

CRIMINAL JUSTICE, B.S. (CAPITAL)

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: Harrisburg, World Campus

Program Description

The Bachelor of Science degree program in Criminal Justice helps provide its graduates with the communications and analytical skills critical to succeed in criminal justice and related careers. Through an interdisciplinary approach to the problems of crime and society, the program also equips students to pursue graduate study in criminal justice or related disciplines, and educates students to become effective problem-solvers as professionals in the field of criminal justice.

The study of criminal justice is approached as an applied interdisciplinary science, teaching students both the theoretical and the practical aspects of crime control and the administration of justice. The Criminal Justice curriculum provides students with the opportunity and assistance to acquire knowledge of the roles of policing, courts, laws, and corrections as they relate to both the adult and juvenile justice system. Students also gain knowledge of the history, concepts, and critical issues related to the role of gender and race/ethnicity in the criminal justice system, victimology, and ethics in criminal justice. The curriculum further provides a theoretical foundation of the discipline, combined with a thorough understanding of the scientific method as it applies to criminal justice. This combination is expected to sharpen the students' talents of reasoning and judgment, qualities imperative to rational functioning in criminal justice and related professions.

What is Criminal Justice?

Criminal justice is the study of the adult and juvenile justice systems, including law enforcement, the courts, and corrections. It is interdisciplinary and includes understanding the intersections of law, public policy, and behavioral science, in an effort to understand crime as a social problem and improve these systems for the good of society.

You Might Like This Program If...

- You enjoy helping others, or doing something for the greater good.
- You are interested in all aspects of the law, including the psychology behind criminal behavior and the way criminal justice and social service agencies operate.
- You want to serve society and have good people skills.
- You are interested in a career in law enforcement, the courts, corrections, or another part of the criminal justice system.

Entrance to Major

The student must have a 2.00 cumulative grade-point average and an average of C (2.00) or better in any course already taken in the major.

Admission Requirements for Transfer Students

Transfer applicants must have at least a 2.00 cumulative grade-point average (4.00 scale). The evaluation of prior college work is conducted on an individual basis by the Office of Enrollment Services at both campuses.

World Campus

Direct Admission to the Major

Incoming first-year students who meet the program admission requirements are admitted directly into the major. Admission restrictions may apply for change-of-major and/or change-of-campus students.

For more information about the admission process for this major, please send a request to the college, campus, or program contact (listed in the Contact tab).

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice, a minimum of 120 credits is required:

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Electives	18
Requirements for the Major	60-61

3-4 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes 3-4 credits of GQ courses.

Requirements for the Major

At least 9 credits in Additional Courses and/or Supporting Courses must be at the 400 level.

To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn a grade of C or better in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44>).

Code	Title	Credits
Prescribed Courses		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
CRIMJ/SOC 12	Criminology	3
CRIMJ/CRIM 100	Introduction to Criminal Justice	3
CRIMJ 210	Policing in America	3
CRIMJ 220	Courts and the Prosecution Process	3
CRIMJ 230	Corrections in America	3
CRIMJ 250W	Research Methods in Criminal Justice	3
CRIMJ 450W	Senior Seminar	3
CRIMJ 465	Ethics in Criminal Justice	3
Additional Courses		
Select 6 credits each from sequence A and B or 12 credits from sequence C:		12
<i>Sequence A</i>		
CRIMJ 221	Issues in the American Criminal Justice System	
CRIMJ 234	Fundamental Techniques of Scientific Criminal Investigation	
CRIMJ 241	Computer Applications in Public Affairs/Criminal Justice	
<i>Sequence B</i>		
CRIMJ 389	Gangs and Gang Behavior	
CRIMJ/SOC/CRIM 406	Sociology of Deviance	
CRIMJ 407	Victimology	

