CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Undergraduate Program Information

The Department of Criminal Justice offers courses in the traditional setting as well as online. However, we do not offer a fully online Bachelor of Criminal Justice (BCJ). We offer an online Degree Completion Program. Students interested in completing the degree online need to complete at least the first two years on campus while working closely with an academic advisor.

The criminal justice degree plan is broadly interdisciplinary in nature embracing the study of the humanities, law, natural, behavioral and social sciences. The curriculum seeks to balance theoretical inquiry with applied knowledge.

Students become prepared for careers in law enforcement, corrections, probation and parole, work with juveniles, victim services, non- and not-for-profit organizations connected with criminal and social justice, and the related field of forensics. Graduates have also been successful in law school and graduate programs in the social sciences. The undergraduate major consists of at least 33 credits in the major field, 27 of which must be numbered 300 or above (excluding C J 393 Internship in Criminal Justice).

The department offers an interdisciplinary minor in Forensic Sciences and has partnered with various other departments to offer an interdisciplinary minor in child advocacy studies. Students interested in the minor should consult with the department head.

Graduate Program Information

The Department of Criminal Justice offers graduate study leading to the Master of Criminal Justice (MCJ) degree. Admission to the MCJ is competitive and prospective graduate students are expected to have at least a 3.0 undergraduate grade-point-average, coursework in research methods and statistics, and possess a bachelor's degree. Those not meeting these requirements may be admitted conditionally and required to make up deficiencies at the outset of their program of study. Applicants must submit three letters of recommendation and a 3-5 page essay introducing themselves and addressing the following topic: "What is the most important change needed in the criminal justice system?" This essay serves as a sample of written work to be evaluated by the MCJ Graduate Committee. The GRE is NOT required for admission into the MCJ program. The MCJ Graduate Committee may require a student to complete additional English writing coursework. For more information, please visit our website: http://crimjust.nmsu.edu/criminal-justice-graduat/.

Students must declare their intent to pursue one of the two degree options: the thesis option or the focused coursework option. The degree options are provided so that students may better match their education with career goals. The thesis option is often used by students interested in pursuing careers in basic and applied criminal justice research or a doctoral degree. The focused coursework option is often used by students pursuing administrative positions within criminal justice agencies. The thesis option is only available for Campus-Based students. Online students may only pursue the Focused Coursework Option.

All candidates, regardless of chosen degree option, must complete a final examination. Examination requirements vary by degree option. Please contact the director of the MCJ program or consult the Department of Criminal Justice web site http://crimjust.nmsu.edu/criminal-justice-graduat/ for details.

Thesis students must submit a thesis proposal to their faculty committee at a proposal hearing for approval and subsequently complete the approved thesis project. An approved thesis proposal is one wherein the thesis committee determines the student demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the nexus of theory, method, and policy as it applies to the proposed thesis project. At the discretion of the thesis committee the proposal may be considered inadequate and the student is required to revise and resubmit the thesis proposal until the committee determines the proposal is satisfactory. The final examination includes a defense of the completed thesis, but may also include a general examination based upon the candidate's program of study. The minimum coursework requirements are displayed below.

Focused coursework students must pass two written comprehensive examinations following completion of the required courses, no earlier than their third semester. Students not passing the examinations will be required to wait until the following semester to retake the examination. The minimum course requirements are displayed below.

Online M.C.J. Coursework

There is an online option for the MCJ degree. Online criminal justice courses are available only to those admitted to the MCJ program as online students, or with permission of the Director of the MCJ program. Students desiring to be admitted to the MCJ program as online students must declare that intent in writing to the MCJ director. Online students may not enroll in campus-based criminal justice courses. Online students may only pursue the Focused Coursework Option, not the Thesis Option.

For more information regarding the online MCJ degree option, consult the Department of Criminal Justice web page, http://crimjust.nmsu.edu, or contact the Director of the MCJ program.

Teaching Assistantships

Teaching assistantships are typically available for some traditional (on-campus) MCJ students on a competitive basis. The Director of the MCJ Program will contact admitted students to determine their interest, and the Graduate Committee will make recommendations to the Department Head for a final decision.

