

ANSWERS TO IMPORTANT QUESTIONS FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE MAJORS

What do I need to do to graduate

1. Complete 120 total credits with at least a 2.0 GPA (that's a C average). That's five 3 credit classes per semester.
2. Complete the College Core (Gen. ed) See Bulletin or your degree evaluation of My Westfield for the college core requirements
3. Complete the CRJU 6 core classes with a grade no lower than a C- for any of the classes and a **GPA of at least 2.5 for the 6 core classes** (that's between a B-/C+)
4. Complete at least 7 CRJU upper-division electives during your Junior/Senior years
5. 21 of your 39 CRJU credits (7 of 13 classes) must be completed at WSU if you are a transfer). In other words you may transfer in no more than 6 CRJU courses from other colleges/universities

What should I do with the remaining 40 or so credits beyond the college core and the CRJU major classes

1. You could double major but you should begin your other major no later than the beginning of your sophomore year. Your second major should be one that you are interested in enough to take at least 13 classes in that subject. The most common double majors for CRJU students are psychology, sociology, and political science. If you are interested, chemistry, business, computer science and foreign languages are some critical skills that will make you more attractive to employers. See the department of interest or the college bulletin for the requirements for majors
2. You could easily pick up a minor or even two minors. Minors are only 6 courses and the requirements vary by department. You can begin a minor as late as your senior year. Odds are that you will have taken some courses in the college core that will count towards a minor or second major.
3. You could spend a semester abroad. Westfield State, through CIS, offers study abroad programs in over 30 countries. You will usually be able to complete a normal 15 credit semester load. Employers value residence abroad and foreign language skills. Study abroad is also a tremendous experience that you will cherish for the rest of your life. It is usually about the same cost as a semester at WSU. If you don't want to spend a semester abroad, WSU offers J-term classes during winter break and at the beginning of summer break that are 3 credit courses and that last about two weeks. Our dept. offers a winter J-term in the exotic country of Washington DC where students visit federal criminal justice agencies and meet important

people in the field. For information on study abroad, see the International Programs Office in Parenzo Hall

4. You could do the Washington Center Semester where you will spend a semester or part of the summer in Washington DC. You will receive 15 credits, have an internship with a federal criminal justice agency, attend lectures and seminars, and visit cool places in our nation's capital. This is also a great experience that you will cherish for the rest of your life. See the Career Center for more information.

5. Do a student exchange at another university for a semester. WSU has agreements with over 50 universities across the country. Sick of winter? Spend spring semester in Hawaii.

6. You could aimlessly take as many CRJU courses possible but you are limited to 2 CRJU electives per semester as a junior and 3 as a senior.

What about internships?

No need to worry about this until your junior year. During the summer before your senior year or during your senior year, you can do an internship for 3 or 6 credits. These credits will count towards your CRJU electives. If you do a 6 credit internship, that will count for 2 of your 7 upper-division CRJU electives. You must apply to do your internship the semester before you want to do it. The internship coordinator will help find a suitable placement based on your interests. IF you do the Washington Center semester, 6 of the credits will count as an internship and you will only need to take 5 more CRJU upper-division electives

Are there ways for me to get a graduate degree with my Bachelors?

Yes, there are two

1. We have a 5 year Bachelors/Master's program in Criminal Justice
2. We have a 6 year Bachelors/Law program with UMass Law School.

-You must know by your junior year if you want to complete either of these programs

Do I have an advisor? How do I get advised?

Yes you do. Each CRJU major is assigned an advisor. Your advisor will provide you with your PIN that you need to register for classes. However, because of the size of our department, each faculty member has between 50-60 advisees. Therefore:

1. You will go to the advising center in Parenzo during your first year for advising and your PIN, not your CRJU faculty advisor. During your Sophomore through senior years, you will see your CRJU faculty advisor for your advising and to get your PIN
2. Do not listen to what anybody else on campus tells you about advising. You will go to Parenzo for advising your first year, not your CRJU faculty advisor.
3. DO NOT e-mail your CRJU faculty advisor for an appointment. Most of us have open/first come/first serve advising with no appointments. Those of that have appointments place a sign-up sheet on our doors.

Should I go to my advisor and professors just to chat, get advice, discuss what is going on in class, or my future?

YES, ABSOLUTELY.

1. Your CRJU professors/advisors are tremendous resources who want to help you succeed in your classes, help you through your college experience, plan for the future, or to get know you better.
2. We all have at least 100 students in our courses and 50-60 advisees per semester. If you want to be one of the 5-10 students each semester that leaves a lasting favorable impression, taking the time to visit your professor outside of class is a good way to do so. When it comes time to write a letter of recommendation, you will get a personalized letter that stands out rather than a generic letter or no letter.
3. Studies have shown that students who visit their professors do better in college

What else should I do to be successful?

- A. Attend Class
- B. Don't fall behind or DISAPPEAR
- C. Let your professor know if you are having problems; academic or personal
- D. Your reading (rent, on-line, amazon, old additions, share)
- E. Take good notes
- F. Participate in Class
- G. Ask Questions
- H. Not be bored (if you are, you might be in the wrong place)

What should I avoid doing because it is rude and annoying?

1. Arrive late for class and leave early.
2. Making a commotion if you arrive late and or leave early. Don't interrupt a professor's class to apologize for being late
3. Don't sleep in class or look bored.
4. DO NOT TEXT OR USE YOUR PHONE IN CLASS.
5. Don't bring a laptop to class unless the professor tells you to or give you permission. Studies have shown that students retain more if they take notes by hand.
6. Don't pack up your belongings until the professor ends class.
7. This is contrary to accepted wisdom and what you have been told up to me. THERE IS SUCH A THING IS A STUPID QUESTION. A stupid question is one that you can easily answer yourself by checking the course syllabus, PLATO website, or a handout. Here is an example of stupid questions
-What day is the exam?

How should I communicate with my professor?

That's a good question. I'm glad you asked

1. The value of communication drops as it become less personal
In-person>phone>email
2. If you send your professor an e-mail, use standard English rather than text English. Check your e-mail for grammar and spelling. Get used to communicating like a professional and in a way that will reflect well.
3. Avoid using e-mail to request explanations of course material

4. Do not ask your professor a question that requires an answer more than one minute before or after class. Go to office hours
5. Address your professor as professor or doctor (if he or she has a doctorate) unless she or he tells you otherwise.

How do I receive important information and announcements from the CRJU department?

1. Check your Westfield State e-mail account and be sure to read e-mails from Daniel Price or Valika Gallishaw
2. "Like" our Facebook page "Westfield State Criminal Justice" @westfieldcriminaljustice

Are there any extracurricular activities available in the department?

Yes!

1. Criminal Justice Club, a student run organization that brings in speakers, has field trips, engages in community service and other activities. Their meeting days/times will be announced in the fall.
2. Alpha Phi Sigma, the criminal justice honor society. You may apply as a junior. You must have a 3.2 GPA cumulative as well as in your Criminal Justice classes. The membership fee is \$75.
3. The department presents a number of guest speakers and panels.

What about finding a job when I'm done?

1. Career Planning and placement is done through Career Services in Lammers Hall. They can help with developing a resume, interviewing skills, embarking on a job search, and other career related matters
2. The university hosts the largest criminal justice career fair in New England in October. Even if you are not you on the job market, it is a great opportunity to network and get information. There is also another career fair in the spring that also includes many criminal justice related employers and internships
3. The department receives many notices regarding job openings. These are posted on bulletin boards in the department, e-mailed to all majors, and posted on the department's Facebook Page
4. Some agencies that are hiring will hold informational sessions outside of our classrooms