

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA
COLLEGE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SERVICE
SCHOOL OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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MASTERS STUDENT HANDBOOK

2011-12

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OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAMS

The School of Criminology and Criminal Justice of the University of Nebraska at Omaha offers two types of Masters degree programs.

Masters of Science Program:

The Masters of Science (MS) degree is a terminal non-thesis degree designed to meet the needs of professional practitioners in the field of criminal justice. To complete the MS degree, students must complete a comprehensive exam or the Capstone course, in which students will conduct an independent research project and write a report similar to those written in agencies and Criminal Justice organizations.

The MS program requires that the student successfully complete 36 credit hours.

Required Courses (12 credit hours)

Elective CJ Courses (12 credit hours)

Elective Cognate Courses (12 credit hours)

(The Cognate is 12 credit hours if comprehensive exam is taken or 9 credit hours + the 3 credit hour Capstone Course).

Masters of Arts Program:

The Masters of Arts (MA) degree is a non-terminal degree designed to emphasize research activity and independent inquiry. This degree is recommended for those students seeking an interim degree prior to pursuing a doctoral degree. To complete the MA degree, students must write and orally defend a thesis. The thesis is an independent research project and an academic exercise that is written to the standards of the faculty members on the thesis committee. A thesis requires a committee of three faculty members and typically takes two semesters to complete.

The MA program requires that the student successfully complete 30 credit hours.

Required Courses (12 credit hours)

Elective CJ Courses (12 credit hours)

Thesis (6 credit hours)

* Note: Students have 10 years to complete their degrees, but if they do not enroll in classes for more than 4 years consecutively, they will have to reapply to the program before taking classes again.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Admission to the program is governed by the requirements specified by the University of Nebraska at Omaha's Graduate College. Students have ten (10) years from admission to complete program requirements. In addition to the basic requirements established by the Graduate College, the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice requires the following:

Unconditional Admission:

1. Possession of a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution.
2. Student has a 3.00 GPA (Average of B) overall in the undergraduate work.
3. At least 12 credit hours of Criminal Justice courses or related courses that meet the requirements of the current School undergraduate curriculum, including a basic statistics course, a research methods course, and introductory Criminal Justice course, and a criminology course.

* Note: A GRE score of 850 or higher is required for unconditional admission to the MA program or to be considered for an assistantship. A GRE score of 800 will be considered for provisional admission.

Provisional Admission:

1. Student must have a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution (if the institution is non-accredited, 12 credit hours of graduate course work at UNO must be successfully completed before the student is eligible for unconditional admission).
2. Has not completed all of the undergraduate prerequisite course requirements for unconditional admission to graduate study.
3. Student has no less than a 2.75 overall GPA for the last two years of undergraduate work and not less than a 2.75 GPA in the undergraduate major.

Note: Applicants must submit information required by the Graduate Studies and complete the application on-line. Applicants must also submit 2 letters of recommendation, and a letter of intent no more than 4 pages discussing reasons for pursuing a graduate degree, interests in the field, and career goals for the future.

STUDENT ASSISTANTSHIPS

The School of Criminology and Criminal Justice have very few student stipends/assistantships available at the Masters level. Most assistantships are reserved for Ph.D. students. Professors

often apply for grant funding, and when awarded, they can employ Masters Students. It is difficult to secure external funding for research, however, so Masters students should not count on faculty having grant funding for assistantships, nor should they expect funding from the School. Students should check the UNO website on career opportunities if they wish to work on campus or otherwise seek employment off campus. Also, students are encouraged to seek advice from UNO's services for financial aid. Government and private loans are available for graduate school.

THE PLACEMENT OF GRADUATE STUDENTS ON ACADEMIC PROBATION

When a student performs at a level below the required standards for successful progress in the graduate program (i.e., GPA falls below 3.00, receipt of a grade below a "B", or other instances), Graduate Studies notifies the Masters or Doctoral Program Coordinator. The Coordinator, along with the School Director and/or students' supervisor committees, must make a decision on whether to dismiss the student from the program or place the student on academic probation with a set of expectations to be completed in order to be released from academic probationary status. If the student successfully completes those expectations, they are taken off probation by Graduate Studies.

