

# CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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| <b>Graduate Program Head</b> | L. Marvin Overby   |
| <b>Program Code</b>          | CRIMJ  |
| <b>Campus(es)</b>            | Harrisburg (M.A.)  |
| <b>Degrees Conferred</b>     | Master of Arts (M.A.)<br>Integrated B.S. in Criminal Justice<br>and M.A. in Criminal Justice   |
| <b>The Graduate Faculty</b>  | View ( <a href="https://secure.gradsch.psu.edu/gpms/?searchType=fac&amp;prog=CRIMJ">https://secure.gradsch.psu.edu/gpms/?searchType=fac&amp;prog=CRIMJ</a> ) |

The program reflects the numerous complexities of the discipline. It provides academic leadership for students to work within corrections, institutionalized and non-institutionalized settings, victim services, adult and juvenile services, policing and law enforcement, private security, courts, and other human service organizations serving the clients of these institutions. It also helps develop research acumen for those students who may wish to consider doctoral studies.

Strong ties developed in state, local, and federal level law enforcement, corrections, drug treatment, victimization, and crime control policy organizations provide research and learning opportunities for interested students.

The degree may be earned by full or part-time study. Most courses will be offered in the evening, although some will be offered during the day or on weekends.

## Admission Requirements

Applicants apply for admission to the program via the J. Jeffrey and Ann Marie Fox Graduate School application for admission (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/admissions/how-to-apply/>). Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-300 Admissions Policies (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>).

- A completed Graduate School application for admission (<http://www.gradschool.psu.edu/prospective-students/how-to-apply/>) with the application fee.
- Official transcripts from all post-secondary institutions attended (<http://www.gradschool.psu.edu/prospective-students/how-to-apply/new-applicants/requirements-for-graduate-admission/>).
- Three letters of recommendation.
- A brief (two-page) statement of purpose or a writing sample.
- Minimum GPA of a 3.0 for the last 60 credits of undergraduate study. Satisfactory scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT), or Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) are required if the GPA is less than 3.0. *Note: All students who seek funding must take one of these standardized tests, preferably the GRE.*
- Some foundational course work may be required for those students who did not major in criminal justice as an undergraduate. This decision will be made by the MACJ Program Coordinator after a close review of the undergraduate transcript.
- In exceptional cases, the program may also approve admission by reason of special backgrounds, abilities, and interests.

The language of instruction at Penn State is English. English proficiency test scores (TOEFL/IELTS) may be required for international applicants.

See GCAC-305 Admission Requirements for International Students (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-300/gcac-305-admission-requirements-international-students/>) for more information.

## Degree Requirements

### Master of Arts (M.A.)

Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Policies. (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>)

The thesis track requires 30 credits. Six of the credits (CRIMJ 600) will be for the thesis.

The master's paper track requires 30 credits. Three of these credits will be awarded for successful completion of a master's paper, for which a student will register for three credits of CRIMJ 594.

All credits must be at the 400, 500, 600, or 800 level, with a minimum of 18 credits at the 500 or 600 level. A minimum of 24 credits must be at the 500, 600, or 800 level.

A minimum grade-point average of a 3.0 must be earned for course work taken as a graduate student.

Students are required to take the following courses: CRIMJ 500, CRIMJ 501, CRIMJ 502, CRIMJ 503, and CRIMJ 504. Students must complete a 9 credit concentration. Students in the non-thesis track will also be required to complete an additional 3-credit elective. A list of courses required for each concentration and additional approved elective courses is maintained by the graduate program office.

| Code  | Title  | Credits   |
|---|--|-----------|
| <b>Required Courses</b>   |  |           |
| CRIMJ 500   | Advanced Criminological Theory                 | 3         |
| CRIMJ 501   | Advanced Research Methods for Criminal Justice | 3         |
| CRIMJ 502   | Public Policy and the Criminal Justice System  | 3         |
| CRIMJ 503   | Advanced Statistics in Criminal Justice        | 3         |
| CRIMJ 504   | Criminal Justice Organization and Management   | 3         |
| <i>Concentration</i> <sup>1</sup>   |  | 9         |
| <b>Culminating Experience</b>   |  | 6         |
| Thesis Track: 6 credits of CRIMJ 600  |  |           |
| Master's Paper Track: 3 credits of CRIMJ 594 and a 3-credit elective <sup>1</sup> |  |           |
| <b>Total Credits</b>  |  | <b>30</b> |

<sup>1</sup> A list of courses required for each concentration and additional approved elective courses is maintained by the graduate program office.

Students who believe they have completed a course substantially similar to one of the specific course requirements may apply to have their previous work evaluated for the purposes of exemption to that requirement. If approved, another course will be taken in place of that requirement.

Credits earned at other institutions but not used to earn a degree may be applied toward the requirements for a graduate degree, subject to restrictions outlined in GCAC-309 Transfer Credit (<http://>

[gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-300/transfer-credit/](http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-300/transfer-credit/)).

## Integrated Undergrad-Grad Programs

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

This Integrated Undergraduate/Graduate (IUG) degree program combines the B.S. in Criminal Justice with the M.A. in Criminal Justice offered at the following campuses:

#### Undergraduate Degree

- Harrisburg
- World Campus

#### Graduate Degree

- Harrisburg

The graduate portion of this IUG is currently offered as face-to-face residential instruction. While the undergraduate curriculum for this IUG may be completed at multiple campuses, the ease and feasibility of completing the integrated program may be heavily dependent upon the location of the graduate instruction. Please discuss the feasibility of completing the IUG with a representative for the graduate program before beginning the application process.

Requirements listed here are in addition to requirements listed in GCAC-210 Integrated Undergraduate-Graduate (IUG) Degree Programs (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-200/gcac-210-integrated-undergraduate-graduate-degree-programs/>).

