

# Master of Arts - Criminal Justice

## Plan Description

The Master of Arts degree program in Criminal Justice is designed to improve a student's understanding of the nature, causes, and consequences of crime and crime control. The program provides students with advanced knowledge of criminal justice institutions and processes, current criminal justice policy, and training in research methods, statistics, and program evaluation. Based on the tradition of the liberal arts, the program emphasizes the symbiotic relationship between crime and the structure of society and the interplay between criminal justice theory and practice. These relationships are explored through course work in criminological theory, law and social control, the administration of justice, and crime and public policy. By completing the requirements for this program, students will be prepared for teaching at the community college level, conducting evaluations of policies and programs within various agencies in the justice system, and applying for doctoral study in crime and criminal justice.

For more information about your program, including your graduate program handbook and learning outcomes, please visit the Degree Directory.

## Plan Admission Requirements

Application deadlines

Applications available on the UNLV Graduate College website.

An undergraduate degree from an institution with regional accreditation is required. Students are encouraged to complete some undergraduate course work related to criminal justice/criminology, and statistics in social sciences. A minimum GPA of 2.75 for all undergraduate work and a 3.00 for the last two years of undergraduate work is required for admission to the program.

The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is required for admission.

A Criminal Justice Graduate Program Application Cover Page must be completed.

A statement of purpose for pursuing the Master of Arts Degree, addressing the student's particular interests in the field of criminal justice and their future academic and/or professional goals, must be provided at the time of application.

Two letters of recommendation are required. It is preferred that both letters be from professors from whom the applicant took the classes. If the applicant completed the undergraduate degree work within the past five years, it is required that at least one letter be from a professor, unless the applicant can document the reasons why a letter from a former professor is difficult to obtain. If the applicant completed the undergraduate degree work more than five years ago and is currently working in a criminal justice-related field, two letters may be obtained from the applicant's direct supervisor or co-workers. References from other sources will not be reviewed.

The admissions process requires submitting all information and materials through the UNLV Graduate College Online Application. See the Criminal Justice Department website for more details.

During the application process, applicants will select a thesis or non-thesis option as their culminating experience for the program.

All domestic and international applicants must review and follow the Graduate College Admission and Registration Requirements.

Students are accepted into a degree program as described in the Graduate Catalog. The faculty and corresponding sub-disciplines and sub-plans within the described programs are subject to change at any time.

## Plan Requirements

Total Credits Required: 36

## Course Requirements

### Required Courses – Credits: 21

Complete 21 credits by completing all of the following courses:

CRJ 700 Proseminar in Criminal Justice	3
CRJ 701 Proseminar on Theory	3
CRJ 702 Proseminar on Research Methods	3
CRJ 703 Proseminar on Statistics	3
CRJ 704 Proseminar on Law and Social Control	3
CRJ 705 Proseminar on the Administration of Justice	3
CRJ 715 Criminal Justice Policy	3

### Criminal Justice Elective Courses – Credits: 6

Complete 6 credits of 600- or 700-level Criminal Justice courses. CRJ 716 and CRJ 799 may not be used to fulfill this requirement.

### General Elective Courses – Credits: 3 or 6

Students completing a thesis as a culminating experience must complete 3 credits of 600- or 700-level courses. Students completing a comprehensive examination as a culminating experience must complete 6 credits of 600- or 700-level courses. Courses may be from

Criminal Justice, from the following approved list of electives, or by advisor-approval:

ENV 703 Environmental Law and Policy Seminar	3
LAW 639 Feminist Jurisprudence	2 – 3
LAW 642 Law and Social Justice	2 – 3
LAW 644 Juvenile Law	2 – 3
LAW 646 Cyberlaw	2 –4
LAW 653 Criminal Procedure I	3
LAW 658 Immigration Law	1 – 3
LAW 666 Domestic Violence and the Law	3
PSC 710R Proseminar in American Politics	3
PSC 713 American National Government: Principles	3
PSC 714 American National Government: Structure and Processes	3
PSC 719 Advanced Studies in American Politics	3
PSC 721 Public Policy Process	3
PSC 723 Policy Analysis	3
PSC 729 Advanced Studies in Public Policy	3
PSC 732 Constitutional Law	3
PSC 739 Advanced Studies in Public Law	3
PSC 740 Proseminar in International Relations	3
PSC 754 Global Governance	3
PSC 755 International Security	3
PSC 759 Advanced Studies in International Relations	3
PSC 760R Proseminar in Comparative Politics	3
PSY 704 Social Psychology	3
PSY 736 Psychopathology	3
SOC 701 Logic of Social Inquiry	3
SOC 704 Advanced Analytical Techniques	4
SOC 705 Qualitative Methods	3
SOC 719 Seminar in Deviance and Disorganization	3
SOC 723 Classical Sociological Theory	3
SOC 724 Issues in Contemporary Sociological Theory	3
SOC 741 Graduate Seminar in Social Stratification	3
SOC 742 Sociology of Gambling	3
SOC 748 Gender, Sex, Society	3
SOC 773 Seminar in Drug Use and Abuse	3
SOC 774 Seminar in Feminist Theories and Research	3
SW 701 Social Welfare Policy I	3
SW 715 Human Behavior and the Social Environment I	3
WMST 700 Introduction to Women's Studies	3
WMST 701 Feminist Theory	3

**Culminating Experience – Credits: 3 or 6**

During initial admission and enrollment to the program, students must choose between completing a thesis or comprehensive examination as a culminating experience. Students completing a thesis must complete 6 credits of CRJ 797. Students completing a comprehensive examination must complete 3 credits of CRJ 796.

CRJ 797 Master's Thesis in Criminal Justice

3 or 6

CRJ 796 Comprehensive Examination

3

## Degree Requirements

Complete a minimum of 36 credits at the 600- and 700-level with a minimum GPA of 3.00.

A maximum of 9 credits of 600-level course work is allowed.

Students may select up to 6 credits of approved graduate study in other social or behavioral sciences or in graduate programs formally approved by the department. An approved list of outside electives is available at the Criminal Justice website. Students must obtain an approval from Graduate Coordinator to take an outside elective course that is not on the approved list.

All students are required to complete a culminating experience: pass a comprehensive examination or complete a thesis. Theses will be written under the direction of a committee of three graduate faculty and chaired by a member of the faculty in Criminal Justice. One 4th member of the thesis committee is a graduate faculty member from outside the Department of Criminal Justice. An additional committee member may be added at the student and department's discretion. Please see Graduate College policy for committee appointment guidelines.

Upon completion of the course work and thesis, an oral examination related to the general field and thesis topic is required of all students completing a thesis. The examination will be administered by the student's thesis committee and a representative from outside the department chosen by the Graduate College. The oral examination will assess:

- a. The student's competency in defending the substantive, theoretical, and methodological topics covered by the thesis.
- b. The student's general knowledge, including the ability to integrate topics covered by core and elective criminal justice classes and to apply core fundamentals to important issues.

## Plan Graduation Requirements

The student must submit all required forms to the Graduate College as well as apply for graduation up to two semesters prior to completing their degree requirements.

The student must successfully pass a comprehensive exam or complete a thesis.