It is the expectation of the School that if the reason for probation is the receipt of a grade lower than a "B" then students will retake that course and earn a "B" or better in it. If there is an instance where that course is not offered again for another year, then the Coordinator and/or supervisory committee must meet with the student and review a new "Plan of Study" that provides a suitable substitute course. If the course is a required course, the student must take it again.

If the probation is the result of the GPA falling below 3.00, then students have one semester to raise the GPA back above 3.00.

In other instances, such as a student's failure to make adequate academic progress in their program, students can be placed on probation, have academic funding stopped, or be dismissed from the program.

Students placed on academic probation cannot teach undergraduate classes at UNO.

GRADE APPEALS PROCESS

Appeal of grades in graduate-level courses shall be made through the graduate student grade appeal procedures for the campus through which the grade was awarded. Students who believe their evaluation in a course has been prejudiced or capricious must first attempt to resolve the matter with the course instructor and then the department through which the course

was offered.

The initiation of the appeal in writing by the student must be filed within six weeks following receipt of the grade from the Office of the Registrar.

In cases where a grade lower than a "C" will result in dismissal from the graduate student's program, the Dean for Graduate Studies will notify the Graduate Program Committee Chair that the student will be automatically dismissed from his/her graduate program. The student will have a two-week grace period from the date of the dismissal notification to the date of the request to the Registrar for disenrollment in all graduate coursework. This two-week period allows the student an opportunity to present his/her case informally to the course instructor and, if necessary, to the chair of the graduate program committee before being terminated from the program and disenrolled from courses. A student who has been dismissed from a graduate program and disenrolled from course work may still file a formal appeal to the campus Dean for Graduate Studies, but is no longer a student in good standing and is prohibited from taking graduate courses until the formal appeal has been resolved.

If the matter is not resolved, the student may file an appeal in writing to the campus Dean for Graduate Studies, who shall inform the student of the grade appeal procedures approved by the Graduate Faculty or by their duly elected representative Graduate Council for that campus, and shall forward the appeal to the student-faculty committee or council which is designated to hear graduate-level course grade appeals on that campus. Since awarding grades in courses occurs at the individual campus level, the decision of the campus committee or council designated to hear the case on behalf of the campus Graduate Faculty shall be final and is not subject to further appeal.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Administratively, the program leading to a Masters degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice is located in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, which is a unit of the College of Public Affairs and Community Service. General supervision of the Masters program is the responsibility of the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice Graduate Program Committee, whose members are appointed by the UNO Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. The School Director recommends that the Masters Program Coordinator serve as co-chair of this committee, along with the Doctoral Program Coordinator, to the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research.

It is the responsibility of the Masters Program Coordinator to provide general supervision of the masters degree programs, including admission of students, implementation of policy, and general administration of the degrees.

MASTERS STUDENT ADVISOR

When a student is officially admitted to the MS or MA program, the Masters Program Coordinator assigns a faculty member to serve as the student's academic advisor. Masters students are assigned to faculty members in Omaha only, so they have ready access to their advisors without traveling to Lincoln. Masters students should make contact via phone or email within a few weeks of the assignment in order to discuss course work selections. Prior to making contact with the student advisor, students should create their own plan of study.

Plan of Study

Students' plans of study should take into consideration their career goals. Individual career goals should drive the choice of courses taken and the degree pursued (MA or MS). Once career goals are identified, students should review the graduate course catalog to decide which courses would best address their needs. From a review of the course catalog, a plan of study can be created. After achieving a rough outline of a plan of study, students should contact their advisors. Advisors can help students match courses to career goals, tell students when courses will be offered, and provide advise on whether an MA or MS degree would best fit the student's goals. In subsequent semesters, it is up to students to decide if they require further assistance from their advisors on revising their plans of study.

NOTE: It is students' responsibility to check their MAV LINK accounts and conduct a degree audit to determine unfulfilled requirements prior to contacting their advisors. This should be done every semester to ensure students are receiving the appropriate credit for courses taken and are on track to graduate. Students should inform their advisors and/or the Masters Program Coordinator of any discrepancies noted reporting MAV LINK as soon as possible so these can be resolved through the Graduate Studies College.

