

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
WSU Department of Criminal Justice
Self-Study Review, Fall 2015
Master of Science in Criminal Justice

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Mission Statement

The mission of the graduate program in Criminal Justice at Weber State University is to provide future leaders a broad and diverse educational experience that integrates the realities of practical field experience with strong theoretical foundations relevant to the diversity of professions within today's modern criminal justice system. Critical thinking, strong analytical skills, and effective communication are central to our task of preparing students for the historical, cultural, political, and economic challenges of shaping and leading the societies in which they live.

Curriculum

The graduate program in Criminal Justice at Weber State University offers a Master of Science in Criminal Justice. There are currently four core courses that cover Criminal Justice Statistics, Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice, Theories of Crime and Delinquency, and Research Methods in Criminal Justice. In addition, we offer a variety of elective courses that reflect the research and academic interests of our graduate faculty. All courses have gone through a faculty review to ensure aligned with current faculty. These courses vary by semester dependent on the availability of faculty and the needs of the students.

Admission to the Master of Criminal Justice program is competitive and limited to well-qualified applicants. Applicants are evaluated on past academic performance (overall GPA), their resume/vita and personal statement (for program fit and writing ability), letters of reference, and overall experience in the criminal justice field or other related areas of expertise.

Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

Student learning outcomes consist of three primary areas: 1) the analysis of key issues affecting our criminal justice system, 2) the ability to synthesize and apply theoretical foundations, and 3) the ability to discriminate between various methodological techniques and their use. Individual courses are assessed through the use of a standardized department survey once a year and results are reported to the course instructor, Department Chair, and College Dean.

As part of the graduate program re-assessment, we have been in contact with the Gail Niklason, Director of Institutional Effectiveness at Weber State University and have implemented an

assessment scheme that met university requirements. As part of our next assessment cycle, we will review the effectiveness of our current assessment and the collection of assessment artifacts.

Academic Advising

Due to the on-line nature of our program, academic advising occurs in two primary ways:

- 1) Program notification e-mails – graduate students receive reminder e-mails at the beginning and end of each semester covering matters such as registration, course offerings, the Student Handbook/Policies, and other programmatic issues.
- 2) Informal advising with the Graduate Director done at the student's request. Informal advising takes place either face-to-face, by e-mail, through phone conversations, or electronically via Google Hangouts.

Faculty

The Graduate Program currently has eight tenured or tenure track faculty (a ninth position was recently filled and the new professor will begin teaching in the program starting the Summer, 2016 semester) and one full-time contract faculty. Our full-time contract faculty member retired last spring, but will continue teaching in the program as an adjunct professor.

Of the tenured/tenure-track faculty, all eight have doctoral degrees (three of those eight also have JDs) and our one full-time contract faculty member has a Masters degree in Public Administration. All tenured and tenure-track faculty are active in research and scholarly publication, speaking at professional conferences, and engage at a variety of levels with a broad spectrum of external communities.

The diversity of the graduate program is directly related to the diversity of the department faculty. As such, we have six males and two females among the tenured/tenure-track professors. All graduate faculty are Caucasian (the department recently hired Heeuk D. Lee – Dr. Lee is a male of South Korean descent and will start teaching in the graduate program in the summer of 2016).

There is also diversity of thought among our graduate faculty with tenured and tenured-track professors possessing doctoral degrees in a variety of disciplines ranging from criminal justice and law to chemistry and family/human development.

In addition to academic credentials, many of our graduate faculty have worked in a variety of criminal justice related positions. Experiences range from prosecutor and defense attorney to Corrections Officer and Police Chief. Our forensics director regularly consults with local law enforcement agencies and spends his summers volunteering at the Utah State Crime Lab.

Program Support

Support for the graduate program consists of the Department Chair (Dr. David Lynch), Graduate Director (Dr. Bruce Bayley), and the criminal justice department secretary (Faye Medd). For the past six years, Faye has assumed all secretarial responsibilities within the program and has done so with no increase in pay or promotion to a higher job classification. These additional duties have grown since last spring with the recent transfer of the graduate budget and accounting responsibilities from the Dean's office to the Department of Criminal Justice.

The graduate program is housed in the Social Science building at Weber State University's main campus in Ogden. All graduate courses are now taught fully on-line and rely on the university's Learning Management System (Canvas) and WSU On-line for technical and program support. All graduate faculty are provided with computers, iPads, and laptops with video/audio capabilities and have access to a variety of software packages to manage their courses. In addition, graduate students are able to access and review a large variety of on-line journals and various publications via the library's electronic portal.

Relationships with the External Community

Graduate faculty maintain extensive relationships with external communities. Of particular note is our growing association with the WSU Law Enforcement Academy. Overseen by Continuing Education, two of our graduate faculty are members on the WSU Law Enforcement Academy Advisory Board. In addition, one of our faculty was appointed by the Governor of Utah to serve on the POST (Peace Officer Standards and Training) Council, another works with the Utah State Crime Lab, and a third works with the Utah Board of Juvenile Justice on Disproportionate Minority Contact.

Student, Faculty, Contract/Adjunct Faculty and Staff Summaries

The graduate program averages 33 students at any given time and graduated approximately 9 students each year during this review cycle. Staff is limited to the criminal justice secretary who, while maintaining a full schedule of responsibilities dedicated to assisting with the undergraduate program, has taken on the duties of the program's part-time secretary when her position was terminated approximately two years ago due to budget constraints. Our secretary is invaluable to the program Director and contributes to the program without the benefit of a pay raise or promotion.

The faculty (tenured, tenure-track, and contract) summaries can be found in the "Faculty" portion of this report.

Information of Review Team Members

The Review Team for this study consists of the following members:

Internal - Department

David Lynch, Ph.D./JD, Professor and Chair, Department of Criminal Justice, Weber State University

Bruce Bayley, Ph.D., Professor and Graduate Director, Department of Criminal Justice, Weber State University

Internal – College

Pending

External – College

Pending

External – University

Pending