



## **Criminology and Criminal Justice: Differences in Programs at the Master's Level**

by Ruth Triplett and Elizabeth Monk-Turner  
Old Dominion University; Old Dominion University

*Sociological Research Online* 15(1)7  
<<http://www.socresonline.org.uk/15/1/7.html>>  
doi:10.5153/sro.2081

Received: 22 Oct 2009 Accepted: 29 Jan 2010 Published: 28 Feb 2010

---

### **Abstract**

Our aim in this work is to: (1) determine how distinct the program structure and curriculum content for graduate education in Criminology was compared to Criminal Justice; and (2) evaluate whether the diversity or consistency of the curriculum in either field varied depending of what type of department was offering the degree. Differences in department titles, hours required for the M.A. degree, program descriptions, curriculum content and curriculum content by department type between M.A. programs in Criminology and Criminal Justice were examined. The results suggested there is both consistency and difference in program structure and in curriculum content across the two fields of study.

---

**Keywords: Criminology, Criminal Justice, Curriculum, Program Development**

---

### **Criminology, Criminal Justice and Disciplinary Identity**

**1.1** Scholars interested in the history of Criminology and Criminal Justice as academic fields of study do not always agree on exactly where and when each field began in the United States. Perhaps the most common view is that Criminology is rooted in Sociology and Criminal Justice in the movement for police professionalization and Volmer's School of Criminology at Berkeley (for a selection on the history of Criminology and/or Criminal Justice see Ward & Webb 1984; Morn 1980, 1995; Hale 1998; Radzinowicz 1962). All seem to agree, however, on the incredible impact of the federal government on criminal justice education and that developments in criminal justice soon began to affect where the discipline of Criminology was housed on universities and colleges across the country. By 1980, it was apparent that Criminology's fortunes were moving away from Sociology and becoming more and more tied to Criminal Justice (Morn 1980).

**1.2** Despite the growing academic connection, the relationship between Criminology and Criminal Justice had a rocky history. Clear evidence of this is found in the histories of the professional societies especially the American Society of Criminology (ASC) and the Academy of Criminal Justice Society (ACJS). According to Morn (1980), ASC was founded in 1941 by August Vollmer and some of his students. Originally named the National Association of College Police Training Officials, its membership centered around those interested in the police courses developing in colleges and universities across the United States. In 1946, the name was changed to the Society for the Advancement of Criminology and changed again in 1957 to the American Society of Criminology. Morn (1980) argues that by the late 1950's Sociology had gained in popularity as an academic discipline. Along with the gain in popularity at colleges and universities came an increase in the involvement of criminologists trained in Sociology in ASC. Morn argues that, throughout the 1950's, divisions increased between the "academic" criminologists who were becoming more and more sociologically oriented, and the "practical" criminologists who were becoming more and more concerned with administration. By 1963, the division between the interests of the two groups had become so wide that some members of ASC broke away to form the International Association of Police Professors, which changed its name in 1970 to the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship that has developed between Criminal Justice and Criminology through an analysis of graduate curriculum at the master's level. Due to the limited number of doctoral programs, and the fact that most require a Master's degree, suggested to us that exploring differences at the master's level was an appropriate choice. Further, the focus was narrowed to the Master's of Art degree because we wanted differences in programs to result as much as possible from the criminology or criminal justice focus and not the type of degree. Two questions inform the research. First, how distinct is the program structure and curriculum content for graduate education in Criminology from that of Criminal Justice? In order to best assess curriculum differences, the focus is on comparing the curriculum for programs offering a Master of Arts degree in Criminology with those offering the same degree in Criminal Justice. Second, does the diversity or consistency of the curriculum in either field vary depending on what type department is offering the degree? For example, is the curriculum for a Master of Arts degree in Criminology from a Sociology department different from that offered in a department of Criminal Justice and Criminology?

### **The Debate**

**2.1** The 1970's and 1980's saw a great deal of discussion in the literature about what exactly Criminology and Criminal Justice are and what direction each field should be going. Definitions of Criminology and concerns over its direction are found in the work of leading scholars in the field including Sutherland (1947),

Wolfgang and Ferracuti (1967), Jeffrey (1969, 1977, 1978), Reckless, (1970), and Cressey (1978). Jeffrey (1977, 1978) in particular was critical of the impact that federal funding of criminal justice had on the field of criminology. Key discussions about the definition of criminal justice and the content of criminal justice education resulted from the development of Albany's School of Criminal Justice (See Newman 1993; Conrad & Myren 1979), Sherman's (1978) report on police education, and the work of the Joint Commission on Criminology and Criminal Justice Education and Standards. As a result of its importance in the discussion, work resulting from the Joint Commission on both the definition of criminology and criminal justice, and their relationship is the focus of the remainder of the literature review.

**2.2** Two views published as *Two Views of Criminology and Criminal Justice: Definitions, Trends, and the Future* in 1979 (Conrad & Myren 1979) were prepared for the Joint Commission. Conrad (Conrad & Myren 1979), then at American Justice Institute, wrote the "first view". Central to Conrad's argument was the belief that Criminology and Criminal Justice are distinct. Using Sutherland's (1947) and Wolfgang and Ferracuti's definitions of Criminology as a base, Conrad defines Criminology as "the application of the scientific method to the explanation of phenomena generated by the interactions of the processes in law-making, law-breaking, and the reactions of society to these processes" (Conrad & Myren 1979: 9), thus emphasizing its position as a social science. Criminal Justice is viewed by Conrad as the application of Criminology, with knowledge of Criminology a necessary component of a "justician's" education. Though he sees them as distinct he also writes, "There is no reason why the two tracts of instruction cannot take place under the same roof in a university with the resources to offer them both. The important thing is to assure that criminologists do not mistakenly acquire the notion that they are qualifying themselves to be administrators, and the justices do not consider themselves to be criminologist on the strength of a course or two in that subject" (Conrad & Myren 1979: 16).

**2.3** Myren's (Conrad & Myren 1979) very different view comes next. Then at the School of Justice at American University, Myren had been dean and professor at the School of Criminal Justice at SUNY Albany, the first Criminal Justice program, between 1966-1976 (Conrad & Myren 1979). Active in discussions over Criminal Justice education, Myren is a key figure in the defining of the field of Criminal Justice. He argues that the field of Criminal Justice, as an academic pursuit, came about as a reaction to two factors – "...a particular view of sociological Criminology and, in part, to vocational agency oriented police science and corrections programs" (Conrad & Myren 1979: 25). Myren defines Criminology as the study of crime and anything related to it. He argues that it is part of the field of Criminal Justice. "Criminal Justice studies programs are integrated interdisciplinary sequences of scholarly teaching and research in the behavioral and social sciences (defined to include law and public administration) focused on the social problem of crime" (Conrad & Myren 1979: 27). Myren's definition of Criminal Justice, which he argues had caught on, "...was intended to include everything covered in traditional sociological criminology together with all of the crime related studies that criminology had left out" (27). Myren concludes with the suggestion that, in the future, the concept of justice be used to broaden the fields of Criminal Justice and Criminology – development of a broader field called "justicology" (see also Myren, 1980).

**2.4** With the publication of the Joint Commission's report in *Quest for Quality* (Ward & Webb 1984) a final contribution to the debate is found in a statement to the Joint Commission by Jeffrey, a leading figure in the field who had been an active contributor to discussions about Criminology. Jeffrey (as reported in Ward & Webb 1984) argued that a basic conflict exists between Criminology and Criminal Justice that past discussions ignored. He sees Criminology as a social science while Criminal Justice is centered around policy issues based on "force, violence, punishment and prisons". This basic difference in perspectives leads to another important difference, how each field views crime and justice. He concludes that these differences mean "...there is no meeting ground or commonality for Criminology and Criminal Justice" (25).

**2.5** Despite the monographs prepared for the Joint Commission, consensus about these key issues was not reached (Ward & Webb 1984). While there was agreement among the members on what they termed "traditional Criminology" and a majority agreed that a difference existed, the Joint Commission reported that disagreement remained about the definitions of Criminology and Criminal Justice (Ward & Webb 1984). The lack of agreement can be seen still today.

