Department of Criminal Justice

Mission Statement
Our mission is to provide criminal justice and criminology education, research, and service to students, practitioners, policymakers, and the community by creating an intellectually challenging environment that promotes collegiality and instills the highest level of ethical standards in the pursuit of informed policy and practice.

The Department of Criminal Justice offers a Master of Science degree in Criminal Justice and Criminology.

Master of Science Degree in Criminal Justice and Criminology
The Master of Science (M.S.) degree in Criminal Justice and Criminology is designed to provide students with competency in research, policy planning, evaluation, agency management, and preparation for continued graduate study in criminal justice and criminology. The program assists students to develop and apply research expertise toward the resolution of contemporary practice and policy issues.

Program Admission Requirements
To qualify for unconditional admission, applicants must satisfy University-wide graduate admission requirements and submit all transcripts as well as two letters of recommendation, a resume and a personal statement. Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test scores are optional. An applicant admitted unconditionally as a degree-seeking student must possess a baccalaureate degree from an accredited university or equivalent training at a foreign institution; have a grade point average of 3.0 or better in the last 60 semester credit hours of undergraduate work as well as all previous graduate work; have 18 hours in criminal justice, criminology, or a closely-related discipline, or professional experience in the justice system; be in good standing at the last institution attended; and the recommendation of the Criminal Justice and Criminology Graduate Program Committee. Students who do not meet these criteria may be admitted conditionally or on probation outside of the discipline in related UTSA graduate programs with approval of the Graduate Advisor of Record (GAR).

Degree Requirements
The minimum number of semester credit hours required for the degree, exclusive of other study to remove deficiencies, is 36. Degree candidates must complete the following three requirements:

A. 15 semester credit hours of core courses: 15
- CRJ 5073 Research Methods
- CRJ 5083 Quantitative Analysis
- CRJ 5103 The Criminal Justice System
- CRJ 5123 Criminal Justice Policy
- CRJ 6373 Criminological Theory

B. 15 semester credit hours of electives as follows: 15
1. At least 9 semester credit hours of prescribed electives should be taken from the required courses listed below:
   - CRJ 5133 Justice Organizations and Administration

   CRJ 6103 Seminar on Topics in Theory of Crime and Justice
   CRJ 6123 Seminar on Topics in Research Methods
   CRJ 6203 Seminar on Topics in Corrections Policy
   CRJ 6213 Gender and Crime
   CRJ 6233 Minorities and Crime
   CRJ 6303 Seminar on Topics in Policing/CP
   CRJ 6343 Study Abroad: International Crime and Justice
   CRJ 6383 Capstone Course
   CRJ 6403 Seminar on Topics in Law and Society
   CRJ 6951 Independent Study
   CRJ 6953 Independent Study
   CRJ 6961 Comprehensive Examination

2. Up to 6 semester credit hours of free electives may be taken outside of the discipline in related UTSA graduate programs with approval of the Graduate Advisor of Record (GAR).

C. 6 semester credit hours consisting of one of the following options.

   1. Nonthesis Option (Written Comprehensive Examination): Students who select the nonthesis option are required to take the written comprehensive examination and complete two additional electives (6 hours). It is required that one of these additional electives be CRJ 6383 Capstone Course. It is graded as Credit/Non-Credit. This course provides a review of the five core courses from which all exam questions will be drawn. CRJ 6383 Capstone Course will operate as a stand-alone course. A student must complete this course to satisfy the requirements of the degree, but can also receive credit for this course without successfully completing the comprehensive exam. In the event that a student does not pass all five sections, the student must re-take the comprehensive exam in a subsequent semester. Students may only re-take the comprehensive exam twice after the initial attempt; students have one calendar year (two semesters) from their initial attempt to successfully pass the comprehensive exam. Students do not need to re-enroll in CRJ 6383 to re-take the comprehensive exam. Students not enrolled in any other courses would be required to enroll in 1 credit hour of CRJ 6961 Comprehensive Examination in the subsequent long semester in which the student wishes to re-take the comprehensive exam.

   2. Thesis Option: This option is available only with permission from an instructor and the Graduate Advisor of Record. Students electing the Thesis option are required to enroll in CRJ 6993 or CRJ 6996 Master’s Thesis for a total of 6 credit hours, which includes completion of an oral comprehensive exam (i.e., successful proposal defense). Students failing to complete all requirements of the thesis option within the 6 credit hours would be required to enroll for 1 credit hour of CRJ 6991 Master’s Thesis if no other courses are being taken that term. The Master’s thesis requires compliance with UTSA thesis requirements and a successful final thesis defense.

Total Credit Hours 36
NOTE: Students are expected to complete the majority of core courses prior to enrolling in elective courses. Students are encouraged to enroll in CRJ 5073 Research Methods, CRJ 5103 The Criminal Justice System, and CRJ 6373 Criminological Theory in their first semester and CRJ 5083 Quantitative Analysis and CRJ 5123 Criminal Justice Policy in their second semester.