Degrees for the Department

Criminal Justice - Bachelor of Criminal Justice (http://catalogs.nmsu.edu/nmsu/arts-sciences/criminal-justice/criminal-justice-bachelor-criminal-justice)

Law and Society - Undergraduate Supplemental Major (http://catalogs.nmsu.edu/nmsu/arts-sciences/criminal-justice/law-society-undergraduate-supplemental-major)

Criminal Justice - Master of Criminal Justice (http://catalogs.nmsu.edu/nmsu/arts-sciences/criminal-justice/criminal-justice-master-criminal-justice)

Minors for the Department

Child Advocacy Studies - Undergraduate Minor (http://catalogs.nmsu.edu/nmsu/arts-sciences/criminal-justice/child-advocacy-studies-undergraduate-minor)
Forensic Science - Undergraduate Minor (http://catalogs.nmsu.edu/nmsu/arts-sciences/criminal-justice/forensic-science-undergraduate-minor)

Professor, Dennis M. Giever, Department Head

Associate Professors Keys, Lara, Posadas; Assistant Professors Alatorre, Natividad, Tapia, Valadez; College Associate Professors Corbett, Dimitrijevic, Joseph; Emeritus Professors Crowley, Gregware, Mays (Regents), Winfree


*MCJ Program Director

Criminal Justice Courses

C J 101G. Introduction to Criminal Justice
3 Credits
Examination of crime and justice within the broader social and cultural context of U.S. society from interdisciplinary social science perspectives. Includes critical analysis of criminal justice processes and the ethical, legal, and political factors affecting the exercise of discretion by criminal justice professionals.

C J 199. Special Topics in Criminal Justice I
1-3 Credits
Specific subjects to be announced in the Schedule of Classes. May be repeated under different topics for a maximum of 6 credits.

C J 205. Criminal Law
3 Credits
Rules, principles, and doctrines of criminal liability in the United States. The historical development, limits, and functions of the substantive criminal law. May be repeated up to 3 credits.

C J 210. The American Law Enforcement System
3 Credits
Historical and philosophical foundations of law and order. An in-depth examination of the various local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies.

C J 221. Fundamentals of Criminal Investigation
3 Credits
Investigation procedures from crime scene searches, collection of evidence, and case preparation. Community Colleges only. (Note: students completing C J 221 may not take C J 321.)

C J 230. Introduction to Corrections
3 Credits
Development of correctional philosophy, theory, and practice. Instructional and non-institutional alternatives available in the corrections process.

C J 250. Courts and the Criminal Justice System
3 Credits
Structures and functions of American courts. Roles of attorneys, judges, and other court personnel; operation of petit and grand juries, trial and appellate courts.

C J 293. Field Experience in Criminal Justice
3-6 Credits
Field experience in a public criminal justice agency or equivalent private sector organization. Supervised internship experience, conferences, and observations. Restricted to majors. Community Colleges only.

Prerequisites: C J 101G, prior arrangement and consent of instructor and a GPA of 2.0 or better in major.

C J 300. Introduction to Criminal Justice Research
3 Credits
Overview and evaluation of criminal justice research. Selection of research topics, methods of data selection and collection, analysis techniques, and presentation of findings.

Prerequisite: restricted to majors or consent of instructor.

C J 301. Advanced Research Methods
3 Credits
Study of selected quantitative and qualitative skills and their application to criminal justice research.

Prerequisite: Restricted to majors or consent of instructor.

C J 302. Crime, Justice and Society
3 Credits
Through critical analysis students build a rich understanding of the role of crime in our contemporary landscape and explore ideas and practices associated with justice, victimization, criminality, morality and righteousness. The course cultivates knowledge & awareness of the interactions between socially constructed phenomena (race, class, power, ethnicity, economic structures) and popular beliefs, policies, and practices associated with crime, punishment, and formal social control. It is recommended that you complete three of the following English courses before enrolling in this class: ENGL 111G, 203G, 211G, 218G, & 311G. Restricted to: Criminal Justice majors.