### **Where Are We Now?**

**2.6** What is the relationship between Criminology and Criminal Justice today? This question can be addressed by examining how these two fields have developed in institutions of higher learning. If colleges and universities are preparing individuals to be "criminologists" and/or "criminal justices" then the structure and curriculum of the various programs should indicate the relationship between the two. If they are two separate fields of study, one would expect different departments/programs and degrees. If they are inextricably interconnected then one would expect that to be reflected in department/program and degree titles, and in the curriculum.

**2.7** Examination of the institutional placement of Criminology in graduate programs in the United States indicates a consensus has still not emerged about the relationship between the two. Suggesting that there are two separate fields is the fact that there are departments of Criminology (for example, at Indiana State University and Indiana University of Pennsylvania), and departments of Criminal Justice (for example, at Michigan State and John Jay). However, there are also departments of Criminal Justice and Criminology (for example the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Maryland and the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Florida State). In addition, a recent study of the placement of Criminology in graduate programs in the US (Triplett & Monk-Turner, 2009) found that when using program/department title to examine "where Criminology is", Criminology was most commonly found in departments of Criminal Justice and Criminology. Another indication of the relationship is that between 1984 and 2004, there was an increase in the number of programs with Criminology in the department or degree title whether they be housed in Sociology, Criminal Justice and Criminology, or Criminology departments (Triplett & Monk-Turner, 2009). Though the increase was greatest for those housed in departments of Criminal Justice and Criminology, the findings of an increase in each area indicates that institutions of higher learning are still divided in their beliefs about the relationship between Criminology and Criminal Justice.

**2.8** Examining department/program names is a start if one is interested in the relationship between Criminal Justice and Criminology. Another method is to examine curriculum. If Criminology and Criminal Justice are two different fields of study would not this show up in curriculum differences such that the curriculum for a degree offered in a Criminal Justice department is different from one offered in a Criminology department or, even more, a degree in Criminal Justice versus one in Criminology? As of this date, though, there are no studies that have compared curriculum across the two fields. There have been four studies, however, that have examined curriculum in Criminal Justice/Criminology. There are two findings of particular importance from these studies.

**2.9** The first finding is that, whether the evaluation has been at the Bachelor's (Southerland 1991, 2002), Master's (Bufkin 2004), or Doctoral (Flanagan 1990) level of education, the curriculum in programs varies considerably. In his 1990 review of 13 doctoral programs in Criminal Justice/Criminology, Flanagan found that "...programs vary widely in content, structure, progression graduation requirements and electives." (205, 208). In terms of the curriculum, he found that the most frequently required courses were research methods and statistics and that "No other single course was required in more than 3 of the 13 programs." (209). Southerland (1991) found much the same in her review of undergraduate Criminal Justice education. Ten years later (2002), she found no improvement in the consensus on what was appropriate for a Criminal Justice curriculum. Similar findings resulted from Bufkin's (2004) review of 156 Master's level Criminal Justice/Criminology programs. Bufkin's conclusion that "...Criminal Justice education means different things to different people" thus can be applied to Criminal Justice education at any level.

**2.10** The second finding from an examination of these studies is on the relationship of Criminology to Criminal Justice. Though two of the studies (Flanagan 1991; Bufkin 2004) include both Criminal Justice and Criminology programs in their analyses, the researchers did not distinguish between the two. Southerland's studies included only those undergraduate programs labeled Criminal Justice. Her analysis shows that Criminology is an important and common class in Criminal Justice curriculum for undergraduates. It is one of only three classes, Introduction to Criminal Justice, Research Methods and Criminology, to be required in more than half the programs in her study.

**2.11** Evaluations of the current relationship between Criminal Justice and Criminology suggest a need for further examination. Two questions structure the current study. First, how distinct is the curriculum for graduate education in Criminology from that of Criminal Justice? If one gets an M.A. degree in Criminology is one getting a different type of education than someone getting an M.A. in Criminal Justice. Second, does the diversity or consistency of the curriculum in either field vary depending on what type department is offering the degree? For example, is the curriculum for a Master of Arts degree in Criminal Justice from a Sociology department different from that offered in a department of Criminal Justice and Criminology?

## Methods

**3.1** The first step in addressing the three questions guiding this research was to develop a list of programs in Criminal Justice and Criminology that could be used for the purpose of comparing both the structure and curriculum.<sup>[1]</sup> Two decisions had to be made at the outset. The first decision was whether to examine the criminal justice and criminology programs at the undergraduate and/or graduate level. Two factors led to the decision to limit the focus of the study to graduate education. The first was the large number of undergraduate programs and the difficulty of obtaining data that would be needed to compare all of them. The second was the belief that the field can best be understood by focusing on graduate education. It is in graduate school where those who are identified as criminologists and criminal justices receive their education and professional identity.

**3.2** The second decision dealt with what type of graduate program to focus on. Should the focus be the Master's of Science, the Master's of Art or the PhD? The focus in the current study is programs offering the Master's degree, in particular programs offering the Master's of Art (M.A.). This focus came about for two reasons. First, the argument that graduate education tells us most about a discipline might lead one to argue that doctoral programs are best suited to describing a discipline. However, the limited number of doctoral programs and the fact that most require a Master's degree suggested to us that the Master's degree was an appropriate choice. Second, the focus was narrowed to the Master's of Art degree because we wanted differences in programs to result as much as possible from the criminology or criminal justice focus and not the type of degree. In order to choose which Masters degree to focus on we examined the number of programs offering each. Among the currently existing graduate programs offering Criminology degrees, the most frequent Master's degree is the M.A. (See Triplett and Monk-Turner, forthcoming). The M.S., however, is the most common Master's degree in Criminal Justice. We chose to examine programs offering the M.A. because this would give us a sample of 20 Criminology and 20 Criminal justice programs.

**3.3** The list of programs offering the M.A. degree was developed from the 2004 edition of *Peterson's Guide to Graduate Programs in the Humanities and Social Sciences*. Information in the *Guide* is collected through an annual survey of graduate and professional institutions offering post baccalaureate degrees. The *Guide* makes no distinction between Criminology and Criminal Justice programs, listing them together alphabetically by university name. It does give, however, department titles and the names of degrees offered. Therefore, the total number of graduate programs offering the M.A. degree in Criminology and M.A. in Criminal Justice could be assessed. Given the information in the *Guide*, it is also possible to categorize the programs by department name.

**3.4** From the *Guide* a list of all programs offering a M.A. in Criminology (n=22) (including Criminology and Criminal Justice or Sociology with a concentration in Criminology) and all programs offering an M.A. in Criminal Justice (n=35) was developed. Criminology programs are listed in table 1, separated into four sections, based on the department name in 2004 – Sociology, Criminology, Criminal Justice and Criminology, and Criminal Justice. Criminal Justice programs are listed in table 3, separated into five sections, based on the department name in 2004 – Criminal Justice, Sociology, Justice Studies, Political Science/History, and other variations. Information on M.A. requirements for all 56 of the programs was then collected through the use of university and department web pages, and graduate catalogues available on the internet. This information was also used to confirm the information in the *Guide*. Any discrepancies (and there were only two found) were checked with Graduate Program Directors at the appropriate program.

**3.5** As with previous studies comparing curriculum, the measures in this study fall into two broad categories. The first are those focusing on the structure of the program. They include, department title, hours required for the degree, thesis option, required hours and program description. The second are those focusing on program content. The measure under this category is course title. Titles and course descriptions for required classes in each of the programs were examined and a list of required classes was developed.

## Findings

### Program Structure—department titles, hours required, and program description

**4.1** First, we aim to better understand differences in the overall structure of programs offering the M.A. in Criminology or Criminal Justice (see Tables 1 and 2). In particular, department title, number of required hours, thesis requirement, and program description are examined.

