



DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

The Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice is a 120-credit program. It is an interdisciplinary major, predicated on a common core of the humanities, social sciences, mathematics, and physical sciences. The goal of the program is to develop in students an increased analytical awareness of the role of law enforcement agencies, courts, and correctional institutions in the criminal justice system.

The course of study consists of an extensive overview of the criminal justice system and an intensive examination of each of the major components of the system. The program is designed to serve both those students who may elect to enter the criminal justice profession immediately upon graduation and those students who desire to pursue graduate work. Criminal Justice majors are able to apply for an internship and work in a criminal justice related agency or organization during their senior year.

The Criminal Justice major has grown from four students in 1969 to present day enrollment of close to 700 students. Currently, the Criminal Justice Department offers its baccalaureate program at Westfield State University through the day and evening divisions, and part time through the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education at Framingham State College. The Department also offers the Master of Science Degree in Criminal Justice at Westfield State University and Framingham State College.

Admission

Westfield State University has a selective admission policy. The Massachusetts Department of Higher Education has established a 3.0 grade point average (on a 4.0 scale) as the minimum standard for admission to state four-year colleges. Applicants with an average between 2.0 and 3.0 may also be considered, contingent upon their SAT-I scores and other application materials. Applicants who meet the minimum eligibility requirements are not guaranteed admission to the University.

Furthermore, admission into the Criminal Justice Program is competitive, as increased demand for the program combined with a commitment to offering the highest quality education while staying in compliance with accreditation requirements

make it necessary for the Criminal Justice Department to better manage enrollment in the program. There are currently 700 criminal justice majors, and many undeclared majors have indicated an interest in criminal justice.

Students who are not initially accepted into the Criminal Justice Program have an opportunity each semester to apply to the program. The minimum requirements to apply to the major are at least thirty (30) **completed** credits at Westfield State University with a minimum GPA of 2.5.

Requirements

The Criminal Justice Major consists of 39 credits. All students must complete at least 21 credits of Criminal Justice coursework at Westfield State University. There are six required courses in the major (Major Core) that comprise 18 of the 39 required credits:

- Introduction to Criminal Justice
- Theories of Crime
- Law Enforcement and Society
- Introduction to Corrections
- American Judicial System
- Research Methods in Criminal Justice

All Criminal Justice majors must complete the Major Core courses with a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.5, and no grade in any of the Major Core courses may be below a C-. Students may repeat any of these courses in order to meet this requirement, in accordance with the College's Repeat Policy.

Students choose upper-level electives in the major to complete the remaining 21 credits. A student who has not maintained the requisite 2.5 GPA for the six Major Core courses, or has had a grade below a C- in any one of the Major Core courses, will be required to correct this deficiency in order to enroll in upper level major electives.

Criminal Justice Minor

A Criminal Justice minor may be particularly attractive to students who seek to augment their major field of study with a basic knowledge of criminology/criminal justice. The minor requires a minimum of 18 credit hours of CRJU coursework, including CRJU0101 Introduction to Criminal Justice, which is a prerequisite for all 200-level and above criminal justice courses, and is one of only two 100-level courses offered by the department.

Students interested in adding a minor in Criminal Justice must have completed at least 15 credits at Westfield State University with an overall GPA of 2.5, including 6 criminal justice credits with no grade lower than a C-. Applications are available in the Criminal Justice office, as well as on the Criminal Justice webpage at www.wsc.ma.edu.

Internships

The Criminal Justice Internship Program is a great way for students to gain work experience while earning academic credit. Many students have found the internship program to be beneficial in realizing their professional goals.

The program is offered during the fall, winter, spring and summer semesters. All qualified Criminal Justice majors have the opportunity to experience work in a criminal justice agency during their senior year. The internship program is designed to provide seniors with an opportunity to translate classroom theory into practical application.

Students have the option of receiving 3 or 6 Criminal Justice elective credits. To qualify for 3 credits a student would be placed for a minimum of 120 hours in the agency during the semester, and the 6 credit option requires 240 internship hours.

Student Internships have been available in almost every area of the country in agencies representing each of the subsystems of the criminal justice system. The Criminal Justice Department deals with more than 150 agencies on a regular basis. If you have an agency that you would like to intern with but it is not one that the school has used, the placement must be approved by the Internship Director. You cannot use current employment as an internship. Most placements are not paid; however, a few agencies provide a small stipend for interns.

More information about the Internship Program, including eligibility and other requirements, can be found at the Westfield State University Criminal Justice web page, or by contacting Professor John Jones at (413) 572-5726.

Graduates

Graduates of Westfield State University's Criminal Justice Program secure employment in a wide variety of positions in the criminal justice system, social service agencies and organizations throughout the New England region and the country. Criminal Justice graduates are employed in the Massachusetts Department of Corrections, the Department of Youth Services and its contract agencies, probation departments, victim/witness programs, in municipal and state law enforcement agencies throughout the region, and in private corporations. Alumni are also working in federal government agencies including the Drug Enforcement Administration and Federal Bureau of Prisons.

Many graduates choose to further their education in graduate school and law school. The inter-disciplinary undergraduate curriculum provides an excellent background for graduate studies in many areas.

Faculty

The Criminal Justice faculty has distinguished itself in a number of areas. The diverse professional and educational backgrounds of the faculty enhance the program's curricula and provide students with the opportunity to hear and discuss different perspectives. Student and faculty interaction both inside and outside of the classroom contributes to the integration of knowledge and experience, and students are encouraged to discuss their ideas and attitudes with faculty.

Faculty members are active in the National Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, American Society of Criminology, Justice Studies Association, American Bar Association, American Sociological Association, American Society of Industrial Security, American Correctional Association, International Association of Crime Analysts, Massachusetts Association of Crime Analysts, American Political Science Association, and the Northeastern Association of Criminal Justice Educators. From presenting papers at regional and national meetings to serving on committees, faculty share and discuss their research and exchange information with colleagues throughout the United States.

The faculty endeavors to make the program's curricula challenging and relevant. As trends develop and change, the Department's course offerings are expanded or revised to include these new areas. In addition, the faculty/student academic advising process facilitates the student's ability to select electives which will be useful to the student's career and/or graduate school goals.

More information regarding Criminal Justice faculty is available at www.westfield.ma.edu.

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