PROGRAM OF STUDIES FOR THE MS AND MA DEGREE

Program of Studies for the Masters of Science:

Required Courses (12 credit hours)

8010 The Nature of Crime
8020 Seminar in Administration of Justice
8030 Criminal Justice Research, Theory and Methodology
8950 Statistical Applications in Criminal Justice

Elective Criminal Justice Courses (12 credit hours)

The student will select 4 elective CJ courses with advisor approval. (Note: Students are

encourage to take 1 Diversity course either in CJ or a Masters level course in another department).

8040 Seminar on Police and Society
8060 Seminar on the Criminal Court System
8080 Seminar on Juvenile Justice
8130 Seminar on Women and Crime
8180 Criminal Justice Internship
8190 Independent Study
8970 Masters Capstone Course
8990 Thesis
9150 Special Topics in Criminal Justice Research
9160 Seminar in Community Based Corrections
9170 Institutional Corrections
9200 Seminar on Violent Crime
9220 Theory II & Theory Construction
9980 Directed Readings

Elective Cognate Courses (12 credit hrs + comprehensive exam OR 9 credit hrs + capstone)

In consultation with advisors, students selects four (4) courses in a related field, such as but not limited to, business administration, psychology, political science, IS&T, sociology, etc.

NOTE: All course substitutions or exchanges must be approved by the Masters Program Coordinator.

Independent Study, Directed Readings, and Internships

Independent study and Directed reading courses and Internships are available to both MA and MS students as course electives. A total of 7 credit hours can be taken as either independent study or directed reading.

Independent Study 8190 and Directed Reading 9980:

In order to enroll in the 8190 or 9980 course, students should identify a topic or course of study of interest to them and contact a faculty member well versed in this area. Students should approach the faculty member by explaining their areas of interest and their ideas for the topic of study. The faculty member and student should agree on the topic of study, the required assignments to complete the study, and the number of credit hours that will be used for the study. Once a faculty member agrees to supervise the student, the student then enrolls in either 8190 or 9980 for the appropriate number of credit hours agreed upon with the instructor. Given that few graduate courses are offered over the summer, these courses provide students with an excellent opportunity to continue to work toward their degree over the summer. They also offer students

the opportunity to learn about a topic not otherwise covered in the course schedule, work closely with faculty members, and work independently to advance their knowledge.

Internship 8180:

To enroll in an internship, students should contact Dr. Bill Wakefield (554-2610), the graduate internship coordinator. Internships provide students with the opportunity to obtain practical experience in a real world criminal justice setting. Students should approach Dr. Wakefield with an idea for what they would like to accomplish with an internship and have an idea of an agency or organization with which they would like to work. Internships cannot occur, however, at students' current place of employment unless the work of the internship will take place in a different section of the organization. It is at the students' and Dr. Wakefield's discretion in regard to the completed product that will be submitted for internship credit. Examples of internships can include, but are not limited to: evaluations of programs within an agency, assessments of organizational policy, investigations of the impetus for agency policy, etc.

NOTE: It takes on average 2 months to make arrangements for internships, gain agency approval, etc. so if students wish to enroll for internship credit for the summer, they must begin making arrangement in March to begin the internship no later than May. For fall, internship arrangements must begin in June to begin the internship in August.

Once all course work is completed, or in the last semester of the student's coursework, students must enroll in the CJ 8970 Masters Capstone Class. For those students admitted prior to 2009, they may either enroll in the Capstone course or may register with the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice to take the final comprehensive exam.

The Comprehensive Exam

The comprehensive exam should be taken in students' last semester or coursework. It requires that the student use materials from all of their course work to answer a series of essay questions. Students must pass the comprehensive exam to complete the degree requirements. Comprehensive Exams are schedule for the second Friday of September for the fall semester and the last Friday of January for the spring semester.