Table 1. List of Programs, Degree Titles and Program Descriptions for Programs offering an M.A. in Criminology (n=22)

University	2004 Department	Graduate Degrees	Total Semester Hours required for MA	Thesis	Program Description
<b>SOCIOLOGY</b>					
Bowling Green State University	Department of Sociology	MA in Crim/deviant behavior	30-33 hours	thesis or comprehensive exam	"The objectives of the graduate programs in sociology are to provide a broad background in general sociology and to create the capacity for the development of rigorous research, teaching, and/or applied skills in at least one area of specialization."
Eastern Michigan University	Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminology	MA in Crim. and CJ (CRM)	31 hours	thesis or two essays	"The analytical and evaluative skills stressed by this program enable students to identify and assess the often conflicting objectives of criminal justice and investigate basic issues and practical problems in criminology and the administration of criminal justice...Objectives 1. Attainment of advanced education for persons who wish to enter careers in post-secondary education, 2 Development of skills in research and in program planning and evaluation in criminology and criminal justice. 3 Strengthening of the professional qualifications of persons employed in the fields of criminal justice. 4. Preparation for doctoral study in a behavioral or social science ( <a href="http://www.sac.emmich.edu/master_of_arts_in_criminologu.htm">www.sac.emmich.edu/master_of_arts_in_criminologu.htm</a> )
Fordham University	Department of Sociology and Anthropology	MA in Soc. with a concentration in Justice and Crim.	30 hours	thesis or non-thesis	"Its approach is grounded and ...encouraging students to challenge existing assumptions of crime and justice, and to examine how ...shape society's responses to crime and other social programs. Special attention will be given to the ...ethnicity, gender, class and the role of community. This concentration also emphasizes links between ...practice."( <a href="http://www.fordham.edu/academics.colleges_graduate_s">www.fordham.edu/academics.colleges_graduate_s</a> )
Morehead State University	Department of Sociology, Social Work and Criminology	MA in Soc. with a concentration in Crim.	30-36	thesis or comprehensive exam	"The department offers an area of concentration in criminology and an emphasis in criminology. Students pursuing either of these options develop a working knowledge of general concepts that comprise criminological and sociological analysis. Students also learn about the criminal justice system including basic skills in working with offenders, theoretical explanations of criminality, research methodology/data analysis, and the effects of social institutions and policies on the system" ( <a href="http://www.morehedd-st.edu/colleges/education/sociology/criminology.crim.html">www.morehedd-st.edu/colleges/education/sociology/criminology.crim.html</a> )
San Jose State University	Department of Sociology	MA in Soc. concentration in Crim.	30 units	thesis, creative project, exam	

University of Delaware	Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice	MA in Soc and Crim.	27 hours	Thesis, exam or internship	"The Department of Sociology and Criminology offers a Master of Arts and a Doctor of Philosophy degree program in both sociology and criminology. The primary focus of the program is the preparation of members of the next generation of sociologists and criminologists by emphasizing systematic training in theory and research methodology as well as teaching. These advanced education degrees are intended for persons interested in careers in academic, public service or private enterprise." (Graduate Catalogue 261-262)
University of Montana-Missoula	Department of Sociology	MA in Crim.	30-36	thesis or professional paper	"At the graduate level, the Department of Sociology at the University of Montana offers a Master of Arts degree designed to prepare students for either advanced study at the doctoral level or careers in organizational settings...The graduate curriculum seeks to provide students with a solid foundation in sociological theory, research and methods...Criminology is an intriguing field of study which examines the making of law, the nature and extent of crime and criminality, and efforts to control crime. The option builds upon the required course work in sociology and allows students to pursue extended study of crime and the criminal justice system. The criminology option prepares students for careers in criminal justice research or administration, as well as further graduate work at the doctoral level." ( <a href="http://www.umt.edu/sociology/matrs.htm">www.umt.edu/sociology/matrs.htm</a> )
University of Tennessee (Knoxville)	Department of Sociology	MA in Soc. with a specialization in Crim.	30 hours	thesis, non-thesis	"The speciality in Criminology is available at the Masters and Doctoral levels. Our objectives are: to promoted critical understandings of the relationship between social forces and crime definition, criminal behavior, and the institutions and dynamics of social control; to apply sociological theories to research on crime and criminal justice; to provide tools for the analysis of fundamental crime and criminal justice issues, including the preservation of peace and the safeguarding of due process and civil rights in a democratic society. ( <a href="http://web.utk.edu/~utsoc.dep/other/criminal_justice.html">web.utk.edu/~utsoc.dep/other/criminal_justice.html</a> )
<b>CRIMINOLOGY</b>					
Indiana State University	Department of Criminology	MA	33 hours	thesis	"The Department of Criminology offers the masters of arts degree and the master of science degree for the preparation of academic and professional criminologists...graduate program is designed to reflect the theoretical orientation of criminology and the more practical emphasis of criminal justice...the department provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary for successful careers in middle- and upper-level management positions in corrections, law enforcement, corporate and private security, and a host of other related career paths. The program

Indiana University of Pennsylvania	Criminology Department	MA	36-hours	thesis or non-thesis	"The Program has prepared students for administrative and research careers in the criminal justice system and related areas...also provides a solid foundation for students to pursue doctoral degrees." (www.lhs.iup.edu/cr/masters.asp)
Jackson State University	Department of Criminology and Justice Services	MA in Criminology and Justice Services	36-hours	thesis	"...Designed to create a cadre of education and policy makers in the area of criminal justice. The primary focus of the program is on providing a strong theoretical and methodological foundation for those individuals desiring to restructure and plan for change in the contemporary justice system...Program objectives: To prepare students for studies beyond the mater degree focusing on planned change; to provide studies in theory, analysis of varied criminal justice systems, management and research sufficient to prepare students for career development in the field; to provide courses to enhance the performance and employment potential of individuals in criminal justice agencies" (Graduate Catalogue, 2003-2005: 118)
University of Florida	Department of Criminology, Law and Society	MA	36 hours	thesis or non-thesis	
University of Pennsylvania	Department of Criminology	MA in Crim.	21 hours plus required to attend both semesters of Criminology in Practice Seminar plus and thesis	thesis	"The Master of Arts (M.A.) in Criminology program is for persons who intend to pursue further graduate studies at the Ph.D. level and a career in academia or research." (www.crim.upenn.edu/MA.htm)
University of South Florida	Department of Criminology	MA	33 hours	thesis or comprehensive exam	"The M.A. in Criminology is a two-year program designed to provide the student with an in depth understanding of the major ideas , issues, theories and research comprising the field of Criminology and Criminal Justice" (USF Graduate Catalogue 2004-2005: 142)
<b>CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND CRIMINOLOGY</b>					
Drury University	Program in Criminology/Criminal Justice	MA in Crim	30-36	thesis and comprehensive exam	"The Master of Arts in Criminology program is carefully integrated with the undergraduate program and grows out of the institutional commitment to the liberal arts. It is intended to provide sound preparation for careers while explaining the breadth of perspective and flexibility that characterize the liberal arts graduate. The program and the faculty are seen as a significant enrichment to the undergraduate program and the graduate and undergraduate programs are intended to be mutually supportive. The Master of Arts in Criminology degree is especially recommended for students who will eventually pursue a Ph.D. " (http://www.drury.edu/multinl)
East Tennessee State University	Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology	MA	33-36	thesis or non-thesis	"The Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology offers the masters of arts degree, which is designed to enhance student understanding of crime, societal reaction to crime, and efforts to control it. It prepares the student for advancement in criminal justice professions, teaching at the community college level and study at the doctoral level." (Www.etsu.edu/crimjust/programs/masters.htm)
Florida State University	School of Criminology and Criminal Justice	MA	three program options: 1) 33 hours 2)24 hours 3) 30 hours	three program options: 1) no thesis 2) thesis 3) area paper	"At Florida State University, criminology is viewed as a broad discipline, encompassing the scientific study of crime, criminals, the law-making process, the criminal justice system and the treatment of offenders. The program is interdisciplinary and integrative in nature...The master's program is concerned with both theory and practice in the belief that neither stands alone...(it) prepares individuals for an administrative or research career in the criminal justice system or some related areas, as well as teaching at the community college level" (www.criminology.fsu.edu/grad/default.htm)
University of Maryland, College Park	Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice	MA (traditional & professional) in criminology and criminal justice	30 hours	thesis	"The program of graduate study leading to Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in the area of Criminology and Criminal Justice is intended to prepare students for research, teaching, and professional employment in operational agencies within the field of criminal justice." (http://www.ccjs.umd.edu/Graduate/)
University of Missouri-St Louis	Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice	MA in Crim. and CJ	33 hours	thesis or non-thesis	"The graduate program is designed to provide students with a command of criminological knowledge and analytical skills." (www.umsl.edu/~ccj/masters.html)

