order to be eligible for employment as a peace officer in the state.

Occupational Titles

The Wildland/Wildlife Law Enforcement AAS curriculum is designed to prepare students for eventual careers as conservation officers or seasonal park rangers. Students with this degree program meet the education requirement for enrollment into Vermilion's Park Ranger Law Enforcement Academy certificate, to then continue on to a career as a law enforcement officer. Graduates can also be directly employed by DNR offices, MN State Patrol, and other LE agencies. There is also the possibility to transfer into a related baccalaureate degree.

Program Learning Outcomes

Graduates of this program will:

1. Apply knowledge of the United States Constitution to law enforcement actions and procedures.
2. Demonstrate a thorough understanding of criminal evidence, court procedures, and corrections, as they pertain to juveniles and adults.
3. Apply knowledge of Minnesota traffic law and selected statutes as they pertain to MN Peace Officer duties.
4. Demonstrate proper crime scene fundamentals and investigative methods, from initial observations through courtroom testimony.
5. Conduct investigative interviews with evaluation of verbal and nonverbal behavior patterns while demonstrating proper criminal procedures.
6. Implement techniques of community oriented policing, including proactive policing and building positive relationships in diverse populations.
7. Identify resources offering assistance in developing community policing strategies.
8. Demonstrate knowledge of cultural, social, religious and linguistic differences
9. Describe the major types of psychological disorders
10. Clearly express mathematical/logical ideas in writing
11. Demonstrate competence in oral, written, and electronic communications.
12. Identify chemical substances, their classification, and their effects on the body and mind.
13. Determine treatment, medical, and/or placement options when dealing with individuals with chemical problems.
14. Demonstrate the competencies and clinical behaviors/judgments required by the National EMS Education Standards and National Highway Traffic Safety Association (NHTSA) for an Emergency Medical Responder.
15. Use topographical maps, a compass, and GPS units to safely navigate in a wilderness setting.
16. Identify wildlife and plant species, demonstrating the ability to use plant structure terminology.
17. Describe habitats and ecological relationships in plant communities.
18. List major United States federal laws pertaining to plants and wildlife.
19. Identify specific National Wilderness Preservation System components, and understand legislation relevant to land conservation.
20. Function successfully in the workforce, applying the problem solving and team building skills gained through an on-the-job internship experience.

Transfer and Articulation Agreements

Strong transfer relationships exist with Concordia University, St. Paul, St. Mary's University of Minnesota, and the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, and Articulation Agreements are in progress.

Program Faculty Contact

Bennett Sauve (bennett.sauve@minnesotastate.edu or 218-235-2128)

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