

# CRIMINOLOGY, B.A.

**Begin Campus:** Any Penn State Campus

**End Campus:** University Park

## Program Description

The Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminology is offered by the Criminology Program in the Department of Sociology.

This major provides students with a broadly based liberal education focused on the understanding and analysis of crime and justice systems. Students obtain a foundation of knowledge of the basic components of the criminal justice and legal systems as well as abilities to solve problems, think and read critically, and write effectively within the context of criminal justice and criminological research and theory.

The B.A. degree is suitable for students seeking entry-level positions in the criminal justice system and for students interested in graduate and law school. Students interested in acquiring strong quantitative skills should consider the B.S. degree.

## What is Criminology?

Criminology is a broad and interdisciplinary field of study that promotes an understanding of crime and the criminal justice system and how they relate to human behavior, social environments, and government policy. Examples of topics studied in Criminology are: the causes and consequences of deviant and/or criminal behavior; the structure and functions of the criminal justice system; societal and individual reactions to crimes and criminal justice processing; the spatial and geographical elements associated with crime and poverty; and the dynamics of criminal justice policy making.

## You Might Like This Program If...

- You are interested in studying human behavior through an interdisciplinary lens.
- You are fascinated with deviance and/or criminal behavior.
- You would like to study the functioning of the criminal justice system.
- You're passionate about issues of social justice.
- You would like to go to law school or graduate school.
- You want to pursue a career in policing, corrections or governmental.

## Entrance to Major

In order to be eligible for entrance to this major, a student must:

1. attain at least a C (2.00) cumulative grade-point average for all courses taken at the University; and
2. have at least third-semester classification (<https://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm>).

READ SENATE POLICY 37-30: ENTRANCE TO AND CHANGES IN MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/37-00-entrance-to-a-college-or-major/>)

## Degree Requirements

**For the Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminology, a minimum of 121 credits is required:**

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Electives	16
Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements	24
Requirements for the Major	40

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

Per Senate Policy 83-80.5, 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. For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

## Requirements for the Major

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade 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
<b>Prescribed Courses</b>		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
CRIM/CRIMJ/ SOC 12	Criminology	3
CRIM/CRIMJ 100	Introduction to Criminal Justice	3
CRIM 249	Criminology Theory and Evidence	3
CRIM 250W	Research Methods in Criminology	3
STAT 200	Elementary Statistics	4
<b>Additional Courses</b>		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
Select one of the following:		3
CAS 283	Communication and Information Technology I	
CMPSC 100	Computer Fundamentals and Applications	
CMPSC 101	Introduction to Programming	
Select one of the following:		3
SOC 1	Introductory Sociology	
SOC 3	Introductory Social Psychology	
SOC 5	Social Problems	
Select two of the following core courses:		6
CRIM 430	American Correctional System	
CRIM/CRIMJ 432	Crime and the American Court System	
CRIM 435	Policing in America	
CRIM/CRIMJ 451	Race, Crime, and Justice	
CRIM/CRIMJ/ WMNST 453	Women and the Criminal Justice System	
CRIM/CRIMJ/ SOC 467	Law and Society	
CRIM 490	Crime Policy	
Select 6 credits from non-core CRIM/CRIMJ courses at the 400 level (including no more than 3 credits of LA 496, CRIM 494, or CRIM 499)		6

Select 6 credits in race, ethnicity and gender:

AA 100	Introduction to International Arts
AMST 105	American Popular Culture and Folklife
AMST 432	Ethnicity and the American Experience
ANTH 146	Indigenous North America
CAS 271N	Intercultural Communication
CAS 455	Topics in Gender and Communication
CAS 471	Intercultural Communication Theory and Research
CMLIT 101	Race, Gender, and Identity in World Literature
CRIM 451	Race, Crime, and Justice
CRIM 453	Women and the Criminal Justice System
ENGL 135	Alternative Voices in American Literature
ENGL 139	African American Literature
ENGL 462	Reading Black, Reading Feminist
HIST 154	History of Welfare and Poverty in the United States
PHIL 9	Race, Racism, and Diversity
PSYCH 432	Multicultural Psychology in America
SOC 103	Racism and Sexism
SOC 119N	Race, Ethnicity and Culture
SOC 409	Racial and Ethnic Inequality in America
SOC 419	Race and Public Policy
SOC 429	Social Stratification
WMNST 1	Introduction to Women's Studies
WMNST 104	Women and the American Experience
WMNST 136	Race, Gender, and Employment

## 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

## 6 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.

## B.A. Degree Requirements

**Foreign Language** (0-12 credits): Student must attain 12th credit level of proficiency in one foreign language. See the Placement Policy for Penn State Foreign Language Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/advising-planning-degree-program/course-placements/placement-policy-world-language-courses/>).