University of South Carolina	Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice	MMA in Crim. and CJ	30 hours	thesis and comprehensive exam	
University of Texas at Arlington	Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice	MA in Crim. and CJ	36 hours	thesis and comprehensive exam	"The Masters Degree Program is designed to effectively serve the needs of the increasing number of individuals in the criminal justice system who desire post baccalaureate education as well as those persons in other public or private sectors who wish to increase their criminal justice expertise... The program leading to the MA degree in criminology and criminal justice is a multidisciplinary one which offers a comprehensive examination of the criminal justice system, an exploration of deviant behavior, a foundation in research and statistics, and an opportunity to explore other relevant topics of interest to the student." (www.uta.edu/criminology/crcj04.htm)
<b>CRIMINAL JUSTICE</b>					
Sam Houston State University	College of Criminal Justice	MA in CJ and Crim	37-hours	thesis	"The Masters of Arts degree is designed to prepare graduate students to conduct research and actively participate in the development of knowledge in the areas of criminological theory, crime control, and correctional and police administration." (www.shsu.edu/graduatecat/crimjus.html)

Table 2. List of Programs, Degrees and Program Descriptions for Programs offering an M.A. in Criminal Justice (n=35)

University	2004 Department	Graduate Degrees	Total Semester Hours required for MA	Thesis	Program Description
<b>CRIMINAL JUSTICE</b>					
Arizona State University West	Criminal Justice Program	MA	30	None required	"The Masters of Arts in Criminal Justice program at Arizona State University West is designed to provide criminal justice agency professionals with advanced training in management and operations analysis and in research and evaluation" (www.west.asu.edu/cha/macj/overview.htm)
Boise State University	Program in Criminal Justice Administration	MA	33	Thesis or Project	"This 33 credit program is designed to provide a foundation in applied research and theory, seminars in substantive areas of criminal justice activity, and focused scholarship on issues of importance in Idaho." (http://cja.boisestate.edu/Pages/GradHons.htm)
California State, San Bernardino	Department of Criminal Justice	MA (traditional and professional)	45	thesis or comprehensive exam	"The Master of Arts in Criminal Justice is designed to serve the growing number of individuals in the criminal justice system who desire postbaccalaureate education, as well as those in more traditional public and private employment who may wish to acquire further education in criminal justice. The degree program offers two options. One is a thesis option designed for students who intend to pursue graduate studies beyond the M.A. level and those students who have special research interests in the criminal justice system. The examination option is for those with administrative and management goals." (http://criminaljustice.csusb.edu/MastersCJ.htm)
California State Stanislaus	Department of Criminal Justice	MA	36	None required	
Illinois State University	Department of Criminal Justice Sciences	MA	32-34	thesis or comprehensive exam	"The Department of Criminal Justice Sciences offers a program leading to the MA or MS degree. The primary purpose of the program is to provide students with the skills to analyze crime and criminal justice policies. Those skills prepare students for advanced graduate study and/or careers in the administration of justice." (Graduate Catalogue)
Loyola University Chicago	Department of Criminal Justice	MA	36	field practicum or thesis, or research tool, or comprehensive examination	"The master's program in criminal justice is designed to provide a comprehensive, analytic, rigorous and conceptually grounded educational experience. Its goal is to produce highly motivated, well educated and thoroughly trained professional and scholars. Two objectives underlie the thrust and substance of the program. First, intellectual and scholarly development is paramount. Second, the program emphasizes the cultivation of skills relevant to criminal justice practice" (www.luc.edu/schools/grad/programs/crimtext.html)
Monmouth University	Department of Criminal Justice	MA	30	thesis or comprehensive exam	"The Master of Arts in Criminal Justice at Monmouth University offers a broad perspective on the criminal justice system, its various institutions and processes, and develops the quantitative, critical and research skills necessary for problem solving and policy making" (Graduate Catalogue 2007-2008)
Pennsylvania State Harrisburg	Program in Criminal Justice	MA	36	thesis or comprehensive exam	"The program reflects the numerous complexities of the discipline. It provides academic leadership for students to work within corrections, institutionalized and non-institutionalized settings, victim services, adult and juvenile services, policing and law enforcement, private security, courts, and other human service organizations serving the clients of these institutions. It also helps develop research abilities for those students who may wish to consider doctoral studies" (http://www.hbg.psu.edu/hbg/programs/gradprog/crimj.html)
Radford University	Department of Criminal Justice	MA	36	thesis	"The graduate program in criminal justice allows students to prepare for management and other careers in criminal justice and related fields. The program is designed both to enhance students' existing capabilities and to develop unique competencies and skills for future academic and career goals." (www.radford.edu/~cju-web/aboutgrad.htm)
Rutgers	School of Criminal Justice	MA	36	essay or comprehensive exam	
State University of New York Albany	School of Criminal Justice	MA	30	None required	
Temple University	Department of Criminal Justice	MA	36	thesis and non-thesis option	"The MA meets the needs both of those who are working full- or part-time in criminal justice or in a related service agency, as well as those full-time students who are continuing their education and looking forward to completing a doctoral program." (Graduate Catalogue)
University of Arkansas Little Rock	Department of Criminal Justice	MA	36	thesis	"The master of arts in criminal justice program prepares graduates for positions of responsibility in the criminal justice system and related areas, facilitates the professional and intellectual development of in-service students, and provides foundation work for those planning careers in research or teaching. The curriculum provides a distinctive melding of professionally structured knowledge and the ethical imperatives of criminal justice in a constitutional democracy focused in two areas, policy or academics" (Graduate Catalogue '72)
University of Illinois at Chicago	Department of Criminal Justice	MA	40	comprehensive exam	"The Department of Criminal Justice offers academic work leading to the Master of Arts and the Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice. The Master of Arts Program is organized into four curricula areas that include the nature and development of rules, rule-breaking behavior, rule application, and research methodology. Programs are designed for careers in research, evaluation, and criminal justice administration." (http://www.uic.edu/depts/cjus/graduate/text.html)