The Capstone Course (CJ8970)

Rather than take a comprehensive exam, students can elect to take the capstone course. This course is 3 credit hours of the 12 elective cognate credit hours and is **ONLY OFFERED IN SPRING SEMESTERS**. Once all required course work is complete, the student can register to take the capstone course. In this course, students will make arrangements with the instructor to conduct a research project. The course will end with a research report detailing results and written in a way consistent with agency and/or Criminal Justice organizational standards.

Program of Studies for the Masters of Arts:

Required Courses (12 credit hours)

8020 Seminar in Administration of Justice
8030 Criminal Justice Research, Theory, and Methodology
8950 Statistical Applications in Criminal Justice
9020 Seminar on Theories of Crime

Elective Criminal Justice Courses (12 credit hours)

The student will select 4 elective CJ courses with advisor approval. (Note: Student must take 1 Diversity course either in CJ or a Masters level course in another department).

8040 Seminar on Police and Society
8060 Seminar on the Criminal Court System
8080 Seminar on Juvenile Justice
8130 Seminar on Women and Crime
8180 Criminal Justice Internship
8190 Independent Study
8970 Masters Capstone Course
8990 Thesis
9150 Special Topics in Criminal Justice Research
9160 Seminar in Community Based Corrections
9170 Institutional Corrections
9200 Seminar on Violent Crime
9220 Theory II & Theory Construction
9980 Directed Readings

Thesis (6 credit hours)

After all course work is completed, students should begin developing the topic for their thesis. Simultaneously, students should select a faculty member to chair their theses committees and in consultation with the faculty chair, pick two other faculty members to serve on the thesis committee. Of these two other faculty members, both must be on UNO's graduate faculty, and one must be from the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice and the other from another department/school at UNO, UNL, or UNMC. Once students appoint a faculty member as chair of their thesis committee, the **APPOINTMENT OF THESIS ADVISOR FORM** must be submitted to the Masters Program Coordinator.

The Graduate Studies College requires students to complete and submit a Proposed Supervisory Committee form, which identifies the chair of the thesis committee and the two other committee members. It is at the chair of the thesis committee's discretion when this form is completed, but

it must be completed and submitted after students hold either a topic approval meeting or a prospectus defense (1st 3 chapters of thesis).

Also, after a topic approval meeting or a prospectus defense, students must complete a Thesis Proposal Approval Form, obtain faculty signatures, and submit it to Graduate Studies.

The following are some general guidelines for the Masters thesis:

- The thesis should generally be approximately 40 – 50 pages in length at maximum.
- Students should avoid gathering their own data if possible.
- No new methodological techniques should be employed in data collection or analysis if possible.
- Students should finish their Masters thesis in two academic semesters. If students are receiving departmental funds, they risk losing their funding if the thesis is not completed in two semesters.

Once the thesis committee gives approval of the thesis, it is the responsibility of the student to schedule a time and location for the thesis defense. The student must successfully, orally defend the thesis. After successful defense, the student must get signatures on the Report on Completion of Degree Form and submit it to the Graduate Studies College.

Summary of Thesis Forms to be Completed and Submitted to the Masters Program Coordinator (MPC) and Graduate Studies

- Appointment of Thesis Advisor Form – submitted to MPC only
- Proposed Supervisory Committee Form
- Thesis Proposal Approval Form
- Report on Completion of Degree Form

NOTE: During thesis work, students should check their MAV LINK accounts to ensure that all classes required for their program have been completed. To meet the MA requirements for the degree, only 6 hours of thesis are required. Masters students are not required to be enrolled in thesis hours the semester they defend their theses.

Change in Degree Program

Students can change their degree program from the Masters of Arts to the Masters of Science (or vice-versa) if they choose. To make a change, students must complete a *Change of Plan of Study form* and submit it to the College of Graduate Studies.