**B.A. Fields** (9 credits): Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Arts, Foreign Languages, Natural Sciences, Quantification (may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major; foreign language credits in this category must be in a second foreign language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the first language)

**Other Cultures** (0-3 credits): Select 3 credits from approved list. Students may count courses in this category in order to meet other major, minor, elective, or General Education requirements, except for the General Education US/IL requirement.

## Integrated B.A. in Criminology and M.P.S. in Criminal Justice Policy and Administration

Requirements for the Integrated B.A. in Criminology and M.P.S. in Criminal Justice Policy and Administration can be found in the Graduate Bulletin (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/criminal-justice-policy-administration/#integratedundergradgradprogramstext>).

## Integrated B.A. in Criminology and M.I.A. in International Affairs

Requirements for the Integrated B.A. in Criminology and M.I.A. in International Affairs can be found in the Graduate Bulletin (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/international-affairs/#integratedundergradgradprogramstext>).

## Program Learning Objectives

- Recognize the causes and consequences of crime at the micro and macro levels and match these with prominent criminological perspectives.
- Describe the interrelated institutions and processes of the criminal justice system.
- Apply theories of crime and criminal justice to explain actual and hypothetical scenarios, behaviors, and trends.
- Explain the various social science methods of inquiry and use these to test specific criminological research questions.
- Recognize and explain macro-social inequities in crime and criminal justice processes by race, social class, gender, region and age.
- Locate and consult works in the area to produce a research paper that is coherent, cogent, and attentive to conventions of the field.

## 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/>)

## University Park

### Liberal Arts Academic Advising

814-865-2545

Use the Liberal Arts Meet the Academic Advisers web page (<https://la.psu.edu/student-services/academic-advising/meet-the-academic-advisers/>) to see the contact information for the specific adviser(s) of this program

## Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2023-24 academic year. To access previous years' suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/>) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition (*Note: the archive only contains suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin*).

## Criminology, B.A. at University Park 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
General Education (GWS) <sup>‡</sup>	3 CRIM/SOC 12*	3
CRIM 100*	3 General Education (GWS) <sup>‡</sup>	3
World Language level 1	4 STAT 200 (GQ) <sup>*††</sup>	4
General Education Quantification (GQ) <sup>‡</sup>	3 World Language level 2	4
General Education or First-Year Seminar	3 General Education Course	3
	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>

### Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
SOC 1, 3, or 5*	3 Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Course from List*	3
World Language Level 3	4 CRIM 250W*	3
CRIM 249*	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3 BA Fields	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>

### Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
CAS 283, CMPSC 100, or CMPSC 101*	3 4XX Level Course from List*	3
4XX Level Course from List*	3 Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Course from List*	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3 BA Fields	3

Elective	3 Elective	3
	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Fourth Year</b>		
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Credits Spring</b>	<b>Credits</b>
4XX-Level CRIM Core Course from List*	3 4XX-Level CRIM Core Course from List*	3
General Education Course (GWS)†	3 BA Fields	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
BA Other Cultures Course	3 General Education Course (GHW)	1.5
General Education Course (GHW)	1.5 Elective	3
	<b>13.5</b>	<b>13.5</b>
<b>Total Credits 121</b>		

\* 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.

All incoming Schreyer Honors College first-year students at University Park will take ENGL 137H/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL 138T/CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry the GWS designation and satisfy a portion of that General Education requirement. If the student's program prescribes GWS these courses will replace both ENGL 15/ENGL 30H and CAS 100A/CAS 100B/CAS 100C. Each course is 3 credits.

#### Bachelor of Arts Requirements:

Bachelor of Arts students must take 9 credits in Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Fields (Humanities; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Arts; World Languages [2nd language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the 1st]; Natural Sciences; Quantification). The B.A. Fields courses may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major. See your adviser and the Degree Requirements section (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/>) of this Bulletin.

Bachelor of Arts students must take 3 credits in Other Cultures.

See your adviser and the full list of courses approved as Other Cultures courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-other-cultures/>).