University of Louisiana at Monroe	Department of Criminal Justice	MA	33-36	thesis or additional course work	
University of Massachusetts Lowell	Criminal Justice Department	MA	33	thesis optional	"The Master of Arts in Criminal Justice and the four 12-credit certificates (Domestic Violence Prevention; Leadership and Policy Development; Forensic Criminology; and Criminal Justice Informatics) are designed to meet the diverse needs of criminal justice professionals...In addition, the program will meet the needs of students preparing for doctoral work in criminal justice or related fields." ( <a href="http://www.uml.edu/Dept/criminal_grad_programs.htm">http://www.uml.edu/Dept/criminal_grad_programs.htm</a> )
University of Nebraska Omaha	Department of Criminal Justice	MA	30	thesis and comprehensive exam	"This degree is especially recommended for those students seeking an interim degree prior to obtaining the Ph.D." ( <a href="http://www.unomaha.edu/criminaljustice/ma/cj.htm">http://www.unomaha.edu/criminaljustice/ma/cj.htm</a> )
University of Nevada Las Vegas	Department of Criminal Justice	MA (traditional and professional)	36	thesis (traditional), comprehensive exam (professional)	"The Traditional Master's degree is designed to prepare students for doctoral studies in the field and in related areas of the social and behavioral sciences. Those who obtain this degree may also assume teaching positions at the community college level. Students enrolled in the Traditional Master's degree track are required to complete a scholarly thesis. The Professional Master's degree is designed to serve the needs of professionals currently working in justice-related agencies by providing the knowledge and skills to enhance their performance in current positions and/or prepare them for career advancement. Students seeking the Professional Master's degree must complete a comprehensive exam prior to graduation." ( <a href="http://www.unlv.edu/Colleges/Urban/Criminal_Justice/graduate/index.html">http://www.unlv.edu/Colleges/Urban/Criminal_Justice/graduate/index.html</a> )
Western Oregon University	Criminal Justice Department	MA	45	thesis or additional course work	"The Master of Arts and Master in Science in Criminal Justice degree programs are currently under revision and a new degree title has been proposed. The proposed degree program will move from a focus in administration to a stronger emphasis in preparing students for a wide range of advanced professional positions in criminal justice agencies. Revisions are also designed to provide academic credentials necessary to teach at the community college level, and provide the necessary preparation for those students who desire to further their education at the doctor level." ( <a href="http://www.wou.edu/las_socsci/cj/programs.html#mastercj">http://www.wou.edu/las_socsci/cj/programs.html#mastercj</a> )
Widener University	Program in Criminal Justice	MA	36	thesis or comprehensive exam	"The Master of Arts in Criminal Justice program is designed to prepare individuals for successful careers in teaching, research, management, and leadership in the criminal justice profession." (Graduate Catalog: 15)
<b>CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE</b>					
University of Memphis	Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice	MA in CJ	30-33 hours	thesis or non-thesis	"... seeks to serve students who are working or who want to work in the criminal justice system as well as those who wish to conduct research and teach in this area...The graduate program provides students with a solid foundation of knowledge about criminology, victimology and the criminal justice system. Program objectives are: (1) fundamental understanding of criminological principles, theories and concepts; (2) development of independent research skills, including data analysis and oral and written communication research; (3) competitive for professional positions in the criminal justice field" ( <a href="http://justice.memphis.edu/gradprog/master.htm">justice.memphis.edu/gradprog/master.htm</a> )
<b>SOCIOLOGY</b>					
Central Michigan University	Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work	MA	30-36	thesis	"Our master's degree program is designed for student planning to pursue a career in research or education. It is also a good starting point for students planning to pursue a Ph.D."  "The social and criminal justice program emphasizes community-based justice and prepares the graduate for advanced professional studies as well as career advancement in various justice fields." ( <a href="http://www.chhs.cmich.edu/saww/grad_prog.htm">www.chhs.cmich.edu/saww/grad_prog.htm</a> )
Clark Atlanta University	Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice	MA	36	thesis	
The George Washington University	Department of Sociology, Program in Criminal Justice	MA	36	thesis or comprehensive exam	"The Criminal Justice program is an academic program weighted toward traditional criminology, with some forensic science training as well, and is not intended to train practitioners who wish to work in criminal justice or security agencies." ( <a href="http://www.gwu.edu/~soc">www.gwu.edu/~soc</a> )
University of Central Oklahoma	Department of Sociology	MA in criminal justice management and administration	36	thesis or comprehensive exam	"The Master of Arts in Criminal Justice Management and Administration degree program is designed to meet Oklahoma's needs for graduate education in the area of criminal justice management and administration. The curriculum has been developed to provide those individuals having a bachelor's degree in criminal justice or a related field, those who are presently employed in a criminal justice environment, and those wishing to work in the field an opportunity to advance their skills and knowledge qualifying them for specialized job opportunities in the area of criminal justice." (Graduate Catalog, 2005-2006, 83)
<b>POLITICAL SCIENCE/HISTORY</b>					
Washington State University	Department of Political Science, Program in Criminal Justice	MA	32	master's essay	"The master of arts in criminal justice is designed to develop or enhance the student's specialized knowledge in criminal justice, broadly defined. It is also intended to expand and develop a student's analytical, reading, and assessment skills, as well as oral and written communication abilities. The program is flexible and provides a superb basis for entry into graduate work at the doctoral level or applied work in criminal justice agencies. Approximately 70% of our M.A. graduates are employed in applied settings while the balance have pursued teaching and research careers." ( <a href="http://libarts.wsu.edu/crimj/graduate/ma-crimj.html">http://libarts.wsu.edu/crimj/graduate/ma-crimj.html</a> )
Washington State University Spokane	Department of Political Science, Program in Criminal Justice	MA	31	thesis	"This training prepares students to meet the primary need faced by the criminal justice system: well-educated professionals capable of making policy decisions based on up-to-date research and theory. Students earning their M.A. in Criminal Justice at WSU Spokane are also well prepared to continue their studies in pursuit of a Ph.D." ( <a href="http://www.spokane.wsu.edu/academic/crim_j/criminal_justice_course.asp">http://www.spokane.wsu.edu/academic/crim_j/criminal_justice_course.asp</a> )
West Texas A&M University	Department of History and Political Science, Program in Criminal Justice	MA	42	thesis or comprehensive exam	"The Master of Arts in Criminal Justice Studies degree at West Texas A&M University is useful for criminal justice professionals and practitioners within the field. It is research-oriented providing the student additional skills that are in demand at the state and federal levels. A master's degree is a necessary credential for that person who wishes to teach at the community college level." ( <a href="http://www.wtamu.edu/academic/ess/hpi/ma/cjfaq.htm">http://www.wtamu.edu/academic/ess/hpi/ma/cjfaq.htm</a> )
<b>JUSTICE STUDIES</b>					
Kent State University	Department of Justice Studies	MA	33-36	thesis or internship/research or research additional course work	"The goals of the M.A. in Justice Studies include the following: for students to (1) build a firm theoretical and methodological foundation on the causation, treatment and control of crime and delinquency, and the process of law and justice, (2) develop professional skills through experience in situations where knowledge gained in the classroom can be tested in applied settings, and (3) develop a behavioral and attitudinal orientation appropriate for the criminal justice professional" ( <a href="http://dept.kent.edu/cjst/grad.htm">dept.kent.edu/cjst/grad.htm</a> )



Southern Illinois University Carbondale	Administration of Justice	MA	36	thesis	"The Center for the Study of Crime, Delinquency, and Corrections, which enjoys a national and international reputation for quality research and education, offers the Master of Arts degree in Administration of Justice. The mission of the M.A. program in Administration of Justice is to provide high quality graduate education in criminal justice and criminology. The program focuses on analyzing criminal justice, social justice, and crime prevention problems and solutions. The program prepares its graduates with the analytic capabilities and problem-solving skills that enable them to succeed in professional careers in criminal justice and related agencies, in policy analysis and research, or in continued graduate or professional education. The focus of the curriculum is theoretically driven, empirically-based criminal justice and crime prevention that takes a problem-solving approach." ( <a href="http://www.siu.edu/~ajstac/graduate.htm">http://www.siu.edu/~ajstac/graduate.htm</a> )
University of Alaska Fairbanks	Department of Justice	MA	30	thesis or project paper	"The degree has a specific goal -- to provide the latest information to enhance management skills of current and/or future managers and administrators in Justice Agencies. Our courses are focused narrowly on those areas we have determined are critical for the modern administrator." ( <a href="http://www.uaf.edu/justice/masters_degree">www.uaf.edu/justice/masters_degree</a> )
University of Southern Mississippi	Department of Administration of Justice	MA	33	thesis	
Western Illinois University	Department of Law Enforcement and Justice Administration	MA	33-39	thesis or comprehensive exam	"The department graduates educationally well-rounded students who possess the skills needed to manage and lead in the increasingly complex field of criminal justice. Additionally, students are academically prepared to pursue advanced degrees in respected doctoral and law degree programs." ( <a href="http://www.wiu.edu/leja_grad">http://www.wiu.edu/leja_grad</a> )
<b>VARIANTS</b>					
Wichita State University	School of Community Affairs	MA	36	thesis, research paper, oral or written exam	
Wright State University	Program in Applied Behavioral Science	MA	30	thesis or graduate project	"The Criminal Justice and Social Problems track emphasizes methodology and theoretical courses and topic-focused workshops aimed at improving the research and intellectual foundations for employment and professional advancement in the criminal justice fields. Students in the program typically work for, or plan to work for, the courts, probation offices, police agencies, prison administrations, or private and public programs for juvenile offenders. The training received in basic social science skills and knowledge is also a useful foundation for those who wish to proceed to doctoral-level study in a number of fields." ( <a href="http://www.wright.edu/cgi-bin/catalog/grad.cgi?id=10">http://www.wright.edu/cgi-bin/catalog/grad.cgi?id=10</a> )

**4.2 Department title.** Though a number of scholars have noted the increasing break of Criminology from Sociology, it is Sociology departments (8) that most often offer the M.A. with Criminology in the title. Next are the seven Criminal Justice and Criminology departments in the sample and the six departments of Criminology. Finally one department (College of Criminal Justice at Sam Houston State) offers an M.A. in Criminal Justice and Criminology.