STEPS IN THE PROCESS

1. The student should consult with their advisor by phone or email before registering for courses.
2. It is to students' advantage to create a plan of study, listing which courses will be taken and in which semesters. This will help prevent students from missing classes they want or need when they are offered.
3. It is students' responsibility to check their MAV LINK accounts periodically to ensure that their courses are being counted correctly toward their degree. If students find a problem, contact the Masters program Coordinator.
4. After completion of all course work, students must decide whether to take the comprehensive examination or the capstone course. If the student elects to take the comprehensive exam, they must contact the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice to get on the list for the exam. Comprehensive exams are given the second Friday in September for fall semester and the last Friday in January for the spring semester. Students may pick up the exam and return it or receive the exam via email. Students have ten days (10) to complete the exam and turn it in. Late exams will not be accepted. Students must successfully pass the exam. If students fail the exam, they can register to take it one additional time and must pass on this second try, or they will be dismissed from the program.
5. If the student elects to take the Capstone course (CJ8970), they must register for that course after all required course work is completed. Students are responsible for creating their own topic of study. This topic for research can be practical in nature or can be considered pure academic research, but it must be based on the collection of empirical data. The student must successfully complete the Capstone course in order to complete the degree requirements.
6. After successful completion of the Comprehensive Examination or the Capstone course, students must complete the *Application for Graduation form* and submit it to the Graduate Studies College.
7. MA students skip the comprehensive exam and capstone course. These students must register for 6 thesis hours. Keep in mind that the thesis will likely take 8 months to a year to complete. Students do not have to be registered during the summer semester unless the thesis will be completed during the summer session.

BASIC EXPECTATIONS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

The first year of Graduate school is often the most difficult for students as they become accustomed to the workload and faculty expectations for students. Newly admitted graduate students should remember that they are no longer undergraduate students and their work must

reflect this fact. Written work must be free of errors, and students must be prepared to discuss course material in a professional manner. If students do not complete the required reading, it will be noticeable to professors and fellow students. Because graduate classes are smaller than undergraduate classes, professors will notice if students are unable to answer questions or discuss the reading assignments in class.

Students will receive extensive feedback on their assignments. They should receive this feedback in the spirit in which it is given, as a way to help them improve their writing and speaking skills in order to successfully complete the Masters program. Carefully read this feedback in order to avoid making these mistakes on future assignments. Also, read and follow all of the written and oral instructions given in class.

Missed classes at the Graduate level are unacceptable without a valid reason such as a *serious* illness. Students should not show up late to class, play on their computers, cell phones or other electronic devices in class.

IMPORTANT DATES

Fall 2011

Comprehensive exam: September 2

Application for Graduation: October 14

Last day to defend thesis: November 23

Last day to submit thesis to graduate school: December 1

Graduation: December 17

Spring 2012

Comprehensive exam: January 27

Application for Graduation: March 2

Last day to defend thesis: April 12

Last day to submit thesis to graduate school: April 19

Graduation: May 5

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF GRADUATE COURSES: 2011-2013

Last updated 7/26/11

Year 1 Fall Odd Years – Fall 2011

On-Campus Offerings

8010	Nature of Crime	RM
8950	Statistical Applications in CJ (Stats I)	RM
9100	Special Problems in Statistical Analysis (Stats III)	RD
9020	Seminar on Theories of Crime	RD
9700	Teaching at the College Level	RD
8040	Seminar on Police and Society	E
8130	Seminar on Women and Crime	E
8060	Seminar on Criminal Court System	E
9150	Special Topics in Criminal Justice Research	E
8180	Criminal Justice Internship	E
8190	Independent Study	E
9980	Directed Readings	E
8990	Thesis	RMA
9990	Dissertation	RD

On-Line Offerings

8800	Special Topics: Econ/Financial Crisis & Crime	E
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Year 1 Spring Even Years – Spring 2012

On-Campus Offerings

8020	Administration of Justice	RM
8030	CJ Research, Theory, and Methodology	RM
8210	CJ Program Evaluation & Policy Analysis	RD
8970	Masters Capstone Course	RMS
9080	Advanced Statistical Applications (Stats II)	RD
9090	Special Problems in Methods (Qualitative)	RD/E
9010	Seminar on Law & Social Control	E
9040	Comparative Criminology & CJ Systems	E
8180	Criminal Justice Internship	E
8190	Independent Study	E
9980	Directed Readings	E
8990	Thesis	RMA
9990	Dissertation	RD

