

MASTER OF SCIENCE: CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND CRIMINOLOGY

Student Learning Outcomes

Students graduating from this program will:

- analyze research on criminal justice topics
- communicate professionally and effectively orally and in writing for the identified audience.
- apply a broad and deep knowledge of the prevailing explanations for criminal behavior to understand criminal justice problems.
- identify and evaluate the most appropriate policy or program to address criminal justice issues.
- design and execute research on a criminal justice topic.

Program Description

The M.S. degree in Criminal Justice and Criminology (CJC) offers coursework that emphasizes policy analysis of criminal justice and criminology issues. The M.S. in CJC prepares those seeking appropriate study and academic credentials to qualify for management and administrative positions in justice-related agencies. The degree may also serve as preparation for advanced study in criminology and criminal justice at the doctoral level.

Graduate Mission Statement

The Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology's mission is to lead in graduate education within the area of Criminal Justice and Criminology; to deepen and expand scientific understanding of America's justice systems; to develop a graduate-educated workforce and collaborate in urban issues and education; to create a vibrant learning and campus life experience for our master's students.

Application Procedures

Applicants must submit an application for admission to UMKC and transcripts of their undergraduate work (and other graduate work if applicable) to the university Office of Admissions. We use a rolling admission process but the priority deadline for spring is November 1st. For fall and for graduate teaching assistantships (GTAs), the priority deadline is April 1st. The department strongly recommends that application materials be submitted well in advance of the posted due date to ensure all materials will be on hand in time for review. Decisions regarding admission to the graduate program are made by the graduate faculty of the program. Materials are reviewed with attention to past academic performance and substantive areas of study that would prepare students for CJC graduate study.

Admission Requirements

The minimum admission requirements for entrance into the M.S. in CJC program include the following:

1. Completed an undergraduate degree, from an accredited university or college, preferably with coursework in the socio-behavioral sciences sufficient to prepare for graduate-level study in the criminal justice and criminology field.
2. Achieved a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 in all undergraduate work.
3. Additionally, applicants must upload a personal statement. This statement should be two to three pages in length (double-spaced) and should identify how the applicant's undergraduate education and their work or personal experience has prepared them for graduate study. Applicants are also encouraged to express how they view study in our graduate program as fitting with their future career or educational goals. It is recommended that students review the M.S. in CJC program's course offerings as well as the concentration areas of the faculty in order to glean additional information about what the academic programming has to offer.
4. Two letters of recommendation: Applicants should provide contact info for at least two individuals who have agreed to provide references on their behalf. Letter writers will be asked to submit these electronically. References should be provided by individuals who are not related to the applicant, ideally will come from individuals who have direct knowledge of the applicant's academic credentials and preparedness, and describe the applicant's scholastic aptitude and their level of preparation for graduate-level education.

The application process is competitive. Satisfaction of the minimum criteria stated above does not guarantee admission to the graduate program of study. Students are admitted according to their rank in the applicant pool and consideration of the adequacy of departmental resources. Students who do not meet admission requirements, but who otherwise may show promise for graduate work, may be admitted provisionally to the program. Provisional admission means deficiencies must be corrected before a student is fully admitted as a degree-seeking student in the M.S. in CJC program. Typical deficiencies include a need to take undergraduate coursework to prepare for graduate study in this program, or to demonstrate scholastic ability in graduate-level courses.

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The M.S. in CJC degree requires successful completion of 30 credit hours of graduate work. Within these 30 hours, students may elect to complete a thesis or pursue the Demonstration Project.

A core of five courses is required of all students. The required courses include:

Code	Title	Credits
CJC 5511	Sociological Methods II	3
CJC 5515	Qualitative Research Methods in Criminal Justice	3
CJC 5516	Intermediate Statistics	3
CJC 5518	Advanced Criminological Theory	3
CJC 5580	Seminar: Policy And Decision Making In Criminal Justice	3
Total Credits		15

The required graduate courses in statistics, research methods and theory demand completion of prerequisite courses in these areas from the student's undergraduate work. Those who have not had such courses may be required to take the prerequisite course(s) prior to enrolling in the graduate course. Beyond the required courses, students must complete an additional 15 hours of academic work. This work should include the available M.S. in CJC electives (which include the three courses listed above, of which at least one must be taken), other graduate-level courses from other departments that have been approved by the student's Thesis Committee or the Graduate Committee prior to enrollment, and other coursework from the CJC curriculum that has been approved by the Graduate Committee prior to enrollment. These hours may also include Thesis hours, or Directed Study hours per the Demonstration Project depending on the desires of the student. The content of the 15 hours of study will reflect the student's choices after consultation with their Thesis advisor, and/or the Graduate Committee, as well as the student's decision regarding the Thesis or the Demonstration Project option.

In sum, the following generally reflects the two options - Thesis Option and Demonstration Project Option:

- Thesis Option: 15 credit hours of required courses + 9 hours of M.S. CJC graduate elective coursework + 6 hours of Thesis = 30.0 credit hours.
- Demonstration Project Option: 15 credit hours of required courses + 12 hours of M.S. CJC graduate elective coursework + 3 hours of Directed Studies = 30.0 credit hours.

Thesis Option

Those electing to write a thesis as part of their graduate work can receive up to 6 hours credit (CJC 5599) for preparation of the thesis. In addition to writing the thesis students must successfully complete an oral defense of that thesis before their supervisory committee. Thesis defenses are also open to the public. The research topic of the thesis will address some issue of specific interest to the student under the advisement of their thesis chair. Through courses, literature review, and analyses conducted in developing the thesis, students are expected to become proficient in their specific thesis topic area.

Demonstration Project Option

Students electing the Demonstration Project Option will take 3.0 credit hours of CJC 5590: Directed Studies, during their final semester of coursework. In addition, students conducting Demonstration Projects will take one additional 3.0 credit hour elective. These 6.0 credit hours (CJC 5590 - Directed Studies for the Demonstration Project along with one additional 3.0 credit hour elective) are in lieu of the 6.0 credit hours of CJC 5599 that a student electing to conduct a Thesis would take.

The demonstration project will require the student to write an independent research paper that outlines solutions to a given scenario. The process is designed to reflect the academic peer-reviewed protocol and will involve two stages of blind review. Please see the Graduate Guidebook and/or the graduate director for more detail regarding the Demonstration Project.