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 justice 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 as degree-seeking students to develop and apply research expertise toward the resolution of contemporary practice and policy issues.

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 requirements:

A. 15 semester credit hours of core courses: 15
   
   CRJ 5073 Research Methods
   CRJ 5083 Quantitative Analysis
   CRJ 5123 Justice Policy Formation and Implementation
   CRJ 5133 Management of Justice Organizations
   CRJ 6373 Crime Theory and Justice Policy

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 5323 Criminal Justice Program Evaluation
   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 Issues in the Criminal Justice System
   CRJ 6233 Minorities in the Criminal Justice System
   CRJ 6303 Seminar on Topics in Policing and Crime Control
   CRJ 6343 Study Abroad: International Criminal Justice
   CRJ 6363 Paradigms of Justice Policy
   CRJ 6383 Capstone Course
   CRJ 6403 Seminar on Topics in Law, Society and Justice Policy
   CRJ 6951 Independent Study
   CRJ 6953 Independent Study
   CRJ 6961 Comprehensive Examination

2. Thesis Option: This option is available only with permission from the 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 Comprehensive Examination in the subsequent long semester in which the student wishes to re-take the comprehensive exam. Students not enrolled in any other courses would be required to enroll in 1 credit hour of CRJ 6991 Comprehensive Examination in the subsequent long semester in which the student wishes to re-take the comprehensive exam.

3. 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 6991 Comprehensive Examination in the subsequent long semester in which the student wishes to re-take the comprehensive exam.

4. 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).

5. Total Credit Hours: 36

   1. At least 9 semester credit hours of prescribed electives should be taken from the required courses listed below:
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 5123 Justice Policy Formation and Implementation, and CRJ 6373 Crime Theory and Justice Policy in their first semester and CRJ 5083 Quantitative Analysis and CRJ 5133 Management of Justice Organizations in their second semester.

Criminal Justice (CRJ) Courses

CRJ 5073. Research Methods. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisite: CRJ 3013 or equivalent. Introduction to methodologies used in justice research. Topics include research design, sampling theory, data collection, measurement, and analysis.

CRJ 5083. Quantitative Analysis. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisite: CRJ 5073 or equivalent. Advanced practice in research design, quantitative techniques, and statistical software used in criminal justice research. Familiarizes students with conventions for statistical report writing and data presentation.

CRJ 5123. Justice Policy Formation and Implementation. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Detailed study of policy formation and implementation process, stakeholder networks, agenda setting, policy crafting, constituency building, consideration of alternatives, political decision making and resolution, short-term and long-term implementation issues, and role of evaluation and evaluators.

CRJ 5133. Management of Justice Organizations. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
The study of management theory, organizational dynamics, leadership and administration research related to public and private justice organizations, case studies and simulations of common administrative problems, operational policies, and implementation and evaluation.

CRJ 5323. Criminal Justice Program Evaluation. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisite: CRJ 5083 or equivalent. Introduction to program evaluation strategies and methods. Surveys implementation, process, and outcome evaluation research designs and the utilization of both quantitative and qualitative analytic techniques. Ethical dilemmas and real-world barriers common to evaluation and evaluators are examined.

CRJ 6103. Seminar on Topics in Theory of Crime and Justice. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Consideration of selected topics related to the theory of crime and justice. Explores particular theories or perspectives of crime and its implications for justice policy. Topics may focus on traditional or emerging theories of crime and justice. May be repeated for credit when topics vary, but no more than 6 hours will apply to the Master's degree.

CRJ 6123. Seminar on Topics in Research Methods. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisite: CRJ 5083 or equivalent. Study of qualitative or quantitative methods not addressed as part of the regular course offerings. Topics may include systems analysis in criminal justice, interrupted time-series analysis, and qualitative methods in criminal justice research. May be repeated for credit when topics vary, but no more than 6 hours will apply to the Master's degree.

CRJ 6203. Seminar on Topics in Corrections Policy. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Consideration of selected topics in the field of corrections. Topics may include offender classification, case management, pretrial supervision, management of confinement facilities, juvenile justice, special needs populations, comparative corrections, offender re-entry, restorative justice, and criminal sanctions on individuals or corporations. May be repeated for credit when topics vary, but no more than 6 hours will apply to the Master's degree.

CRJ 6213. Gender Issues in the Criminal Justice System. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
This course uses an interdisciplinary approach to provide students with an overview of gender issues in the criminal justice system. The course integrates research design and both qualitative and quantitative methods to develop a graduate level understanding of gender and justice policy issues. Students will learn to examine issues and problems associated with changes in the representation of men and women in justice organizations, explore the internal/psychological and structural barriers to equal treatment of men and women in the justice system, as well as examine employment and policy decisions within a framework of traditional and nontraditional gender role expectations and justice system needs.

CRJ 6233. Minorities in the Criminal Justice System. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
This course is an interdisciplinary exploration of the historical and contemporary differences and similarities in the study of minorities within the criminal justice system. The course integrates a variety of interdisciplinary perspectives used in the past to study minority issues and to empirically test the most important ideas concerning these topics. Topics for discussion may include the following: deviance, juvenile delinquency, substance use, gang membership, images of criminality, as well as involvement with police, courts, and correctional institutions.

