

CRIMINAL JUSTICE, B.S. (BERKS)

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: Berks

Program Description

Students receiving a baccalaureate degree in criminal justice should understand each of the three main components of the criminal justice system and their interrelationships, be able to evaluate critically both current and future crime control policy proposals and criminal justice research, and understand the complexity of the crime phenomenon and its relationship to individual, social, and cultural factors. This major includes study in law enforcement, courts and corrections individually and as components of a system, plus work in theories of crime causation, and crime control policy. Students should expect reading, writing, and critical thinking skills to be rigorously applied and developed throughout the degree program. The Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminal Justice provides a broadly based liberal arts background for the study of crime, justice and the criminal justice system. The Bachelor of Science degree offers an opportunity for educational enrichment in fields not traditionally considered part of the liberal arts. Either degree is excellent preparation for a career in criminal justice, graduate, or professional study, or informed citizenship.

What is Criminal Justice?

Criminal justice is the study of the adult and juvenile justice systems, including law enforcement, the courts, and corrections. It is interdisciplinary and includes understanding the intersections of law, public policy, and behavioral science, in an effort to understand crime as a social problem and improve these systems for the good of society.

You Might Like This Program If...

You have an interest in working in corrections, courts, court administration, law enforcement, and probation and parole. Students completing this course of study are prepared to enter law school and graduate degree programs in more specialized areas. Every student in this degree will participate in an internship at a host agency located in a local, state or federal agency of their choice.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CRIMINAL JUSTICE (<https://altoona.psu.edu/academics/bachelors-degrees/criminal-justice/>)

Entrance to Major

In order to be eligible for entrance to this major, a student must:

1. attain at least a C (2.00) cumulative grade-point average for all courses taken at the University; and
2. have at least third-semester classification (<https://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm>).

READ SENATE POLICY 37-30: ENTRANCE TO AND CHANGES IN MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/37-00-entrance-to-a-college-or-major/>)

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice, a minimum of 120 credits is required:

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Electives	18-22
Requirements for the Major	60-61

4-7 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes: 0-3 credits of GH courses; 4 credits of GQ courses.

Requirements for the Major

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44>).

Code	Title	Credits
Prescribed Courses		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
CRIMJ/CRIM 100	Introduction to Criminal Justice	3
CRIMJ 210	Policing in America	3
CRIMJ 220	Courts and the Prosecution Process	3
CRIMJ 230	Corrections in America	3
CRIMJ 290	Introduction to Internship Experience	2
CRIMJ/CRIM 441	The Juvenile Justice System	3
CRIMJ 450W	Senior Seminar	3
CRIMJ 495	Internship in Criminal Justice	3
SOC/CRIMJ/CRIM 12	Criminology	3
SOC 119N	Race, Ethnicity and Culture	3-4
STAT 200	Elementary Statistics	4
Additional Courses		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
CRIMJ 250W	Research Methods in Criminal Justice	3
or SOC 207	Research Methods in Sociology	
PHIL 103	Ethics	3
or CRIMJ 465	Ethics in Criminal Justice	
Select 9 credits from any 400-level CRIMJ course that does not already fulfill another requirement in the major		9

Supporting Courses and Related Areas

<i>Supporting Courses and Related Areas: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
Select 12 credits, in consultation with the adviser, in one or two of the following skill enhancement areas: accounting, computers, composition and rhetoric, counseling, education, law and legal studies, world language, management, public speaking, research methods and statistics, science and engineering, biobehavioral health; or in the following topics: adolescence, deviant behavior, drugs, minorities		12

General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills

necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/>) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Quantification (GQ):** 6 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 9 credits

Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Arts (GA):** 3 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 3 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 3 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 3 credits

Integrative Studies

- **Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain):** 6 credits

Exploration

- **GN**, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- **GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses.** This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 6 credits

University Degree Requirements

First Year Engagement

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- **United States Cultures:** 3 credits
- **International Cultures:** 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Program Learning Objectives

- **Knowledge of the field:** Students will demonstrate an understanding about the roles and functions of the central components of the United States criminal justice system.
- **Theory:** Students will be able to apply major theoretical frameworks to understanding and analyzing the causes and prevention of crime.
- **Research:** Students will recognize the importance of scientific inquiry and how to use quantitative and qualitative research methods to study issues in the field.
- **Ethics:** Students will demonstrate the importance of ethics to the field of criminal justice.
- **Professionalism:** Students will behave professionally and ethically in all academic and professional experiences.
- **Diversity and Justice:** Students will recognize the roles that race, ethnicity, gender, and social class have in the criminal justice field and the need to be prepared to interact with individuals with diverse backgrounds.
- **Communication and Critical Thinking:** Students will demonstrate proficiency in writing, oral communication, and critical thinking.
- **Preparation:** Students will be prepared to either work in the criminal justice field or attend related graduate programs.

Academic Advising

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee's unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

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Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2024-25 academic year. To access previous years' suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/>) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition.

Criminal Justice, B.S. at Berks Campus

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ENGL 15 or 30H (GWS) [‡]	3 CAS 100A or 100B (GWS) [‡]	3
CRIMJ 100 [*]	3 CRIMJ 12 [*]	3
General Education Course (GN or GA or GS)	3 General Education Course (GQ) [‡]	3
General Education Course (GN or GA or GS)	3 General Education Course (GN)	3
General Education Course (GN or GA or GS)	3 General Education Course (Integrative Studies)	3
First-Year Seminar	1	
	16	15

Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
CRIMJ 210 [*]	3 ENGL 202A, 202B, 202C, or 202D (GWS) [‡]	3
PHIL 103 (GH)* [†] or CRIMJ 465	3 CRIMJ 220 [*]	3
PSYCH 200 or STAT 200 (GQ) [‡]	4 CRIMJ 230 [*]	3
General Education Course (Integrative Studies)	3 General Education Course (Exploration)	3
General Education Course (GHW)	1.5 General Education Course (Exploration)	3
	14.5	15

Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
CRIMJ 250W or SOC 207 [*]	3 400 Level CRIMJ Selection [*]	3
CRIMJ 290 [*]	3 Skills Enhancement Selection [*]	3
CRIMJ 441 [*]	3 Elective	3
SOC 119N [*]	4 Elective	3
Skills Enhancement Selection [*]	3 Elective	3
	16	15

Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
CRIMJ 495 [*]	3 CRIMJ 450W [*]	3
400 Level CRIMJ Selection [*]	3 400 Level CRIMJ Selection [*]	3

Skills Enhancement Selection [*]	3 Skills Enhancement Selection [*]	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
Elective	3 Elective	1
General Education Course (GHW)	1.5	
	16.5	13

Total Credits 121

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major

‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education

Course is an Entrance to Major requirement

† Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

¹ For General Education Course notations, please be sure to include three (3) credits of United States (US) Cultures and three (3) credits of International (IL) Cultures. Consult adviser for details.

² The following courses are offered Spring Semester only: ENGL 202B.

³ For Skills Enhancement Selection, choose from the following: Business, Communication Arts & Sciences, Information Sciences & Technology, Psychology, Science, Security & Risk Analysis, Sociology, and World Language courses. Consult adviser for details.

University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

Career Paths

Graduates of the Criminal Justice program are prepared to enter the workforce or can continue their graduate education in Master's and PhD programs, as well as law school. Penn State Altoona Career Services supports and serves students in all areas related to career development and preparation including: Major and Career Exploration Career Decision-Making Preparation of Employment Documents Internship and Job Search Strategies Interview Preparation Preparing for Graduate School Developing your Professional Online Brand Presentations and Workshops.

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