

College: CUPA
Department: Criminology and Criminal Justice
Degree: B.A., B.S.

Introduction

The Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice emphasizes the generation and practical application of empirical evidence to crime and justice issues. We seek to promote effectiveness, efficiency, and equity in crime prevention and control efforts by (1) providing students with quality educational experiences that prepare them for lifelong professional success, (2) conducting and disseminating research on theoretical and policy-relevant topics, and (3) collaborating with justice-related organizations to assess, evaluate, and improve policy and practice. Our Department values empirical inquiry, access to higher education, diversity, social justice, and community engagement.

Criminology & Criminal Justice's undergraduate program seeks to educate students about the causes, consequences, prevention, and control of criminal and law-violating activity at multiple levels of analysis. Our undergraduate curriculum focuses on (1) criminology and criminal justice theories and empirical research addressing the role of individuals, families, communities, and society in the production and prevention of crime, (2) the justice system's function in controlling crime, and (3) a critical analysis of the effectiveness, efficiency, and equity of related policies and practices. Educational experiences facilitated inside and outside of class help promote students' long term professional success by developing their capacity for critical reasoning, problem-solving, and effective communication.

Criminology and Criminal Justice is an interdisciplinary major, a fact demonstrated by the diverse backgrounds of our full-time and adjunct faculty. Students graduating from our program have a wide range of choices when they look for employment or post-graduate education. Recent graduates have found jobs in law enforcement (e.g., police officer, immigration, crime analyst), courts (e.g., victim advocate, administration), corrections (e.g., parole officer, facility management), human services (e.g., offender counseling, child welfare), and crime prevention (e.g., neighborhood crime prevention specialist, private security). Other graduates from our program have gone on to pursue advanced degrees in such areas as law, criminal justice, psychology, social work, public administration, and urban planning.

Undergraduate Program Learning Outcomes

Through the classroom curriculum, experience-based learning in the internship and work with the faculty as a whole, students graduating from the program should be able to demonstrate proficiency in the following eight areas:

1. Outline the fundamental sequence of events in criminal justice (CJ); identify the points in the decision making process where professional ethics and equity are of greatest concern.
2. Describe and critique current policies and practices in CJ; assess the broader legal and historical context for the measures and their impacts with regard to social justice.
3. Identify major sources of CJ data and report key findings or trends in the data (e.g., crime rates, victimization patterns); contrast the strengths and limitations of each data source for our understanding of crime.

4. Access, summarize, and evaluate empirical studies in CJ; demonstrate basic skills in methodological design, data collection, and ethical research practices.
5. Demonstrate basic skills in analyzing and interpreting patterns in CJ data; communicate empirical findings effectively through written reports and oral presentations.
6. Outline the major theories of crime causation; appraise the empirical support for the theories and their implications for policy and practice.
7. Synthesize theories and empirical literature on given CJ topics and present the findings through oral and written reports.
8. Investigate a justice career through a formal internship; apply knowledge and skills learned in the Criminology & Criminal Justice program to help an organization achieve its goals.