

WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY, CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAM, NEWSLETTER, SPRING 2021

Volume 1, Issue 2



PREVIEW

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GREETINGS CRIMINAL JUSTICE STUDENTS, ALUMNI, AND FRIENDS OF THE PROGRAM:

We hope all of you are having a fabulous and relaxing summer break! It is undoubtedly a well-deserved break after another different semester for us all. In addition to a worldwide pandemic, we also had to deal with freezing temperatures, plenty of snow—enough to build a snowman in front of Old Main, burst pipes, and university closures. Fortunately, nothing got too crazy in the Panhandle around campus, but that cannot be said for our Criminal Justice Students in the southern portions of Texas. I know that I, unfortunately, had quite a few students that were impacted by the freezing temperatures. However, through perseverance, a little ingenuity, and some Buffalo Spirit, our Criminal Justice Program had another great and successful semester!

Spring 2021, News and Happenings Around the Program

In the Spring of 2021, we opened up a search for a new Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice. Dr. Garza, Dr. Bang, Professor Jordan, and Professor Arpero made up the search committee. Over the years, not all of our previous searches have been successful; however, we were amazed at the number of impressive candidates that applied. After hours of phone calls and Zoom meetings, we are happy to announce that our search was successful! We have a new Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice, Dr. Sohee Kim, joining our Program in the Fall of 2021.

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Program in the Fall of 2021.”

We are very excited about the expertise, diverse opinions, and academic rigor that Dr. Kim will add to our Program. Dr. Sohee Kim is originally from South Korea and received both her Bachelor's degree in Police Administration and Master's Degree in Criminology from Kyonggi University, South Korea, in 2014 and 2016, respectively. Dr. Kim received her Ph.D. in Criminal Justice and Criminology from Washington State University in the Summer of 2021. Her specific research interests include international comparative criminal justice, sexual violence, juvenile delinquency, and crime victimization. Her recent work has been published in the *Prison Journal* and *International Journal of Law, Crime, and Justice*. Her philosophy and style of teaching are in line with West Texas A&M University's primary mission, which promotes a positive influence through education to serve the needs of the community and society. This Fall, she will teach undergraduate courses, including *Criminology*, *Juvenile Delinquency*, and *Victimology*.

In the Spring of 2021, we also welcomed a new adjunct faculty member—Gordon Eatley. Professor Eatley taught our *Advanced Criminal Investigations* class, CRIJ 3322-01, and he did a fantastic job. I was fortunate enough to observe Professor Eatley's course in the Spring. After visiting Professor Eatley's class, I emailed the Department Head, Dr. Garza, to let her know what a great job he is doing. In that write-up, I wrote the following, "Gordon was able to blend the practitioner side of Criminal Investigations, with the academic, social science literature, alongside personal anecdotes from his experience in the field, to give our students a first-rate education. I appreciate Gordon's more academic approach." Professor Eatley plans to teach our *Advanced Criminal Investigations* course every Spring, and we hope to find a course for him to teach each Fall.

"Professor Eatley taught our Advanced Criminal Investigations class...and he did a fantastic job."

This is far from the only positive teaching experience we have had in the Criminal Justice Program lately. In the latest *National Survey of Student Engagement*, a survey given to many WTAMU students about their overall experience at WT, there were several positive comments about Criminal Justice Professors, courses, and the Program as a whole. According to one anonymous student, "I think my most useful class was my writing class. I don't think I'd ever been taught how to actually write a paper...The most significant learning experience was in my capstone internship for my criminal justice degree. The whole criminal justice program is fantastic, and the professors are incredible." Thank you to Professor Arpero for doing such a fantastic job with the *Writing and Research* course, which is a very challenging course to teach. I know that I've seen significant

NEWS

Dr. Sohee Kim received her Ph.D. in Criminal Justice and Criminology, from Washington State University. She is our new Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice, and will start in the Fall of 2021.



improvements in the writing of our undergraduate students. Additionally, thank you to the anonymous student for the positive feedback about our Program. If you would like to read the rest of the comments about the Program and other Criminal Justice faculty, you can find the NSSE survey [here](#).

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Furthermore, we are still working with Political Science and the Emergency Management Programs to improve our graduate program. The MPA degree (Master of Public Administration), which will have one track with an emphasis in Criminal Justice, is still being approved at several levels. However, from what I understand, the approval is going well, and the program is slated for a soft start in the Spring of 2022.

NEWS

The Criminal justice Program, in conjunction with Political Science and Emergency Management, is continuing to work on implementing a new MPA, with a track in Criminal Justice, with a soft start in the Spring of 2022.

Spring 2021, Faculty News and Accomplishments

Furthermore, the individual faculty in Criminal Justice kept themselves productive during the Spring of 2021! Dr. Price thoroughly revised his CRIJ 4375, *Capital Punishment* course, which is now available to take online. To accomplish this and accommodate different learning methods, Dr. Price filmed interviews with some professionals, which will be available for the online course. In one video, Dr. Price discusses the case where one of his correctional officers, Stanley Wiley, was murdered by an inmate, Travis Runnels, while Dr. Price was Warden of the Clements Unit. Dr. Price also had a new addition to his family recently in a new Granddaughter. The Price family welcomed Madeline Kathleen Price into the world last Spring. Dr. Price also officially announced his retirement from WT. However, we are fortunate enough to keep Dr. Price for this academic year. Dr. Price has served the Criminal Justice Program and WT for 19 years, and we are lucky we have had him for this long, and we will miss him. We will have more about Dr. Price’s

retirement in the next edition of the *Criminal Justice Newsletter*.

