In conjunction with their advisor and program coordinator, students must select a second research/analysis tools course (approved by advisor and program coordinator).

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) Cs 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:**
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.