The Criminal Justice Program offers an integrated B.S./M.A. program that is designed to allow academically superior baccalaureate students enrolled in the Criminal Justice major to obtain both the B.S. and the M.A. degrees in Criminal Justice within five years of study. The first two years of undergraduate coursework typically include the University General Education requirements and lower-level courses. In the third year, students typically take upper-division coursework in Criminal Justice and define areas of interest. The fourth year involves graduate-level Criminal Justice coursework including required courses in Criminal Justice Theory and Policy (CRIMJ 500; CRIMJ 502). The fifth and final year of the program typically consists of graduate course work in Criminal Justice including Advanced Research Methods and Statistics in Criminal Justice (CRIMJ 501; CRIMJ 503) and identification of an original research project that will culminate in the completion of a thesis (CRIMJ 600) or master's paper (CRIMJ 594).

### Admission Requirements

Applicants apply for admission to the program via the J. Jeffrey and Ann Marie Fox Graduate School application for admission (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/admissions/how-to-apply/>). Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-300 Admissions Policies (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>).

The number of openings in the integrated B.S./M.A. program is limited. Admission is selective based on specific criteria and the unqualified recommendation of faculty. Applicants to the integrated program:

1. Must be enrolled in the B.S. program in Criminal Justice and meet the admission requirements of the Criminal Justice M.A. program at Harrisburg.
2. Must apply to the program via the Graduate School application for admission (<http://www.gradschool.psu.edu/prospective-students/how-to-apply/>), and must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate School.
3. Must have completed entrance to their undergraduate major and have completed no less than 60 credits. Students must be admitted no later than the end of the second week of the semester preceding the semester of expected conferral of the undergraduate degree. Transfer students must have completed at least 15 credits at Penn State to enroll in an IUG.
4. Must submit transcript(s) of undergraduate work taken outside of Penn State, recommendations from two faculty members, writing sample, and statement of goals.
5. Must have an overall GPA at or above 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in undergraduate coursework and a GPA at or above 3.25 in all coursework completed for their major.
6. Must present a plan of study approved by the student's adviser in the application process. The plan should cover the entire time period of the integrated program, and it should be reviewed periodically with an adviser as the student advances through the program.

### Degree Requirements

Students must fulfill all requirements for each degree in order to be awarded that degree, subject to the double-counting of credits as outlined below. Degree requirements for the B.S. in Criminal Justice are listed in the Undergraduate Bulletin (<http://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/>). Degree requirements for the M.A. degree are listed in the Degree Requirements section. Up to 12 credits may be double-counted towards the degree requirements for both the graduate and undergraduate degrees; a minimum of 50% of the double-counted courses must be at the 500 or 800 level. Independent study courses and credits associated with the culminating experience for the graduate degree cannot be double-counted.

| Code   | Title  | Credits |
|--|--|---------|
| <b>Courses Eligible to Double Count for Both Degrees</b> |  |         |
| CRIMJ 450W   | Senior Seminar                                 | 3       |
| CRIMJ 465  | Ethics in Criminal Justice                     | 3       |
| CRIMJ 500  | Advanced Criminological Theory                 | 3       |
| CRIMJ 501  | Advanced Research Methods for Criminal Justice | 3       |
| CRIMJ 502  | Public Policy and the Criminal Justice System  | 3       |
| CRIMJ 504  | Criminal Justice Organization and Management   | 3       |

Students must sequence their courses so all undergraduate degree requirements are fulfilled before taking courses to count solely towards the graduate degree. Students are expected to complete the undergraduate degree requirements within the typical time to degree for the undergraduate major. In the semester in which the undergraduate degree requirements will be completed, IUG students must apply to graduate, and the undergraduate degree should be conferred at the next appropriate Commencement. If students accepted into the IUG program are unable to complete the M.A. degree, they are still eligible to receive their undergraduate degree if all the undergraduate degree requirements have been satisfied.

## Minor

A graduate minor is available in any approved graduate major or dual-title program. The default requirements for a graduate minor are stated in Graduate Council policy GCAC-218 Minors (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-200/gcac-218-minors/>).

## Student Aid

Graduate assistantships available to students in this program and other forms of student aid are described in the Tuition & Funding (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/funding/>) section of the J. Jeffrey and Ann Marie Fox Graduate School's website. Students on graduate assistantships must adhere to the course load limits (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gsad/gsad-900/gsad-901-graduate-assistants/>) set by the Fox Graduate School.

## Courses

Graduate courses carry numbers from 500 to 699 and 800 to 899. Advanced undergraduate courses numbered between 400 and 499 may be used to meet some graduate degree requirements when taken by graduate students. Courses below the 400 level may not. A graduate student may register for or audit these courses in order to make up deficiencies or to fill in gaps in previous education but not to meet requirements for an advanced degree.

Criminal Justice (CRIMJ) Course List (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/university-course-descriptions/graduate/crimj/>)

## Contact

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| <b>Campus</b>  | Harrisburg   |
| <b>Graduate Program Head</b>   | L. Marvin Overby   |
| <b>Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)<br/>or Professor-in-Charge (PIC)</b> | Eileen Michelle Ahlin  |
| <b>Program Contact</b>   | Kristen Elliott<br>School of Public Affairs<br>777 West Harrisburg Pike, 160W<br>Olmsted Bldg.<br>Middletown PA 17057<br>kme13@psu.edu<br>(717) 948-6648   |
| <b>Program Website</b>   | View ( <a href="https://harrisburg.psu.edu/public-affairs/criminal-justice/master-arts-criminal-justice/">https://harrisburg.psu.edu/public-affairs/criminal-justice/master-arts-criminal-justice/</a> ) |