CRJ 6303. Seminar on Topics in Policing and Crime Control. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Consideration of selected topics related to police and private sector crime control practices. Topics may include the roles, responsibilities and limitations of public and private enforcement; surveillance, use of force, minority relations, extralegal practices, labor relations, security operations, terrorism, and national security. May be repeated for credit when topics vary, but no more than 6 hours will apply to the Master's degree.

CRJ 6343. Study Abroad: International Criminal Justice. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. A lecture/seminar course associated with a study abroad program related to the study of cross-cultural differences in crime and applications of criminal justice systems and practice. Involves international travel and field trips. May be repeated for credit when the destination country varies.

CRJ 6363. Paradigms of Justice Policy. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisite: CRJ 5123 or equivalent. Examination of the major paradigms of justice policy from early deistic and philosophical perspectives to modern and postmodern perspectives of social justice, and exploration of policy implications of these perspectives.

CRJ 6373. Crime Theory and Justice Policy. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Examination of theoretical perspectives on crime and their impact on justice policy. Includes progression of criminology as an interdisciplinary field, theory construction and evaluation, and approaches to preventing and controlling crime in the United States.
CRJ 6383. Capstone Course. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisite: Completion of the 15 semester credit hours of core courses and a minimum of 9 semester credit hours of electives. This course is designed to prepare students for the comprehensive examination and covers topics including but not limited to: Research Methods, Quantitative Analysis, Justice Policy Formation and Implementation, Management of Justice Organizations, and Crime Theory and Justice Policy. The grade report for the course is either “CR” (satisfactory performance on the Comprehensive Examination) or “NC” (unsatisfactory performance on the Comprehensive Examination).

CRJ 6403. Seminar on Topics in Law, Society and Justice Policy. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Consideration of selected topics related to law and society issues. Topics may include decision making by groups or individuals, criminal law and courts, international law, sentencing reforms, and history of law. May be repeated for credit when topics vary, but no more than 6 hours will apply to the Master’s degree.

CRJ 6951. Independent Study. (0-0) 1 Credit Hour.
Prerequisites: Graduate standing and permission in writing (form available) of the instructor and the student’s Graduate Advisor of Record. Independent reading, research, discussion, and/or writing under the direction of a faculty member. For students needing specialized work not usually available as part of the regular course offerings. May be repeated for credit, but no more than 6 hours will apply to the Master’s degree.

CRJ 6953. Independent Study. (0-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisites: Graduate standing and permission in writing (form available) of the instructor and the student’s Graduate Advisor of Record. Independent reading, research, discussion, and/or writing under the direction of a faculty member. For students needing specialized work not usually available as part of the regular course offerings. May be repeated for credit, but no more than 6 hours will apply to the Master’s degree.

CRJ 6981. Comprehensive Examination. (0-0) 1 Credit Hour.
Prerequisite: Approval of the Graduate Advisor of Record to take the Comprehensive Examination. May be repeated as many times as approved by the Graduate Advisor of Record. Enrollment is required each term in which the Comprehensive Examination is taken if no other courses are being taken that term. The grade report for the course is either “CR” (satisfactory performance on the Comprehensive Examination) or “NC” (unsatisfactory performance on the Comprehensive Examination).

CRJ 6983. Justice Policy Research Project. (0-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisite: Permission of the Graduate Advisor of Record and Faculty Advisor. A formal policy research project involving interaction with one or more justice agencies, conducted by the student under the supervision of a faculty member. May be repeated for credit, but no more than 6 hours may be applied to the Master’s degree. Credit will be awarded upon submission and acceptance of the formal research project report.

CRJ 6991. Master’s Thesis. (0-0) 1 Credit Hour.
Prerequisites: Completion of the core courses (15 semester credit hours), and at least 9 semester credit hours of electives (for a total of 24 hours of graduate work), and permission of the Graduate Advisor of Record and Faculty Thesis Advisor. Oral comprehensive examination, thesis preparation, and defense. May be repeated for credit but no more than 6 hours will apply to the Master’s degree. Credit will be awarded upon successful completion of the thesis.

CRJ 6993. Master’s Thesis. (0-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisites: Completion of the core courses (15 semester credit hours), and at least 9 semester credit hours of electives (for a total of 24 hours of graduate work), and permission of the Graduate Advisor of Record and Faculty Thesis Advisor. Oral comprehensive examination, thesis preparation, and defense. May be repeated for credit but no more than 6 hours will apply to the Master’s degree. Credit will be awarded upon successful completion of the thesis.

CRJ 6996. Master’s Thesis. (0-0) 6 Credit Hours.
Prerequisites: Completion of the core courses (15 semester credit hours), and at least 9 semester credit hours of electives (for a total of 24 hours of graduate work), and permission of the Graduate Advisor of Record and Faculty Thesis Advisor. Oral comprehensive examination, thesis preparation, and defense. May be repeated for credit but no more than 6 hours will apply to the Master’s degree. Credit will be awarded upon successful completion of the thesis.