C J 303. Introduction to Criminological Theory
3 Credits
Defining and measuring crime, crime causation, and the criminal behavior system, and their linkage to criminal justice policies, procedures, and practices. Completed two of the following: ENGL 111G, 203G, 211G, 218G, or 311G. Restricted to: C J majors.

Prerequisite(s): Restricted to majors or consent of the instructor and must have completed C J 300.

Corequisite(s): Must be enrolled or have completed third English writing class.

C J 304. Historical Perspectives of Criminal Justice Systems
3 Credits
Examines the precursors to and development of three distinct systems associated with crime and punishment in the United States: the Courts, the Police, & Corrections. By studying the historical context and sociopolitical backdrop in which theses institutions emerged and expanded students will come to a richer understanding of them and their attendant polices, practices, conventions, and assumptions. It is recommended that you complete three of the following English courses before enrolling in this class: ENGL 111G, 203G, 211G, 218G, & 311G. Restricted to: Criminal Justice majors.

Prerequisite(s): C J 300.

C J 306. Criminal Procedural Law
3 Credits
Legal analyses of the rights of criminal defendants; legal duties and responsibilities of criminal justice personnel in the processing of criminal defendants. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: C J majors.

Prerequisite(s): Restricted to majors, Forensic Science minors, or consent of instructor.
C J 307. Law of Evidence
3 Credits
Evidentiary rules and concepts and their application in a criminal trial. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: C J majors.
Prerequisite(s): Restricted to majors, Forensic Science minors, or consent of instructor.

C J 321. Criminal Investigation and Intelligence
3 Credits
Principles of criminal investigation and intelligence production; processing cases from complaint through crime scene search, identification and collection of evidence, interviewing and interrogation, and case preparation for courts. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: C J majors.
Prerequisite(s): Restricted to majors, Forensic Science minors, or consent of instructor.

C J 331. American Correctional Institutions
3 Credits
Structure, organization, and operations of United States jails and prisons. Overview of correctional standards and classification systems, emphasizing current theory and practice. Restricted to majors, Forensic Science minors, or consent of instructor.

C J 332. Correctional Law
3 Credits
Federal and state laws and rules of post-conviction procedures; rights of the convicted related to sentencing, appeals, clemency, and restoration of rights. Restricted to majors, Forensic Science minors, or consent of instructor.

C J 333. Juvenile Corrections
3 Credits
Development and implementation of juvenile facilities and community programs. Effectiveness of current corrections practices. Restricted to majors.

C J 345. Victimology
3 Credits
Study of risk factors in crime victimization, the impact of crimes upon victims, and the role of the victim in the criminal justice system. Restricted to majors or consent of instructor.

C J 346. Psychology and the Justice System
3 Credits
Analysis of psychological underpinnings of criminal behavior and the implications of these psychological principles for criminal justice policy. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to majors.
Prerequisite(s): Restricted to majors, Forensic Science minors, or consent of instructor.

C J 347. Sex Crimes
3 Credits
Dynamics of sex crimes for victims and offenders, plus consideration of the legal and correction systems’ response to sex crimes. Restricted to majors.

C J 348. Serial Killers
3 Credits
Overview and critical assessment of serial homicide and its relevance for contemporary U.S. society. Focus on factors influencing definitions and cultural understanding of serial homicide.
Prerequisite(s): 60 credit hours.

C J 360. The Juvenile Justice System
3 Credits
History, development, and philosophy behind a separate juvenile justice system. Role of the juvenile court, evaluation of juvenile law and procedure, and the processing of juvenile offenders. Restricted to majors or consent of instructor.

C J 380. Introduction to Terrorism
3 Credits
Overview of the phenomenon of terrorism, psychological and sociological theories of terrorism, and various contemporary governmental policies.

C J 391. Special Readings in Criminal Justice
1-3 Credits
Individually chosen subject areas not readily available in other courses. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits under different subtitles. Restricted to majors.
Prerequisites: at least a 2.5 GPA and consent of instructor.

C J 393. Internship in Criminal Justice
1-12 Credits
Field experience in a local, state, or federal criminal justice or private security agency. Includes orientation, observation, conferences, and work experience. Credits limited to six if student has taken C J 293. May be repeated for a maximum of 12 credits. Restricted to majors. Graded S/U.
Prerequisites: consent of instructor and GPA of 2.5 or better.