On-Line Offerings

8050 Seminar in Corrections E

Summer 2012

On-Line Offerings

8203 Terrorism E

Year 2

Fall Even Years – Fall 2012

On-Campus Offerings

8010 Nature of Crime RMS
8950 Statistical Applications in CJ (Stats I) RM
9020 Seminar on Theories of Crime RD
9100 Special Problems in Statistical Analysis (Stats III) RD
9700 Teaching at the College Level RD
9800 Advanced Research Design RD
9030 Seminar on Minorities & the CJS E
8080 Seminar on Juvenile Justice (on line) E
9160 Seminar in Community Based Corrections E
9150 Special Topics in Criminal Justice Research E
8180 Criminal Justice Internship E
8190 Independent Study E
9980 Directed Readings E
8990 Thesis RMA
9990 Dissertation RD

On-Line Offerings

8030 CJ Research, Theory, and Methodology RMA/RMS
8080 Seminar in Juvenile Justice E

Year 2

Spring Odd Years – Spring 2013

On-Campus Offerings

8020 Administration of Justice RM
8030 CJ Research, Theory, and Methodology RM
8970 Masters Capstone Course RMS
9080 Advanced Statistical Applications (Stats II) RD
9050 Academic Writing RD
9090 Special Problems in Methods (Quantitative) RD/E
9220 Theory II & Theory Construction E
9200 Seminar on Violent Crime E
9170 Institutional Corrections E
8180 Criminal Justice Internship E

8190	Independent Study	E
9980	Directed Readings	E
8990	Thesis	RMA
9990	Dissertation	RD

On-Line Offerings

8040	Seminar in Police and Society	E
8950	Statistical Applications in CJ	RMA/RMS

Summer 2013

On-Line Offerings

8010	Nature of Crime	RMS
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Note:

RM = Required Masters level

RD = Required Doctoral level

E = Elective Masters & Doctoral level

RMS = Required for the Masters of Science

RMA = Required for the Masters of Arts

FACULTY IN THE SCHOOL OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Amy Anderson	Pennsylvania State University. Juvenile Delinquency, Communities & Crime, Advanced Research Methods and Statistics
Candice Batton	Vanderbilt University. Criminological Theory, Violent Crime.
Jon Brauer	North Carolina State University. Juvenile Delinquency and Family Influences.
Pauline Brennan	State University of New York at Albany. Court Processing and Sentencing
Samantha Clinkinbeard	University of Nevada at Reno. Social Psychology, Juvenile Delinquency, Intersection between Psychology and Law
John Crank	University of Colorado. Police Culture, Organizational Theory, Criminal Justice Education, Issues in Counter-Terrorism
Chris Eskridge	Ohio State University. Criminal Court Systems, Organized Crime,

	Administration of Justice, Terrorism
Dennis Hoffman	Portland State University. Administration of Justice, Organized Crime
Lori Hughes	Washington State University. Dynamics of Violence, Offender Reintegration, Cyber Crime
Susan Jacobs (Emeritus)	University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Criminal Law and Procedure, Court Systems
Colleen Kadleck	University of Cincinnati. Policing, Quantitative Methods, Evaluation Research
Chris Marshall	Iowa State University. Victimization, Social Control, Quantitative Methods, Theory Construction
Robert Meier	University of Wisconsin. Criminological Theory, Social Control, White Collar Crime.
Robbin Ogle	Pennsylvania State University. Women & Crime, Corrections, Theory Construction, Organizational Theory
Lisa Sample	University of Missouri at St. Louis. Criminal & Juvenile Justice Policy, Sex Offending, Mixed Methodological Research Design
Jukka Savolainen	University of Albany, SUNY. Life Course and Developmental Perspectives, Crime Control and Prevention, Violence, Theory
Pete Simi	University of Nevada at Las Vegas. Youth & Adult Gangs, Social Movements and Collective Violence, Qualitative Methods
Marc Swatt	University of Nebraska at Omaha. Statistics, Research Methods, Offending over the Life Course
Rebecca Trammell	University of California at Irvine. Violence, Corrections, Gender Differences in Prison Violence
William Wakefield	South Dakota State University. Corrections, Comparative Criminal Justice Systems, Juvenile Justice, Program Evaluation Research
Samuel Walker (Emeritus)	Ohio State University. Police & Society, Administration of Justice, Race & Crime

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What courses should I take?

