Criminal Justice and Criminology M.S. (Emphasis in Criminal Justice)

Degree Requirements: 36 Credit Hours

Admission Standards

Regular Admission

Admission to this program is competitive. At a minimum, for regular admission the applicant must have:

1. A Bachelor’s degree from an appropriately accredited, four-year institution in criminal justice/criminology or related field (that adequately prepares students for success in this field. This application requirement will be waived for applicants who successfully complete the Post-Baccalaureate Cyber Certificate.)

2. A 2.75 cumulative grade point average or higher on completed requirements for a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution. (This application requirement will be waived for applicants who successfully complete the Post-Baccalaureate Cyber Certificate.)

3. Minimum GRE scores of 146 on the verbal section and 145 on the quantitative section or between 3.5-4.0 on the analytical section. (This application requirement will be waived for applicants who successfully complete the Post-Baccalaureate Cyber Certificate.)

4. Letter of Application detailing: a) academic background and/or professional credentials, b) relevant research and work experience, c) career goals and reasons for enrollment in this program.

5. Two letters of recommendation addressing the applicant’s: 1) academic work; 2) professional experience, if any; 3) ability to handle master’s level curriculum, and 4) how the applicant can be expected to contribute to the program. (This application requirement will be waived for applicants who successfully complete the Post-Baccalaureate Cyber Certificate.)

Provisional Admission

Applicants who meet two out of the three requirements outlined for GPA and GRE scores may be granted provisional admission by the graduate faculty committee based on careful review of additional materials submitted.

Reclassification

A student may be reclassified with regular admission providing that they have completed three program or related courses (9 hours), approved by their advisor, with a grade of no less than B. Additional courses may be required to be completed prior to a student's reclassification that do not contribute to these nine hours (such as taking an undergraduate statistics course to prepare for graduate statistics). No more than nine hours may be earned under the provisional admission classification. After nine hours, the student must either be reclassified as a regular admission student or be removed from the program.

Prerequisites for Admission

While an undergraduate degree in criminal justice is not a prerequisite to admission, newly admitted students must be deemed adequately prepared for graduate study in this essentially multidisciplinary area. Students who lack the necessary background may be required to complete additional undergraduate coursework. For example, students who have not successfully completed an undergraduate statistics course may be required to do so prior to enrollment in graduate statistical analysis or research methods courses.

Standards of Progression and Graduation

A. Graduate students must maintain a 3.0 overall grade point average in all graduate courses. A student will be placed on academic probation if he or she earns one (1) C or below. If a student earns two (2) C’s or below, the student will be dismissed from the program. There is a one (1) semester waiting period after the first C is earned so that the student has the opportunity to replace the grade and get the GPA back to a 3.0. The student may repeat a class only once to replace a grade.

B. Each student must file a program of study and an application for graduation with Graduate Studies. Fifty percent of the program of study must be completed at the 6000- 8000 levels.

C. If any change in the approved program of study is required, an amended program of study, signed by the student and advisor, must be submitted to Graduate Studies.

D. Satisfactory completion of a written comprehensive assessment one semester prior to graduation for the coursework option students is required. Students choosing the thesis option must receive a satisfactory score on a formal thesis defense. Students completing practicum must receive a passing grade on the paper required for completion of the course.

E. Students are encouraged to apply for graduation two semesters before the anticipated date of graduation. Note: A copy of the official program of study must accompany the candidate’s application.

F. All degree requirements must be completed within seven years.

Program of Study

The program is offered via two different tracks. The traditional track primarily is offered in a seated format, with some opportunities to take hybrid or online courses. The online track allows students to complete the degree requirements utilizing an online delivery method. Students will opt into one of three emphases, depending on the track they select.
Students select from three capstone options to complete their final 6 hours of the program:

**Thesis Option:**
Recommended for students who seek to do research for public and non-profit agencies or who seek further educational opportunities, such as a Ph.D. Students must pass the thesis defense.

**Practicum:**
Recommended for students who seek employment in the justice system or adjacent systems' agencies. Students will complete an internship, approved by their advisor and the program coordinator, completing all tasks associated with the internship option. Students will complete a comprehensive paper as part of this course, and must earn a passing score on this paper.

**Free Electives:**
Recommended for students who seek additional substantive information relative to their career track. Specific courses must be approved by their advisor and the program director. Students selecting this option must earn a passing grade on a comprehensive exam.

**Total Credit Hours:** 36

The M.S. Student Handbook describes additional relevant information for the degree requirements.