C J 399. New Mexico Law
3 Credits
Same as GOVT 399, JOUR 399, SOC 399, and HIST 399.

C J 405. Juvenile Courts and Law
3 Credits
History, development, and current status of juvenile courts. Legal status of juveniles in court and constitutional protections afforded them. Restricted to majors.

C J 410. Criminal Justice Administrative Systems
3 Credits
Administrative structures in criminal justice agencies and institutions; relationship of administrative structures to practical police, courts, and corrections problems. Restricted to majors or consent of instructor.

C J 412. Introduction to Security Technology and Loss Prevention
3 Credits
Private and public responses to security problems, including employee theft, perimeter security, and domestic or foreign terrorism; reviews related law and management practices.

C J 414. Race, Crime and Justice
3 Credits
Historical and contemporary analysis of the relationship between race and crime in the United States with emphasis upon human equality and fairness. Overview of racial and ethnic social categorizations and how they impact law and order.

C J 416. Global Perspectives on Youth and Drug Use
3 Credits
Overview of global drug use among young people, comparative legal structures, formal and informal responses. Restricted to C J, ANTH, GOVT, SOC, W S, S WK majors.

C J 417. Drugs In Our World
3 Credits
Comparative analysis of patterns and theories of drug use, formal government mitigation strategies.
C J 424. Forensic Law
3 Credits
Overview of the rules and issues related to the use of scientific information in the legal process. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: C J majors.
Prerequisite(s): C J major, Forensic Science minors, or consent of instructor.

C J 425. Issues in Ethics, Law, and Criminal Justice
3 Credits
Examination of the key ethical and decision-making dilemmas facing professionals working in the field of law and criminal justice. Prerequisite: restricted to majors or consent of instructor. 

C J 427. Race and Crime in Film
3 Credits
Critical analysis of film where messages relating race and crime are present, with emphasis on how this imagery informs problem definition, policies, and practice within the criminal justice system. Prerequisite(s): 60 credit hours. 

C J 428. Mexican-American and Issues of Social Justice
3 Credits
In this course we will explore and discuss social issues related to the Mexican American community in the U.S., with special emphasis on their collective historical struggles and contributions to society. We will discuss the political, economic and cultural forces that exemplify their experience as a “whole.”
Prerequisite(s): Students must have completed C J 300 or research methods equivalent or consent from the instructor. 

C J 429. Immigration & Justice
3 Credits
This course is designed to introduce undergraduate students to the complexities of immigration in the United States through a social justice lens. Students will explore the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, and class in immigration through different groups’ historical and contemporary experiences, including immigrants’ experience with the criminal justice system.
Prerequisite(s): Student must have completed C J 300 or Research Methods equivalent or consent of the instructor. 

C J 430. The U.S. Supreme Court and the Criminal Justice System
3 Credits
History and workings of the U.S. Supreme Court in the context of the criminal justice system from writs of certiorari to last minute appeals in death penalty cases, including study of specific U.S. Supreme Court cases in the areas of criminal law, criminal procedural law, 8th amendment prison sentencing issues, and death penalty cases. Consent of Instructor required. Restricted to: Criminal Justice majors.

C J 431. Family Violence and the Law
3 Credits
This course will examine how practitioners are involved in the criminal justice system in areas of family violence including: child physical abuse; child sexual abuse; child neglect; child ritualistic abuse; child exploitation; sibling abuse; intimate partner abuse; stalking; sexual abuse and elder abuse. This course will be helpful for those who wish to go into law enforcement or victim’s advocacy work. Restricted to: Criminal Justice majors.

C J 432. Issues in Criminal Justice
3 Credits
Seminar on problems and conflicts encountered in major criminal justice issues. Topics announced in the Schedule of Classes. May be repeated for unlimited credits under different subtitles.

C J 433. Women and Justice
3 Credits
Critical analysis of violence and systems of justice along border regions. Examines causes and correlates of violence experienced by those living in border regions and the social responses to that violence.

