



## Federal Agent

### **BACJ related certificates and concentrations:**

- Law Enforcement certificate/concentration

### **BACJ-related courses:**

- CRJU 4043 - Law Enforcement (3 credit hours)
- CRJU 4540 - Evidence-Based Approaches in Law Enforcement (3 credit hours)
- CRJU 3310 - Contemporary Issues in Law Enforcement (3 credit hours)
- CRJU 3320 - Police-Community Relations (3 credit hours)
- CRJU 3520 - Juvenile Justice (3 credit hours)
- CRJU 3530 - Juvenile Delinquency (3 credit hours)
- CRJU 4014 - Federal Wildlife and Fisheries Investigations (3 credit hours)
- CRJU 4410 - Criminal Law and Constitutional Procedures (3 credit hours)
- CRJU 4430 - Law and Society (3 credit hours)
- CRJU 4450 - Homeland Security (3 credit hours)
- CRJU 4600 - Special Topics (3 credit hours) - some of these topics are law enforcement related

**Complementary/recommended minors:** Computer Science and Information Technology, Finance Science, International Studies and Foreign Languages, Cybersecurity, Spanish, Psychology, Sociology, Communication, Law Studies

**Recommended extracurricular activities and experiences:** Alpha Phi Sigma Criminal Justice Honor Society, study abroad, other community involvement and equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) experiences such as a student association or club, volunteering in the community, or other experiences that expose you to communities and cultivate a service-minded perspective.

**Complete a law enforcement related internship:** This could be at the local, state and/or federal level. Ideally complete a federal level internship with any agency, as getting your 'foot-in-the-door' with one agency allows for easier transition to another agency. Federal level internships are extremely competitive, and students should be aware that applications may only open once a year, with very strict requirements and application processes and deadlines. It is recommended that students cast a wide net, and apply to many different internships at the federal level, but also state and local level. While local and state level internships may not be ideal, they can be an excellent stepping stone to demonstrate your abilities, interest and commitment.

**Duties and Responsibilities:** Federal agents investigate and respond to a wide variety of national security threats and considering the wide range of areas the federal government is responsible for, special agent duties span a wide array of responsibilities. These may include investigations, arrests, upholding the law, collecting evidence, infiltration of organized crime rings, terrorist investigations, defending civil rights, etc. fbijobs.gov states: "A day for an FBI special agent might entail surveilling a subject in the morning, tracking

terrorists' online social activity before lunch, testifying in court in the afternoon, and addressing a public forum on identity theft in the evening." This career spans desk/administrative jobs as well as field work, depending on the area the agent works in.

**Work Environment:** The work environment varies-however, many special agent positions will occupy an active out-of-office position, rather than a desk position. All agent positions will have a report writing component, however, so writing skills are an important facet of this position. Many agents enjoy that no day is the same, which helps to keep the job interesting. Agents will often collaborate with other agents in their investigations, arrests, or other duties. There are opportunities for international travel and work placement as well.

**Work Schedule:** Federal agents work an average of 50 hours per week and the Bureau expects agents to be available and flexible. However, those who maintain a widely available schedule are also entitled to a 25% pay increase for this availability.

**Career Path/Promotion:** Like many government jobs, federal agents work on a classification system. A special agent usually begins as a GS 10-GS 13. An agent will begin their career by training through an intensive program for 20 weeks at Quantico, Virginia. Agents can advance through the GS ranks through additional training and experience and years of service. Supervisory agent classifications begin at GS 14.

**Education, Training and Certification:** A Bachelor's degree is required to apply to be a federal agent. There are no specific requirements as to the type of degree, however the most competitive candidates may major in the following: criminal justice, computer science and information technology, finance science, international studies and foreign languages, cybersecurity. Prior to applying, candidates must also have two years of applicable job experience (this may look like law enforcement or military, or cybersecurity), or a Master's degree and one year of experience.

**Special Considerations:** Federal agents undergo extensive background checks and psychological examinations as part of the hiring process. *Those interested in working as a federal agent should be aware that drug use and criminal activity will greatly inhibit their ability to work in the field.* Students are encouraged to conduct research as early as possible to better understand possible eliminating employment factors. Additional requirements: must be between 23-36 years of age, a U.S. citizen, pass the drug and background check, file all federal, state and local taxes, be in peak physical fitness and health, have a valid drivers license.

**Skills and Competencies:** Physical fitness, leadership, flexibility, problem solving, attention to detail, listening skills, observation, writing, service mindset, emotional intelligence, and analytical skills.

**Average Salary Range:**

\*Federal agent salary, similar to the military, will begin at a base salary appropriate for the GS rank then a percentage added depending on the location the agent is assigned to.

GS 10- GS 13 avg range: \$78,000-\$153,000