

Discover Criminal Justice

Master of Arts in Criminal Justice

Who takes this program?

- Individuals currently employed within the field want to advance to supervisory positions within an agency or even as a chief of police or chief of probation position.
- Individuals focusing on the years beyond retirement and are preparing for the possibility of teaching at a community college.
- Those who are interested in federal employment where a graduate degree is either a formal or informal entry-level requirement.
- Recent graduates of undergraduate programs who recognize the value of entering the job market with higher credentials.

How does the program work?

- This is a 42-hour program with thesis and non-thesis tracks.
- Two seminars are offered each semester and two during the summer.
- Most students are able to complete the degree in two years and a summer.
- Program objectives:
 - Demonstrate critical thinking about criminal justice problems, that is, to define a problem, to generate appropriate data, to conduct appropriate analysis, and to propose logical solutions.
 - Be able to undertake empirical research appropriate for the master's level, using various qualitative and quantitative methodologies and appropriate statistical measures.
 - Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of contemporary policies, practices, and issues in and surrounding the criminal justice system.

How will this degree benefit me?

Because the program's students are diverse in terms of employment and in the mix of newly-minted baccalaureate graduates and professionals, students do have the chance to network. That opportunity is facilitated by the guest lectures by professionals within the community. Potential future financial rewards include the possibility of promotion, achievement of credentials for transfer to a federal agency, for retirement, and for personal satisfaction.

Recent graduates include a county judge, lawyers, Department of Public Safety troopers, chief deputies in sheriff's offices, officers of the Amarillo Police Department, and probation and parole officers.

What courses will I take?

- Four core courses: Overview of the Criminal Justice System, Ethics, Research Design, and Statistics.
- Remaining 36 hours may include six hours of thesis, other criminal justice classes, and a maximum of 12 hours in a related field as a minor.

What sets this program apart from other programs?

This program is the only face-to-face criminal justice program within 250 miles. Students have the opportunity to interact with the professors in small classroom settings and to participate in research projects with local law enforcement agencies. For example, a graduate student authored the policy manual for a unique rehabilitation program for the Randall County Sheriff's Office during the summer of 2011.

Faculty led trips to Mexico to study and analysis the criminal justice system of Mexico. Several students have had the opportunity to work on special projects for area agencies or to complete internships at various agencies.

Admission Criteria and Application Guidelines

Full Admission

- Undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher
- Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended
- GRE scores in the 50th percentile or higher in one or more test area (verbal, quantitative, analytical writing)

Conditional Admission

Any applicant who does not meet the above requirements will be reviewed for possible conditional admission.

Application Deadline

- August 1 for Fall admission
- December 1 for Spring admission
- May 1 for Summer admission

Program Contact Information

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