CRIMJ 408	Police Administration
CRIMJ 409	White Collar Crime
CRIMJ 410	The Pennsylvania Court System
CRIMJ/SOC/ CRIM 413	Advanced Criminological Theory
CRIMJ/SOC 414	Criminal Careers and the Organization of Crime
CRIMJ 415	Drug Control Policy in Comparative Perspective
CRIMJ 416	The Death Penalty
CRIMJ/CRIM 421	Violent Crime in the United States
CRIMJ/ WMNST/CRIM 423	Sexual and Domestic Violence
CRIMJ/CRIM 425	Organized Crime
CRIMJ 426	Special Offender Types
CRIMJ 430	Alternatives to Incarceration
CRIMJ 431	Offender and Prisoner Rights
CRIMJ/CRIM 441	The Juvenile Justice System
CRIMJ/ WMNST/CRIM 453	Women and the Criminal Justice System
CRIMJ 460	History and Function of Criminal Justice Components
CRIMJ 462	Comparative Criminal Justice Systems
CRIMJ/HIST 469	Drugs and Drug Policy in the United States
CRIMJ 489W	Victimology: Predatory Crime
CRIMJ 495	Internship in Criminal Justice
CRIMJ 496	Independent Studies
CRIMJ 497	Special Topics
<i>Sequence C</i>	
CRIMJ 304	Security Administration
CRIMJ 389	Gangs and Gang Behavior
CRIMJ/SOC/ CRIM 406	Sociology of Deviance
CRIMJ 407	Victimology
CRIMJ 408	Police Administration
CRIMJ 409	White Collar Crime
CRIMJ 410	The Pennsylvania Court System
CRIMJ/SOC/ CRIM 413	Advanced Criminological Theory
CRIMJ/SOC 414	Criminal Careers and the Organization of Crime
CRIMJ 415	Drug Control Policy in Comparative Perspective
CRIMJ 416	The Death Penalty
CRIMJ/CRIM 421	Violent Crime in the United States
CRIMJ/ WMNST/CRIM 423	Sexual and Domestic Violence
CRIMJ/CRIM 425	Organized Crime

CRIMJ 426	Special Offender Types
CRIMJ 430	Alternatives to Incarceration
CRIMJ 431	Offender and Prisoner Rights
CRIMJ/CRIM 441	The Juvenile Justice System
CRIMJ/ WMNST/CRIM 453	Women and the Criminal Justice System
CRIMJ 460	History and Function of Criminal Justice Components
CRIMJ 462	Comparative Criminal Justice Systems
CRIMJ/HIST 469	Drugs and Drug Policy in the United States
CRIMJ 489W	Victimology: Predatory Crime
CRIMJ 495	Internship in Criminal Justice
CRIMJ 496	Independent Studies
CRIMJ 497	Special Topics

Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better

CRIMJ 260	Statistical Analysis for the Social Sciences	3-4
or STAT 200	Elementary Statistics	

Supporting Courses and Related Areas

Select 6 credits: 3 credits at the 200 level and 3 credits at the 300 and 400 level or 6 credits at the 300 and 400 level from the following: 6
AFRAS, BESC, PLSC, PUBPL, PSYCH, SOC

Select 15 credits in consultation with an academic adviser and in support of the student's interests. For information about specific courses in this area, contact the School of Public Affairs. 15

General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/>) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Quantification (GQ):** 6 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 9 credits

Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Arts (GA):** 3 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 3 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 3 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 3 credits

Integrative Studies

- **Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain):** 6 credits

Exploration

- **GN**, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- **GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses.** This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 6 credits

University Degree Requirements

First Year Engagement

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- United States Cultures: 3 credits
- International Cultures: 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Integrated B.S. in Criminal Justice and M.A. in Criminal Justice

Available at the following campuses: Harrisburg

Requirements for the Integrated B.S. in Criminal Justice and M.A. in Criminal Justice can be found in the Graduate Bulletin ([https://](https://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/criminal-justice/#integratedundergradgradprogramtext)

bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/criminal-justice/#integratedundergradgradprogramtext).

Program Learning Objectives

- Interpret behavior and social circumstances from a criminological perspective.
- Apply empirical evidence to describe how the use of the broad discretionary powers of police is controlled and to evaluate innovations in policing.
- Apply law, procedure, and legal philosophy to criminal justice and judicial processes.
- Apply the goals of corrections and principles of behavior modification to offenders and offender populations.
- Employ social science methodology to address criminal justice problems.
- Demonstrate proficiency in written communication at a level appropriate to criminal justice professionals.
- Incorporate contemporary scholarly perspectives on ethics and social justice into decision-making.

Academic Advising

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee's unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

Harrisburg

Jennifer C. Gibbs, Ph.D.