#### Advising Notes:

- All incoming first-year students must take a First-Year Seminar (FYS) during Fall or Spring of their first year. Academic advisers can provide a list of FYS being offered and help the student enroll. Most FYS in the College of the Liberal Arts are worth 3 credits and count as a General Humanities (GH) or General Social Sciences (GS) course. For this reason, the FYS is not listed separately on this eight-semester plan; most students will be able to fulfill the FYS requirement while also fulfilling a GH or GS requirement.
- The following sequence **MUST** be followed: CRIM 12/SOC 12 # CRIM 249 # CRIM 250W. It is suggested that CRIM 12 and CRIM 249 be taken as early as possible. CRIM 100 and CRIM 249 can be taken in the same semester. CRIMJ 250W will only be used as elective credits.
- While CRIM 294, CRIM 296, and CRIM 494 provide students with terrific opportunities and learning experiences, these credits may **NOT** be counted in fulfillment of the Criminology major requirements. They may, however, be used as elective credits to count toward the credit requirement for graduation
- Internship credits will be counted towards elective credits, unless approved by the internship coordinator to meet a general 3 credit 400 level CRIM course requirement
- 3 credits of the Netherlands Education Abroad experience (CRIMJ 499) can be used to meet a general 400 level course requirement. A total of 15 education abroad credits (max) may be applied toward the major; courses must be approved by the department for application toward the major. CRIM 12/SOC 12, CRIM 100, CRIM 249 and CRIM 250W cannot be taken abroad.

## Criminology, B.A. at Commonwealth Campuses

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
General Education Course (GWS) <sup>‡</sup>	3 CRIM 12, CRIMJ 12, or SOC 12 <sup>*</sup>	3
CRIM 100 or CRIMJ 100 <sup>*</sup>	3 STAT 200 <sup>*††</sup>	4
World Language Level 1	4 General Education Course (GWS) <sup>‡</sup>	3
General Education Course (GQ) <sup>‡</sup>	3 World Language Level 2	4
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
<b>16</b>		<b>17</b>
Second Year		
Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
SOC 1, 3, or 5 <sup>*</sup>	3 Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Course from List <sup>*</sup>	3
World Language Level 3	4 General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3 BA Fields	3
General Education Course	3 Elective	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
<b>16</b>		<b>15</b>
Third Year		
Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
CAS 283, CMPSC 100, or CMPSC 101 <sup>*</sup>	3 CRIM 250W <sup>*</sup>	3
CRIM 249 <sup>*</sup>	3 Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Course from List <sup>*</sup>	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
Elective	3 BA Fields	3
<b>15</b>		<b>15</b>
Fourth Year		
Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
4XX Level Course from List <sup>*</sup>	3 Core CRIM Course from List <sup>*</sup>	3
CRIM Core Course from List <sup>*</sup>	3 4XX Level Course from List <sup>*</sup>	3
General Education Course (GWS) <sup>‡</sup>	3 BA Fields	3
BA Other Cultures Course	3 General Education Course (GHW)	1.5
General Education Course (GHW)	1.5 Elective	3
<b>13.5</b>		<b>13.5</b>
<b>Total Credits 121</b>		

\* 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.

All incoming Schreyer Honors College first-year students at University Park will take ENGL 137H/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL 138T/CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry the GWS designation and satisfy a portion of that General Education requirement. If the student's program prescribes GWS these courses will replace both ENGL 15/ENGL 30H and CAS 100A/CAS 100B/CAS 100C. Each course is 3 credits.

### Bachelor of Arts Requirements:

Bachelor of Arts students must take 9 credits in Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Fields (Humanities; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Arts; World Languages [2nd language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the 1st]; Natural Sciences; Quantification). The B.A. Fields courses may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major. See your adviser and the Degree Requirements section (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/>) of this Bulletin.

Bachelor of Arts students must take 3 credits in Other Cultures. See your adviser and the full list of courses approved as Other Cultures courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-other-cultures/>).

## Career Paths

There are opportunities for careers in criminology for everyone. Whether you like field work, working in a laboratory or working behind the scenes in research or administration, the chances are you'll find a rewarding career.

### Careers

Majoring in Criminology will prepare you for a wide array of criminal justice careers, such as law enforcement, corrections and rehabilitation, research analysis, governmental and non-governmental organizations.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE CRIMINOLOGY PROGRAM (<https://sociology.la.psu.edu/undergraduate/criminology/careers-in-criminology/>)

### Opportunities for Graduate Studies

A baccalaureate degree in Criminology is suitable for students seeking entry-level positions in the criminal justice system and for students interested in graduate and law school.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES  
(<https://sociology.la.psu.edu/graduate/>)

## **Professional Resources**

- The American Society of Criminology (<https://asc41.com/>)
- American Sociological Association (<https://www.asanet.org/>)
- Penn State Justice Association (<https://pennstateja.wixsite.com/justice-association/academics/>)

## **Contact**

### **University Park**

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<https://sociology.la.psu.edu>