**4.3** Not surprisingly, the M.A. in Criminal Justice is most commonly offered by a Criminal Justice department. There are 20 departments of Criminal Justice that offer this degree. In addition, there are five Justice Studies or Administration of Justice departments, four Sociology departments, three Political Science or History departments, and one department of Criminology and Criminal Justice that also offer the M.A. in Criminal Justice. Finally, two other types of departments (the School of Community Affairs at Wichita State and Program in Applied Behavioral Science at Wright State) offer an M.A. in Criminal Justice.

**4.4** In terms of department title, there is a difference in where Criminology and Criminal Justice M.A. degrees are offered. It is rare to see an M.A. in Criminology in a department that does not have Sociology or Criminology in the department title (the degree at Sam Houston being the exception). Note also that, after Sociology departments, the most common departments to offer an M.A. in Criminology include both Criminal Justice and Criminology in the title. Conversely it is rare to have an M.A. in Criminal Justice offered in a department that does have Criminology in the title (Memphis State University). In terms of department titles, then, Criminology M.A.'s are often offered in departments that recognized a connection between Criminology and Sociology, and Criminology and Criminal Justice.

**4.5 Number of hours required for a degree.** Differences in program structure are not wide when it comes to the number of hours required for the M.A. The number of hours required for a degree in Criminology ranges from 24 to 37 with the mean being 33.23. For the M.A. in Criminal Justice, the number of required hours is higher. It ranges from 30 to 45 with the mean being 35.2

**4.6 Thesis requirement.** The thesis or comprehensive exam is common both in departments offering a M.A. degree in Criminology or Criminal Justice. Of the 22 programs ending in an M.A. in Criminology, 65% (14) give an option of thesis, comprehensive exam, or paper. Twenty-three percent (5) require the thesis and 14% (3) require both the thesis and comprehensive exam. Similar to the Criminology programs, among the 35 programs ending in the M.A. in Criminal Justice, 66% (23) require a thesis, exam or paper. Another 23% (8) require the thesis or Master's essay and 3% (1) require a comprehensive exam. However, a small percent of programs offering the M.A. in Criminal Justice, 8% (3), require neither the thesis nor comprehensive exam,

**4.7 Program description.** A content analysis of program descriptions for both Criminology and Criminal Justice programs was completed to see if there are differences in how the M.A. programs across the two fields are described. After a preliminary examination, we content analyzed program descriptions coding for the presence of eleven words that frequently appeared in them. These words included: *prepares* (if the program is aimed at students who aim to move into a PhD program), *applied* (if program aims to educate students to enter a professional job or to provide credentials to enhance current job opportunities), *critical* (does the program self-define as analytical or critical in nature), *theory*, *research*, *Sociology*, *Criminal Justice*, *Criminology*, *evaluation*, *teaching* (particularly at the two-year college level) and *administration* (or management). The total number of times these words appeared in program descriptions were coded (1 = word included in program description; 0 = not included). Our findings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. A Content Analysis of Eleven Words in Program Descriptions of M.A. Programs in Criminology and Criminal Justice

	Criminology (n=20)	Criminal Justice (n=29)
Prepares for PhD	10	14
Applied	14	28
Critical	4	4
Theory	8	6
Research	16	21
Sociology	10	0*
Criminal Justice	26	53*
Criminology	24	5*
Evaluation	4	7
Teaching	7	7
Administration	3	10

\* Significant difference in the use of these words in program descriptions for programs offering the M.A. in Criminology or Criminal Justice.

**4.8** We tested for significant differences in the appearance of these 11 words in Criminology and Criminal Justice program descriptions. We found a significant difference between Criminology and Criminal Justice program descriptions in whether the words "Sociology", "Criminal Justice" or "Criminology" appeared. One fourth of the Criminology programs included the word Sociology in their program description; no Criminal Justice program description does so ( $X^2 = 8.07$ ;  $p = .004$ ). Sixty percent of the time, in Criminology program descriptions, the words Criminal Justice appears compared to 86% of the time in Criminal Justice program descriptions ( $X^2 = 4.39$ ;  $p = .04$ ). Finally, 80% of Criminology program descriptions included Criminology in their descriptions; 14% of Criminal Justice program descriptions included this word ( $X^2 = 21.47$ ;  $p = .0001$ ).

**4.9** Clearly, there is much overlap in the use of these eleven words between Criminology and Criminal Justice M.A. program descriptions. However, some differences appear in program descriptions. Specifically, Criminal Justice program descriptions rarely include Criminology in their description and never include the word Sociology. Criminology programs, however, often use both the words Sociology and Criminal Justice. As with program titles, an examination of program descriptions suggests that faculties in programs offering an M.A. in Criminology recognize a connection between Criminology and Sociology, and Criminology and Criminal Justice.

**4.10** The program description for the University of Delaware is representative of Criminology program descriptions. It states that "The Department of Sociology and Criminology offers a Master of Arts and a Doctor of Philosophy degree program in both Sociology and Criminology. The primary focus of the program is the preparation of members of the next generation of sociologists and criminologists by emphasizing systematic training in theory and research methodology as well as teaching. These advanced education degrees are intended for persons interested in careers in academic, public service or private enterprise" (Graduate Catalogue 261-262).<sup>[2]</sup> For Criminal Justice, the program description for West Texas A&M University is typical of many others. It reads: "The Master of Arts in Criminal Justice Studies degree at West Texas A&M University is useful for Criminal Justice professionals and practitioners within the field. It is research-oriented providing the student additional skills that are in demand at the state and federal levels. A Master's degree is a necessary credential for that person who wishes to teach at the community college level" (<http://www.wtamu.edu/academic/ess/hps/macjfaq.htm>). Interestingly, The George Washington University program description, for Criminal Justice, aims to put their program at arms length from what must be perceived as the applied nature of many of these degrees. It states: "The Criminal Justice program is an academic program weighted toward traditional Criminology (with some forensic science training as well), and is not intended to train practitioners who wish to work in Criminal Justice or security agencies" (<http://www.gwu.edu/~soc/>).

### Curriculum Content—course titles and descriptions

**4.11** More indicative of the two fields than program structure is curriculum content for it is the curriculum that informs us of what faculties see as the knowledge essential to the field. Given the large number of total courses offered, the focus here is on the required courses (see table 4 and 5). Before focusing on a comparison of curriculum content across the fields of Criminal Justice and Criminology, the analysis begins with an examination of within field curriculum.

Table 4. Core Required Courses for the 22 Programs Offering a Master of Arts Degree in Criminology

	n	%
Research Methods	20	91
Criminological Theory	19	86
Statistics/Quantitative Methods	15	68
Law	9	41
Sociological Theory	7	32
Deviant Behavior	6	27
Survey of Criminal Justice	5	23
Administration	3	14
Corrections	3	14
Ethics/Justice	3	14
Theory in Criminology and Criminal Justice	2	9
Program Evaluation	2	9
Advanced Statistics – Linear Modeling	2	9
Qualitative Methods	2	9
Law Enforcement	1	4
Teaching Intro to Sociology	1	4
Proseminar in Crime, Law and Justice	1	4
Contemporary Community Structures	1	4
American System of Justice	1	4

  

	n	%
Law and Society	1	4
Internship in Criminology	1	4
Designing a New CJS	1	4
Contemporary Analysis of African and Euro Centric Perspectives	1	4

Table 5. Core Required Courses for the 35 Programs Offering a Master of Arts Degree in Criminal Justice or Related Program\*

	n	%
Research Methods	29	83
Statistics/Quantitative Methods	24	68
Criminological Theory	22	63
Seminar in Criminal Justice	19	54
Organization and Management of Criminal Justice System	9	26
Law	7	20
Law Enforcement Administration	6	17
Criminal Justice Administration	6	17
Corrections	5	14
Ethics	5	14
Qualitative Methods	3	8
Data Analysis	3	8
Delinquency and Juvenile Justice	3	8
Program Evaluation	2	6
Courts	2	6
Criminal Justice Planning	2	6
Administration of Juvenile Justice	2	6
Race, Class and Gender of Crime and Justice	2	6
	n	%
Theory of Criminal Justice	2	6
Historical Analysis of Criminal Justice System	2	6
Foundations of Scholarship	2	6
Public Policy and Criminal Justice	2	6