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World Campus

Undergraduate Academic Advising

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814-863-3283
advising@outreach.psu.edu

Suggested Academic Plan

Criminal Justice, B.S. at Harrisburg Campus

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit

(accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If report**). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ENGL 15, 15S, 30T, or ESL 15 [‡]	3 CRIMJ 12 [*]	3
Quantification (GQ)	3 CAS 100A or 100S [‡]	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course (GHW)	1.5 General Education Course	3
	13.5	15

Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
CRIMJ 100 [*]	3 CRIMJ 220 [*]	3
General Education Course	3 ENGL 202A, 202B, 202C, or 202D [‡]	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course (GHW)	1.5 General Education Course	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
	13.5	15

Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
CRIMJ 250W [*]	3 CRIMJ 260 or STAT 200 ^{**}	3-4
CRIMJ 210 [*]	3 Select 3 credits of CRIMJ additional courses from list	6
CRIMJ 230 [*]	3 Select 3 credits in consultation with adviser	3
200-300-400 level from the following: AFRAS, BESC, PLSC, PUBPL, PSYCH, SOC	3 Elective	3
Select credits in consultation with adviser	3	
	15	15-16

Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
Select CRIMJ additional courses from list	6 CRIMJ 450W [*]	3
300-400 level from the following: AFRAS, BESC, PLSC, PUBPL, PSYCH, SOC	3 CRIMJ 465 [*]	3
Select credits in consultation with adviser	6 Select credits in consultation with adviser	3
	Elective	7-8
	15	16-17

Total Credits 118-120

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major

‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education

Course is an Entrance to Major requirement

† Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

Program Notes

Internship credits do not count toward criminal justice electives, but can count toward "credits taken in consultation with adviser."

Select 6 credits from the following:

- CRIMJ 200 - Introduction to Security and Loss Control
- CRIMJ 201 - American Legal System (3)
- CRIMJ 221 - Issues in the American Criminal Justice System (3)
- CRIMJ 234 - Fundamental Techniques of Scientific Criminal Investigation (3)
- CRIMJ 241 - Computer Applications in Public Affairs (3)

and Select 6 credits from the following:

- CRIMJ 300H - Honors Seminar; Issues and Trends in Criminal Justice (3-6)
- CRIMJ 301H - (3-6)
- CRIMJ 304 - Security Administration (3)
- CRIMJ 310 - Forensic Science I (3)
- CRIMJ 345 - Criminal Justice and the Community (3)
- CRIMJ 389 - Gangs and Gang Behavior (3)
- CRIMJ 406 - Sociology of Deviance (3)
- CRIMJ 407 - Victimology (US) (3)
- CRIMJ 408 - Legal Aspects of Law Enforcement (3)
- CRIMJ 410 - The Pennsylvania Court System (3)
- CRIMJ 412 - Crime, Social Control, and the Legal System (3)
- CRIMJ 413 - Advanced Criminological Theory (3)
- CRIMJ 414 - Criminal Careers and the Organization of Crime (3)
- CRIMJ 415 - Drug Control Policy in Comparative Perspective (3)
- CRIMJ 416 - The Death Penalty (3)
- CRIMJ 421 - Violent Crime (3)
- CRIMJ 422 - Victimization (3)
- CRIMJ 423 - Sexual and Domestic Violence (US) (3)
- CRIMJ 424 - (CRIM 424) Drugs and Crime
- CRIMJ 425 - Organized Crime (3)
- CRIMJ 426 - Special Offender Types (3)
- CRIMJ 430 - Criminal Law (3)
- CRIMJ 431 - Offender and Prisoner Rights (3)
- CRIMJ 435 - Border Security (3)
- CRIMJ 439 - (PLSC 439) The Politics of Terrorism (3)

- CRIMJ 441 - (US) (CRIM 441) The Juvenile Justice System (3)
- CRIMJ 451 - (US) (CRIM 451) Race, Crime, and Justice (3)
- CRIMJ 453 - Women and the Criminal Justice System (US) (3)
- CRIMJ 455 - Contemporary Issues in Law Enforcement (3)
- CRIMJ 460 - History and Function of Criminal Justice components (3)
- CRIMJ 462 - Comparative Criminal Justice Systems (3)
- CRIMJ 467 - (SOC 467), CRIM 467 Law and Society (3)
- CRIMJ 469 - (HIST 469) Drugs and Drug Policy in the United States (3)
- CRIMJ 471 - Legal Rights, Duties, Liabilities of Criminal Justice Personnel (3)
- CRIMJ 473 - Criminal Procedure and Evidence in the Business Community (3)
- CRIMJ 482 - (CRIM 482) Seminar, Criminal Justice Agency Administration
- CRIMJ 489W - Victimology: Predatory Crime (3)
- CRIMJ 494 - Research Topics (3)
- CRIMJ 494H - Research Topics (3)
- CRIMJ 495 - Internship in Criminal Justice (3-12)
- CRIMJ 496 - Independent Studies (1-18)
- CRIMJ 497 - Special Topics (1-9)
- CRIMJ 499 - (IL) Foreign Studies
- CRIMJ 455 - Contemporary Issues in Law Enforcement (3)
- CRIMJ 460 - History and Function of Criminal Justice components (3)
- CRIMJ 462 - Comparative Criminal Justice Systems (3)
- CRIMJ 467 - (SOC 467), CRIM 467 Law and Society (3)
- CRIMJ 469 - (HIST 469) Drugs and Drug Policy in the United States (3)
- CRIMJ 471 - Legal Rights, Duties, Liabilities of Criminal Justice Personnel (3)
- CRIMJ 473 - Criminal Procedure and Evidence in the Business Community (3)
- CRIMJ 482 - (CRIM 482) Seminar, Criminal Justice Agency Administration
- CRIMJ 489W - Victimology: Predatory Crime (3)
- CRIMJ 494 - Research Topics (3)
- CRIMJ 494H - Research Topics (3)
- CRIMJ 495 - Internship in Criminal Justice (3-12)
- CRIMJ 496 - Independent Studies (1-18)
- CRIMJ 497 - Special Topics (1-9)
- CRIMJ 499 - (IL) Foreign Studies