Professor Jordan has stayed busy teaching five courses and advising a lot of students. She has reviewed some chapters for community corrections textbooks. She also investigated her first Title IX case. Professor Jordan also worked on starting the internship back up after the hiatus due to COVID. She developed new relationships with agencies in the Panhandle to give our students even more opportunities for fantastic internships! Lastly, Professor Jordan is also an advisory board member for the Panhandle Regional Law Enforcement Academy.

In the Spring of 2021, Professor Arpero stayed diligent, creating and keeping up on her five courses. She thoroughly revised and refined the *Writing and Research* course to increase learning and engagement. She also served on the search committee for our new Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice. Professor Arpero has also

taken over Social Media for our Program, and she has fantastic fun ideas she will implement this Fall! Furthermore, Professor Arpero is busy creating a new class for our Program. Professor Arpero is teaching CRIJ 4392-71, *Violence Against Women*, which is being offered in the Fall of 2021. The class is currently offered as a “Current Topics” course; however, we hope to add it officially to the catalog soon.

“Professor Arpero is busy creating a new class for our Program...CRIJ 4392-71, Violence Against Women, which is being offered in the Fall of 2021.”

Undoubtedly, in the nation, but also specifically in the Texas Panhandle, victimization and violence against women is a problem that not only our students and community must deal with, but practitioners in the field must deal with as well. We are happy that Professor Arpero is going to teach this course about such an unfortunate but timely topic, and we can’t wait to see how the course turns out!

RECENT SUCCESS

Jazmyn McGuire was awarded the Outstanding Criminal Justice student award, and was also selected as a McNair Scholar. She is working with Dr. Bang on a legal research project this summer concerning the sex offender registry.



As the Undergraduate and Graduate Director of our Program, I’ve kept myself busy and productive as well. Above teaching my four courses and advising many students, I’ve managed to accomplish a few things for our Program. I thoroughly revised the Criminal Justice website to make sure the information is accurate, up to date, and professional in order to help attract more students. I also served on the search committee to bring in our new Criminal Justice professor. Furthermore, I continued to work on reforming our curriculum, and I’ll get together with the other faculty members about this in the Fall.

For the tenure-track faculty members, publishing is also essential. I’m excited that I recently signed two book contracts with Cognella Publishing to author two textbooks. One book on Criminal Procedure and another book on Criminal Law. The Criminal Law textbook should be available in the Spring of 2023. I’m still serving as a Designated Administrator for Title IX, and I’m also serving as a member of the Potter County Indigent Defense Commission. Lastly, I am honored to be featured on the website for the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology, at Washington State University, as a distinguished alumnus. You can find a link to the page [here](#).

Spring 2021, Program Accomplishments

Program wide we have graduated several undergraduate students and three Master’s students. We also had a Criminal Justice Student, Jazmyn McGuire, that was selected for the prestigious McNair Scholars program. Jazmyn was also awarded the Outstanding Criminal Justice Student award for the 2020-2021 academic year.

Jazmyn is not only a remarkable student, but she personifies those attributes and characteristics that we like to see in our students, graduates, and practitioners in the Criminal Justice System. Jazmyn is the type of person that makes those around her better, and we are proud of her and how she represents our Program. Jazmyn and I have been working together this summer on her McNair Scholars project, where we are doing a legal analysis of the sex offender registry. Also, Jazmyn is contemplating where and what she wants to study for her graduate education. We know wherever she goes that she is going to do extraordinary!

Future

Finally, although we have accomplished much during the Spring there is always more work to be done. First, Professor Arpero and I have noticed that plagiarism among our Criminal Justice students happens much more than we would like to see. As it says on the Criminal Justice website, “The Criminal Justice Program strives to produce graduates who...embody the highest academic, professional, and ethical standards in both their academic work and chosen profession.” We take this statement seriously. Professor Arpero and I are working on a plan to ensure that our students understand what plagiarism is, how to avoid plagiarism, and how to ensure they embody these high ethical standards in their writing.

In the Fall, the criminal justice faculty will work together to update our curriculum and requirements. We have updates that will be submitted in the Fall of 2021, and we will work together to implement further changes in the future.

I hope all of you enjoy the rest of the Summer! We look forward to seeing you in August! If you still need to register and get Greenlighted, please get in touch with your advisor or me, and we can definitely help you. Let's hope for a fantastic Fall of 2021, continued progress in our Criminal Justice Program, and an excellent semester for all of you!

Best,



Brandon L. Bang, Ph.D.
Director, Criminal Justice Program

Recent Success

Dr. Bang recently signed two book contracts with Cognella Publishing to author a *Criminal Procedure* textbook and a *Criminal Law* textbook.