\* There are a number of other courses that were required by only one program. For ease of presentation they are listed here. They are Crime and Criminal Justice, Applying Criminological Theory to Criminal Justice, Graduate Review in Criminal Justice, Teaching and Staff Development in Criminal Justice, Development of Sociological Theory, Contemporary Sociological Theory, Social Control and Juvenile Justice, Violence, Victims and Social Justice Response, Social Justice, Classical Theories in Sociology and Criminology, Contemporary Theories in Sociology and Criminology, Psychopathology, Computer Applications in Criminal Justice, Decision Making, Justice Program, Planning/Evaluation and Grant Writing, Legal Aspects of Criminal Justice Management, Community/Restorative Justice, Critical Issues and Criminal Justice Policy, Criminal Justice Policy, Criminal Justice Planning and Research, Planned Change in Criminal Justice, Civil and Criminal Liability, Criminal Justice and Community Action, Seminar in Applied Criminal Theory, Criminal Justice Planning and Program Development, Nature of Crime and Delinquency, Electronic Research, Theoretical Foundations, Research Practicum, Intervention Strategies: Changing Organizations and Communities and Victimology

**4.12** In Criminology, we identified 23 core courses; 22 in Criminal Justice. As previous studies have found, even when we examine the same degree within a particular field there is substantial variation to be found in the core curriculum of programs. In those programs offering an M.A. in Criminology, three classes are required by over half the programs. These are Research Methods (91%), Criminological Theory (86%) and Statistics (68%). No other class is required by more than half of the programs. In programs offering the M.A. in Criminal Justice the most commonly required class is Research Methods (83%). This is followed by Statistics (68%), Criminological Theory (63%) and Seminar in Criminal Justice (54%).

**4.13** There is substantial variation within the curriculum of the two degrees – the M.A. in Criminology and the M.A. in Criminal Justice. If we compare across the two fields, however, would there be a recognizable difference in curriculum content? Does earning an M.A. in Criminal Justice require the student to learn different material than the student who is earning an M.A. in Criminology? There are obvious similarities, with programs for both most commonly requiring Research Methods, Criminological Theory and Statistics. It is interesting that programs offering the M.A. in Criminal Justice often require Criminological Theory suggesting these recognize the connection between the two fields. In addition program requirements in Criminology and Criminal Justice are similar in their tendency to require Ethics, Corrections, Evaluation and Administration courses.

**4.14** Differences across the fields are apparent though. In Criminology, a higher percentage of graduate programs required research methods than is true for Criminal Justice programs (91% vs. 83%). In addition, and notably, Criminology programs require more theory than is typically offered in Criminal Justice programs. Criminology programs offer Criminological Theory (86%), Sociological Theory (32%), and Theory in Criminology and Criminal Justice (9%). Criminal Justice programs offer Criminological Theory (63%) and Theory of Criminal Justice (6%). Thus, almost a third of all M.A. in Criminal Justice programs (31%) require no theory at all. On the other hand, programs offering the M.A. in Criminology are much less likely to offer classes focusing on the various branches of the criminal justice system. Survey of Criminal Justice is offered by 23% of programs, along with Administration (14%), Corrections (14%) and Law Enforcement (14%). While those offering the M.A. in Criminal Justice offer such courses as Seminar in Criminal Justice (54%), Organization and Management in Criminal Justice System (26%), Law Enforcement Administration (17%), Criminal Justice Administration (17%), Corrections (14%) and Courts (6%).

**4.15** Two additional differences are striking. Interestingly, Sociology appears in Criminology programs in the guise of theory (at 32% of all programs and Teaching Introduction to Sociology – 4%) while Criminal Justice programs occasionally offer such courses as Development of Sociological Theory, Contemporary Sociological Theory, Classical Theories in Sociology and Criminology, and Contemporary Theories in Sociology and Criminology. Finally, Law is almost twice as likely to be a required course in a Criminology program as a Criminal Justice Master's program.

#### **Curriculum Content by Department Type**

**4.16** In the last part of the analysis we ask whether there is more similarity to be found in curriculum content when programs are divided both by field of study and department type (See tables 6 and 7). The analysis begins, as it did previously, with a brief discussion of within field comparisons.



Courts	0 0	0 0	1 25	1 33	0 0	0 0
Criminal Justice Planning	2 10	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Administration of Juvenile Justice	0 0	0 0	1 25	0 0	1 20	0 0
Race, Class and Gender of Crime and Justice	1 5	0 0	0 0	1 33	0 0	0 0
Theory of Criminal Justice	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	2 40	0 0
Historical Analysis of Criminal Justice System	2 10	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Foundations of Scholarship	2 10	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Public Policy and Criminal Justice	2 10	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0

**4.17** In Criminology, most programs are located in Sociology departments (8), combined Criminology and Criminal Justice departments (7) or in separate Criminology departments (6). Examining table 6, we can see that in Criminology, regardless of where the degree is housed, programs generally require: Research Methods, Criminology and Statistics, and that beyond these classes there is considerable variation in curriculum content. It is notable that of the types of departments, there is no more agreement on curriculum than when we examine all departments, except for Criminal Justice and Criminology departments. In these departments, compared to all Research Methods is required in 100% of the departments (compared to 87%), Criminological Theory 100% of the departments (compared to 75% for all) and Statistics is required 86% of the departments (compared to 68% for all). Above the tendency to teach Sociological Theory in departments offering the M.A. in Criminology was noted. However, we see now that this only occurs when the degree is offered in a Sociology Department.

**4.18** A number of other differences across department type stand out. Law and ethics courses are more apt to be required if the Criminology M.A. degree is housed in a separate Department of Criminology. If the degree is housed in a Sociology department, Sociological Theory is generally required (in 87% of all programs) as are courses in Corrections and Qualitative Methods. It is notable that Sociological Theory is not required in any program not housed in a Sociology Department. If the Criminology degree is housed in a combined Criminology and Criminal Justice department, required courses such as Survey of Criminal Justice, Theory in Criminology and Criminal Justice, and Law Enforcement are more typically seen.

**4.19** Looking at Table 7, we note that the vast majority of Criminal Justice M.A. programs are housed in a Department of Criminal Justice (20 of 35 programs). Four other M.A. in Criminal Justice programs are housed in Sociology departments, three in Justice Studies, two in Political Science and one in a combined Criminology and Criminal Justice department. When we examine curriculum in Departments of Criminal Justice there is some increase in agreement on required course. Most M.A. in Criminal Justice programs require Research Methods (85% compared to 83% for all programs), Statistics (85% compared to 68%), Criminological Theory (80% compared to 63%) and Seminar in Criminal Justice (65% compared to 54%). However after these four considerable variation in required courses remains.

**4.20** Next, examine tables 6 and 7 to compare across the two fields. Since we are largely interested in comparisons across the disciplines, the focus is on Criminal Justice departments offering the M.A. in Criminal Justice as compared to Criminology departments offering the M.A. in Criminology. This comparison shows no more disciplinary differences than above. Both most commonly require Research Methods, Criminological Theory and Statistics. As noted above Criminal Justice departments require statistics more frequently and Criminological Theory less frequently. In both there is considerable variation in required classes beyond the three mentioned above. Required classes on some part of the criminal justice system are more often found in Criminal Justice departments, with the exception of corrections which is more frequently found in Criminology departments.

## Discussion and Conclusion

**5.1** We found both consistency and difference in program structure and in curriculum content across the two fields of study. In terms of program structure there are similarities in thesis requirements and number of hours required. As one might expect, differences are found in where programs offering the MA. in Criminology and the M.A. in Criminal Justice are housed. The M.A. in Criminology is most commonly housed in a Sociology Department of a joint Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology. This suggests a recognition among those faculties of a connection between Criminology and Sociology, and Criminology and Criminal Justice. Both similarities and differences were found in program description. Similarities are found in the use of words or phrases such as "prepares for PhD", "critical", "theory", "research" and "teaching". As one might expect differences are found in the use of the words "Criminal Justice", "Criminology" and "Sociology". Beyond the obvious difference, programs offering the M.A. in Criminology are more likely to use the word "Sociology". In addition they are more likely to use the phrase "Criminal Justice" than Criminal Justice programs are to use the word "Criminology". Once again suggesting faculties in programs offering the M.A. in Criminology recognize a connection to either Sociology or Criminal Justice more than Criminal Justice faculties do to Criminology.

