

Criminal Justice (BA) Mission Statement and Essential Learning Outcomes

According to its mission statement, the criminal justice BA views crime as a social problem and seeks to develop in its students the capacity to critically assess the normative structure of the existing criminal justice system with an aim to improving its condition and function. The emphasis of the major is on developing analytical skills, ethical reasoning, and a capacity for solving problems. It aspires to cultivate creative and original thinking about one of the most challenging social problems of our time. Specifically, students should be able to:

- 1) Apply analytical, ethical, and critical reasoning skills to quantitatively, qualitatively and morally assess and evaluate the role and function of institutions engaged in the mission of crime control;
- 2) Articulate how institutions achieve social goals and understand and describe how to effectuate change within institutions;
- 3) Consider how race, ethnicity and ethnicity impact the construction and effectuation of crime control;
- 4) Have a broad, multidimensional focus on moral questions and be able to express the ethical implications of policy decisions;
- 5) Be facile with data and prefer original research to secondary sources, and
- 6) Think creatively and originally as evidenced by the ability to write well, construct and implement an original research design, and apply this research to present innovative solutions and insights to complex policy questions.

The criminal justice department has identified the following six measurable outcomes, which students should display at the conclusion of the BA program:

1. The capacity to critically evaluate ethical arguments regarding criminal justice policy decisions.
2. The capacity to critically evaluate the impact of race, gender, and ethnicity on criminal justice policy decisions.
3. The ability to construct an original research question, manifesting a familiarity with the existing literature, and an implementable research design.
4. The ability to implement that research design through the collection and interpretation of data, and to articulate proposals for policy reform.
5. Clarity of expression.