or Select 12 credits from the following:

- CRIMJ 300H - Honors Seminar; Issues and Trends in Criminal Justice (3-6)
- CRIMJ 301H - (3-6)
- CRIMJ 304 - Security Administration (3)
- CRIMJ 310 - Forensic Science I (3)
- CRIMJ 345 - Criminal Justice and the Community (3)
- CRIMJ 389 - Gangs and Gang Behavior (3)
- CRIMJ 406 - Sociology of Deviance (3)
- CRIMJ 407 - Victimology (US) (3)
- CRIMJ 408 - Legal Aspects of Law Enforcement (3)
- CRIMJ 410 - The Pennsylvania Court System (3)
- CRIMJ 412 - Crime, Social Control, and the Legal System (3)
- CRIMJ 413 - Advanced Criminological Theory (3)
- CRIMJ 414 - Criminal Careers and the Organization of Crime (3)
- CRIMJ 415 - Drug Control Policy in Comparative Perspective (3)
- CRIMJ 416 - The Death Penalty (3)
- CRIMJ 421 - Violent Crime (3)
- CRIMJ 422 - Victimization (3)
- CRIMJ 423 - Sexual and Domestic Violence (US) (3)
- CRIMJ 424 - (CRIM 424) Drugs and Crime
- CRIMJ 425 - Organized Crime (3)
- CRIMJ 426 - Special Offender Types (3)
- CRIMJ 430 - Criminal Law (3)
- CRIMJ 431 - Offender and Prisoner Rights (3)
- CRIMJ 435 - Border Security (3)
- CRIMJ 439 - (PLSC 439) The Politics of Terrorism (3)
- CRIMJ 441 - (US) (CRIM 441) The Juvenile Justice System (3)
- CRIMJ 451 - (US) (CRIM 451) Race, Crime, and Justice (3)
- CRIMJ 453 - Women and the Criminal Justice System (US) (3)

Career Paths

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment opportunities in criminal justice professions are projected to grow through the year 2026. In addition, the 2017 Occupational Outlook Handbook reports that employment opportunities for substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors are expected to grow 20 percent through the year 2026, much faster than the national average for all occupations. Police officers have the highest rate of projected openings each year in the criminal justice field.

Careers

Penn State Harrisburg criminal justice graduates have pursued opportunities with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Secret Service, the U.S. Marshals' Office, sheriffs' departments, municipal and state police departments, security and loss prevention programs, court administration, legal aid/paralegal, delinquency prevention programs, juvenile court personnel, youth shelters and other juvenile residential institutions, victim advocate, and probation and parole offices.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAM (<https://harrisburg.psu.edu/public-affairs/criminal-justice-bs/>)

Opportunities for Graduate Studies

While job opportunities are increasing, so is the level of qualified applicants, which makes the field much more competitive. Those interested in working at the federal level and those wishing to pursue supervisory and other upper-level positions in criminal justice are especially encouraged to obtain a graduate degree. Furthermore, a graduate degree in criminal justice, such as Penn State's Master of Arts in Criminal Justice, is a great step for those interested in doctoral studies or a career in the legal system.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES (<https://harrisburg.psu.edu/public-affairs/criminal-justice-ma/>)

Contact

Harrisburg

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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<https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/criminal-justice-bachelors/overview> (<https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/criminal-justice-bachelors/overview/>)