C J 434. Probation, Parole, and Community Corrections
3 Credits
Structure, organization, and operation of probation, parole, and other community-based correctional programs in the U.S. Overview of historical and recent trends in the supervision of offenders in the community and in the development of alternatives to incarceration. Analysis of issues related to community correctional policies and practices. Restricted to majors.

C J 435. Political Penology
3 Credits
Comparative analysis of incarceration and sanctions as punishment for crimes of conscience, religious intolerance, and dissidence.

C J 436. Courts and Sentencing
3 Credits
This course will focus on the structure, organization, and operation of the state and federal court systems in the United States. It examines courtroom decision making and dynamics of courthouse justice—prosecutorial discretion, plea bargaining practices, jury and judicial decision making and sentencing. Additional topics will include racial, gender and class disparities in sentencing outcomes and the impact of recent reforms directed at the criminal court system. Restricted to: Criminal Justice majors.

C J 437. Wrongful Convictions
3 Credits
This course will address causes (e.g. problems in witness identification, forensics, police and attorney conduct) as well as results of erroneous dispositions (e.g. compensation, media dynamics, possible reforms) in a critical analysis. Appropriate for prospective police, legal, and policy professionals. Restricted to: Criminal Justice majors.

C J 440V. Comparative Criminal Justice Systems
3 Credits
Cross-national study of selected Western and non-Western legal systems. Comparison of structures and functions of police, court systems, and corrections in different systems.

C J 449. Senior Seminar
3 Credits
Problems and conflicts encountered in major attempts to control crime. Restricted to majors.
Prerequisite(s): C J 101, C J 205, C J 210, C J 230, C J 250, C J 300, C J 301, 90 credit hours completed.

C J 451. Border Violence and Justice
3 Credits
Critical analysis of violence and systems of justice along border regions. Examines causes and correlates of violence experienced by those living in border regions and the social responses to that violence.

C J 453. Women and Justice
3 Credits
Critical analysis of the impact of the criminal justice system, race and class upon the lives of women. Restricted to majors.

C J 454. Human Trafficking
3 Credits
C J 455. Feminist Research Methods
3 Credits
Feminist research practices and methodologies utilized in various disciplines. Definitions of research, what constitutes valid inquiry, how research can be feminist, and what it means to do interdisciplinary work. Same as W S 455.

C J 484. Hate Crimes & Groups
3 Credits
Explores the phenomenon of hate-motivated violence. Examines the hate crime laws, organized hate groups, and social theories attempting to explain violent hate.

C J 501. Research Methods in Criminal Justice
3 Credits
Research design, methods of data collection and analysis, and preparation of research reports. Restricted to majors.
Prerequisite: C J major or consent of instructor.

C J 511. Nature of Crime
3 Credits
Defining and measuring crime, crime causation, and criminal behavior systems. Restricted to majors.
Prerequisite: C J major or consent of instructor.

C J 514. Advanced Race, Crime, and Justice
3 Credits
Advanced analysis of the historical and contemporary relationship between race and crime in the United States with emphasis upon human equality and fairness. Overview of racial and ethnic social categorizations and how they impact law and order.

C J 515. A Course on Punishment
3 Credits
Exploration and analysis of the idea and practice of punishment through a variety of philosophical perspectives, seeking to understand its moral and practical viability as employed in contemporary society, including its application within the criminal justice system.

C J 520. Advanced Girls, Women & Crime
3 Credits
Advanced critical social science analysis of concepts of violence and justice as experienced by women impacted by the criminal justice system. Restricted to C J, W S majors. Crosslisted with: W S 520

C J 521. Law and Social Control
3 Credits
The development and implementation of criminal law. Consideration of functionalist, conflict, and interpretive theories and research. Restricted to majors.
Prerequisite: C J major or consent of instructor.

C J 524. Forensic Law
3 Credits
Rules and policy implications related to the use of scientific information in legal process. Restricted to majors.
Prerequisite: C J major or consent of instructor.

C J 525. Issues in Ethics, Law, and Criminal Justice
3 Credits
Examination of the key ethical and decision-making dilemmas facing professionals working in the fields of law and criminal justice. Restricted to majors.