**5.2** Both diversity and similarity were found in the curriculum for graduate education in Criminology and Criminal Justice. Graduate M.A. programs in Criminology were more likely to require research methods than was true for Criminal Justice M.A. programs. Notably, Criminology programs required more theory than was typically offered in Criminal Justice programs. Almost a third of all M.A. programs in Criminal Justice required no theory at all; however, for M.A. programs in Criminology, 86% required at least criminological theory. Law is almost twice as likely to be a required course in a Criminology program compared to a Criminal Justice Master's program. An additional difference is found in the greater likelihood of programs offering the M.A. in Criminal Justice to require at least one class on some branch of the criminal justice system. Program requirements in Criminology and Criminal Justice are similar in their statistics requirements, as well as course requirements in ethics, corrections, evaluation and administration. These findings change little when we divide by program type.

**5.3** The lack of consistency in the curriculum in both areas suggests there remains little agreement about the content of each field. It also suggests that disciplinary lines are not clearly drawn as of yet and makes further comparisons across the two fields difficult. We believe, though, that the curriculum for M.A. graduate education in Criminology is distinct from that in Criminal Justice. As one might well expect,

looking at required courses, Criminology programs are more theoretically grounded than Criminal Justice M.A. programs; while Criminal Justice programs are more applied. These findings support Conrad and Jeffery's understanding of the two fields of Criminology and Criminal Justice. Both Conrad (Conrad & Myren 1979) and Jeffery (Ward & Webb 1984) argued that Criminal Justice was the application of Criminology, a policy oriented discipline, whereas Criminology was understood to be a social science discipline. We do not believe that Myren's position the Criminology was a mere part of the field of Criminal Justice can be supported. The lack of a theoretical core, evidenced in the relative lack of a theory requirement in Criminal Justice Master's programs, makes Myren's position untenable. Zalman's (1981) proposition that there is not a common paradigm under which these two fields could be combined may find some empirical support in light of our data. Jeffery's (see Ward & Webb 1984) proposition that there is little commonality between Criminology and Criminal Justice finds mixed support given our data. Clearly, there is both diversity and consistency in the curriculum between the two.

**5.4** Given the historical connection between the two fields, and, more recently, the proposed specialty area revisions outlined in the September/October 2005 issue of the *ASA Footnote's*, where a proposed *Social Control, Law, Crime, and Deviance* area is defined (which includes Criminal Justice, Criminology/delinquency, deviant behavior/social disorganization, law and society, penology/corrections and social control), one must wonder how an M.A. in Sociology with this specialty area is distinct from an M.A. in Criminology or Criminal Justice. In the current work, we found that most M.A. in Criminology programs are located in Sociology departments, that they often include the word "Sociology" in their programs descriptions and that Sociological Theory is offered on occasion. This suggests that Criminology is still well tied to Sociology. Closer inspection shows however that it is only in Departments of Sociology that programs descriptions and curriculum include sociology. When the M.A. is offered in a Criminology, or any other, Department the connection seems to be lost. All of this suggests that Criminology, as a field, is still wrestling with the questions explored in this paper. Beyond anything else, how does a discipline, create a core and theory when it does not appear to have a clear academic home? How much of a disciplinary core can be shared when a discipline is split between so many academic departments?

**5.5** Similar to the findings of previous studies that examined Criminal Justice curriculum, we find that there continues to be a lack of agreement about what a distinct curricular core for "traditional Criminology" as a field looks like compared to Criminal Justice. Even though the Joint Commission posited that a difference between the disciplines exists, one does not observe a major curricular difference. While Criminology Master's programs typically require more theory, the specific class offerings between the two degrees are not distinct. Further, we wonder about the distinctness between Criminology, Criminal Justice and Sociology Master's curriculum save differences in core theory classes. In a way, we feel we have raised as many questions as we set out to better understand. The complexities between these disciplines, where they are best housed and how distinct they really are, will undoubtedly be a topic for much heated debate for years to come.

---

## Notes

1We use the word "department" to refer to the division of the university offering the M.A. degree. For consistency we use department in the text even though some of the M.A. degrees under examination are offered out of colleges or schools. "Department" is distinct from "program" which refers to the degree requirements each department requires for the M.A. it offers.

2At the University of Delaware, the department name is "Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice", however, the graduate catalogue does list the department name as "Department of Sociology and Criminology".

---

## References

- BUFKIN, Jana. (2004). Criminology/Criminal Justice Master's Programs in the United States: Searching for Commonalities. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education* 15: 239-262. [doi:10.1080/10511250400085971]
- Clear, Todd. (2001). Has Academic Criminal Justice Come of Age? *Justice Quarterly* 18: 709-726.
- CONRAD, John and Richard Myren. (1979). *Two Views of Criminology and Criminal Justice: Definitions, Trends and the Future*. Monograph prepared for the Joint Commission on Criminology and Criminal Justice Education and Standards.
- CRESSEY, Donald. (1978). Criminological Theory, Social Science and the Repression of Crime. *Criminology* 16: 171-191.
- FLANAGAN, Timothy. (1990). Criminal Justice Doctoral Programs in the United States and Canada: Findings from a National Survey. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education* 1:195-213.
- HALE, Donna. (1998). Criminal Justice Education: Traditions in Transition. *Justice Quarterly* 15: 385-394.
- JEFFERY, C. Ray. (1977). Criminology: Whither or wither? *Criminology* 15: 283-286. [doi:10.1111/j.1745-9125.1977.tb00067.x]
- JEFFERY, C. Ray. (1978). Criminology as an Interdisciplinary Behavioral Science. *Criminology* 16: 149-169.
- MORN, Frank. (1980). *Academic Disciplines and Debates: An Essay on Criminal Justice and Criminology as Professions in Higher Education*. Monograph prepared for the Joint Commission on Criminology and Criminal Justice Education and Standards.
- MORN, Frank. (1995). *Academic Politics and the History of Criminal Justice Education*. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press.
- MYREN, Richard. (1980). 'Justicology': An Idea whose Time has Come. *The Justice Reporter* 1: 1-7.
- NEWMAN, D. J. (1993). The American Bar Foundation Survey and the Development of Criminal Justice Higher Education. Pp. 279-349 in *Discretion in Criminal Justice: The Tension between Individualization and Uniformity*, edited by Lloyd Ohlin and Frank Remington. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.



Pearson, Richard, Theodore Moran, James Berger, Kenneth Laudon, Janice McKenzie and Thomas Bonita. (1980). *Criminal Justice Education: The End of the Beginning*. New York: John Jay Press.

Peterson, Thomson. *Peterson's Guide to Graduate Programs in the Humanities and Social Sciences, 2004*. Lawrenceville, NJ: Thomson Peterson's.

RADZINOWICZ, Leon. (1962). *In Search of Criminology*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

RECKLESS, Walter. (1970). American Criminology. *Criminology* 4-20.

SHERMAN, Lawrence. 1978. *The Quality of Police Education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey- Bass Publications.

SOUTHERLAND, Mittie. (2002). Criminal Justice Curricula in the United States: A Decade of Change. *Justice Quarterly* 19: 589-601.

SOUTHERLAND, Mittie. (1991). Criminal Justice Curricula in the United States: An Examination of Baccalaureate Programs, 1988-1989. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education* 2: 45-68.

SUTHERLAND, Edwin. (1947). *Principles of Criminology*. Chicago: J.P. Lippincott Company.

TRIPLETT, Ruth and Elizabeth Monk-Turner. Where is Criminology? The Institutional Placement of Criminology with Sociology and Criminal Justice. *Criminal Justice Review*.

WARD, Richard and Vincent Webb. (1984). *Quest for Quality*. New York: University Publications.

WOLFGANG, Marvin and Ferracuti. (1967). *The Subculture of Violence: Towards an Integrated Theory in Criminology*. London: Tavistock Publications.

ZALMAN, Marvin. (1979). *A Heuristic Model of Criminology and Criminal Justice*. Monograph prepared for the Joint Commission on Criminology and Criminal

Justice Education and Standards.