

CRIMINOLOGY

Graduate Program Head	Michelle Frisco
Program Code	CRIM
Campus(es)	University Park (Ph.D., M.A.)
Degrees Conferred	Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Master of Arts (M.A.)
The Graduate Faculty	View (https://secure.gradsch.psu.edu/gpms/?searchType=fac&prog=CRIM)

The graduate program in Criminology is for students seeking the Ph.D. degree. Students may either enter the program with an M.A. degree or earn that degree en route to the Ph.D. program. The program offers an advanced education on various aspects of criminology to persons interested in research careers in academia and public service.

The graduate program emphasizes theory and research on crime and justice, research and statistical methodology, and substantive knowledge about crime and its control.

Admission Requirements

Applicants apply for admission to the program via the Graduate School application for admission (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-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/>).

Applications from students with either the B.A. or M.A. degree will be accepted through early January for admission in the fall of the following academic year. Selection is based on:

- 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 from persons familiar with the applicant's academic performance,
- a statement of goals,
- a sample of written work such as a term paper,
- and Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) verbal, quantitative, and writing scores.

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/>)

Students entering the program with the B.A. degree will first earn the M.A. degree. Thirty-seven credits of course work at the 400, 500, 600, or 800 level, with a minimum of 18 credits at the 500 and 600 level, combined,

and a master's thesis, including 6 credits of thesis research, are required for the M.A. The course work includes:

- a proseminar,
- an introduction to graduate studies seminar,
- a sequence of methods and statistics courses;
- a criminological theory course;
- a course in the organization and criminal justice system;
- and additional 500-level substantive criminology courses selected in consultation with a student's faculty committee.

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

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

For the Ph.D., 30 credits beyond the M.A. are required, no more than three of which may be for Individual Studies. All Ph.D. candidates must have completed all courses required for the M.A. degree or their equivalent. The 30 credits beyond the M.A. must include 6 hours of Criminology seminars and 12 hours of elective seminars, all of which should be selected in consultation with the Ph.D. committee. Seminar requirements are not fulfilled by Individual Studies credits.

Qualifying Examination

A qualifying exam is required of all students seeking the Ph.D., after a master's degree has been earned. Students admitted with a master's degree will stand for this exam in the second semester of full-time study.

Language Requirement

The program in Criminology has no formal foreign language or communication requirement.

Ph.D. Committee Composition

The student's Ph.D. studies are conducted under the supervision of a Ph.D. committee that must meet all Graduate Council requirements (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-600/phd-dissertation-committee-formation/>). At least two members of the Ph.D. committee must be Criminology tenure-line faculty and one must be from outside the Criminology Program and Sociology Department and must represent a field outside the candidate's major field of study. One Criminology tenure-line faculty member is designated chair of the Ph.D. committee; ordinarily this person also serves as general adviser and director of the dissertation.

Comprehensive Examination

After completing all course work, doctoral students must pass a comprehensive examination that will be administered by the student's Ph.D. committee. At the discretion of the committee, examination content will include material on:

1. general criminological theory,
2. criminal justice/law,
3. research methods/statistics, and
4. the student's area of specialization.

Dissertation and Dissertation Defense

In order to earn the Ph.D., students are required to write and orally defend a dissertation on a topic that reflects their original research and education.

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 policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Policies (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>) and GCAC-700 Professional Degree Policies (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>), depending on the type of degree the student is pursuing:

- GCAC-611 Minor - Research Doctorate (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-600/gcac-611-minor-research-doctorate/>)
- GCAC-641 Minor - Research Master's (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-600/gcac-641-minor-research-masters/>)
- GCAC-709 Minor - Professional Doctorate (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-700/gcac-709-professional-doctoral-minor/>)
- GCAC-741 Minor - Professional Master's (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-700/gcac-741-masters-minor-professional/>)

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/graduate-funding/>) section of The 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 Graduate School.

All students admitted to the program are supported with stipends and tuition waivers for either four years (students entering with a master's degree) or five years (students entering with a bachelor's degree). Support may be in the form of research assistantships or teaching assistantships, with most students receiving a combination of types of support across their graduate careers.

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.

Criminology (CRIM) Course List (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/university-course-descriptions/graduate/crim/>)

Learning Outcomes

1. **Know:** Graduates will demonstrate a deep conceptual understanding of criminological theory and the interrelated institutions and processes of the criminal justice system, as well as specialized knowledge in a sub-area of the discipline.
2. **Apply:** Graduates will be able to apply theory and current research to identify gaps in the literature and generate new knowledge in criminology.

3. **Communicate:** Graduates will be able to communicate with the discipline through clear, well-organized manuscripts, proposals, and formal presentations.
4. **Think:** Graduates will be able to critically analyze unpublished and published research by other scholars in criminology and in their specialty area.
5. **Professional Practice.** Graduates will demonstrate a commitment to active citizenship in the department and the discipline and engage with research, as well as with colleagues and students, in an ethical manner.

Contact

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Program Website	View (http://sociology.la.psu.edu/)