C J 527. Advanced Race & Crime in Film
3 Credits
Advanced critical analysis of film where messages relating race and crime are present, with emphasis on how this imagery informs problem definition, policies, and practice within the criminal justice system.

C J 529. Advanced Immigration & Justice
3 Credits
Advanced analysis of the complexities of immigration in the United States through a social justice lens. Students will explore the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, and class in immigration through different groups’ historical and contemporary experiences, including immigrants’ experience with the criminal justice system.

C J 530. Advanced U.S. Supreme Court and the Criminal Justice System
3 Credits
Advanced history and workings of the U.S. Supreme Court in the context of the criminal justice system from writs of certiorari to last minute appeals in death penalty cases, including study of specific U.S. Supreme Court cases in the areas of criminal law, criminal procedural law, 8th amendment prison sentencing issues, and death penalty cases. Restricted to: Criminal Justice majors.

C J 531. Advanced Family Violence and the Law
3 Credits
This course will examine how practitioners are involved in the criminal justice system in areas of family violence including: child physical abuse; child sexual abuse; child neglect; child ritualistic abuse; child exploitation; sibling abuse; intimate partner abuse; stalking; sexual abuse and elder abuse. This course will be helpful for those who wish to go into law enforcement or victim's advocacy work. Restricted to: Criminal Justice majors.

C J 532. Advanced Issues in Criminal Justice (f, s, sum)
3 Credits
Seminar on problems and conflicts encountered in major criminal justice issues. Topics announced in the Schedule of Classes. May be repeated under different subtitles for unlimited credit.

C J 535. Advanced Political Penology
3 Credits
Advanced comparative analysis of incarceration and sanctions as punishment for crimes of conscience, religious intolerance, and dissidence.

C J 537. Advanced Wrongful Convictions
3 Credits
This course will address causes (e.g. problems in witness identification, forensics, police and attorney conduct) as well as results of erroneous dispositions (e.g. compensation, media dynamics, possible reforms) in a critical analysis. Appropriate for prospective police, legal, and policy professionals. Restricted to: Criminal Justice majors.

C J 541. Seminar in Criminal Justice Policy Analysis and Planning
3 Credits
Seminar on policy development, planning and implementation processes in criminal justice. Links formal policy goals as they relate to theory and outcomes. Topics announced in the Schedule of Classes. Restricted to majors.
Prerequisite: C J major or consent of instructor.
C J 545. Advanced Victimology
3 Credits
Study of risk factors in crime victimization, the impact of crimes upon victims, and the role of the victim in the criminal justice system. Consideration of the impact of criminal justice policy on victim outcomes. Same as W S 545.

C J 554. Advanced Human Trafficking
3 Credits

C J 555. Advanced Feminist Research Methods
3 Credits
Advanced feminist research practices and methodologies utilized in various disciplines. Definitions of research, what constitutes valid inquiry, how research can be feminist, and what it means to do interdisciplinary work. Same as W S 555.

C J 560. Juvenile Justice Systems
3 Credits
Policy development and operations in police, court, and correctional agencies in response to juveniles. Analysis of programs designed to identify, prevent and treat juvenile offenders. C J 570. Probation and Parole 3 cr. Advanced analysis of goals, theories and practices of all forms of correction in the community, including probation, parole, plus other intermediate sanctions. Restricted to majors.

C J 581. Community Policing
3 Credits
Overview and analysis of community policing issues from various perspectives. Analysis of strategies that facilitate police and community collaboration. Restricted to majors.

C J 591. Directed Readings in Criminal Justice
3 Credits
Supervised review of literature in specialized areas of the nature of crime, law and social control, and criminal justice administration. Consent of instructor required.

C J 592. Independent Research
1-3 Credits
Design and execution of a criminal justice research project. Requires a written paper in standard format, including literature review, hypotheses, methodology, findings, and conclusions.

C J 593. Internship
3-6 Credits
Supervised placement in an applied or research setting in criminal justice. An in-depth written report of the project is required. Restricted to C J majors. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits. Graded S/U.

Prerequisites: introductory graduate course in the area of the internship and consent of the internship supervisor.

C J 599. Master's Thesis
15 Credits
Thesis.

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