You should begin with the 2 required masters courses offered in each of the first two semesters. If you are a part time student, then you may want to take only one of these. If full time, you should take both of these and possibly an elective as well. Part time students, who are employed full time, should not take more than 1 - 2 courses because of the level and volume of reading and writing required in graduate school.

2. What are the Options in Public Administration or Counseling?

You are not required to select one of these options. The MS degree is available without an option. The options are intended to give students more extensive education in a specific areas of interest and are intended to help students pursue their career goals.

3. What level of work is expected for a Masters student?

The expectation for reading, writing, thinking, discussion, preparation, and professionalism is significantly higher for Masters students than for undergraduate students. You should expect to do two to three times as much work, and it should be done at a level reflecting graduate education. This means preparing for each class, thinking critically about the material, participating in discussions with meaningful comments, behaving professionally, reading extensively in class and on your own, and finally, writing at a graduate student level.

Graduate students should never turn in a paper that contains grammatical errors or lacks citations of all of the relevant research in the area. Writing must be done in appropriate academic style and reflect significant knowledge and thought on the topic.

4. What is a Seminar? How is it different from an undergraduate course?

A seminar is the style of course utilized for most graduate education. The seminar consists of the professor covering some material not available in the readings and then proceeding into extensive discussion and debate over the material. These courses generally do not involve much lecture or group work. This helps graduate students to further develop as scholars and hone their skills in intellectual debate.

5. What do I have to do to pass?

You must maintain a "B" average to remain in the program. However, passing is not sufficient in graduate school. The goal of graduate school is to promote intellectual curiosity.

Students should begin to develop as scholars and professionals.

6. What is a Thesis?

A thesis is a long research paper that contains a review of all relevant research on the topic, a research design, and a discussion of results. The thesis is intended to be an original piece of research that makes a contribution to the field of criminology or criminal justice. Masters of Arts students are required to write a thesis for 6 credit hours of the degree. Masters of Science students have the option of taking a comprehensive exam or the capstone course instead.

7. What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism occurs when you utilize the words or ideas of someone else and do not cite them. Obviously, any time you quote someone in a paper it must be cited. However, you must also cite when you borrow their ideas or reword something they have written. Please note plagiarism is grounds for dismissal not only from our program, but also from the University. For additional information, please refer to the student code of conduct.

8. What are Flags, Holds, and Permits?

Flags and Holds are used by the University administration to notify registrar, students, and administrators that there is some problem. For example, non-payment of fees or tuition, visa issues, need for updates on student demographic information, student needs to see advisor, etc. Permits are issued by administrative personnel to allow the student to do something that they otherwise would not be permitted to do. For example, permits are used to enroll students in classes that are full, allow students to take a class without the pre-requisites, register without fee payment, etc. If you experience a flag or hold, or need a permit, you should contact your assigned advisor or the Masters Program Coordinator

9. What should I do if I am having difficulty WRITING?

If your feedback from professors indicates that your writing needs to improve, then you should go to the UNO Writing Center and obtain assistance. The UNO Writing Center is located at Arts & Sciences Hall, Rm. 150. For information on hours of operation, check the UNO website. There is also a satellite writing center in the Criss Library at UNO that provided services for students who need to improve their writing and editing skills. Take advantage of the opportunity.

Also, complete your assignments as early as possible so that you have enough time to proofread and work with the writing center. NEVER wait until the last minute to write an assignment and work with your professors if you have difficulty with the content of the material.

10. What does the Capstone course (CJ8970) involve?

If students intend to take the capstone course, they should think of a research questions that can be asked and answered in a 16-week time frame. The project can be of any kind, including case study, cost/benefit analysis, content analysis, program evaluation, work process or process improvement analysis, etiological study, organizational analysis, policy analysis, or an exploratory study. The study can involve quantitative data collection, qualitative methods, or both. Some potential techniques might involve surveys, interviews, focus groups, performance measurements, forecasting, etc.

The student will then begin the literature review and methodological development. Once this portion of the report is complete, the student will proceed with data collection and analysis. After the research project is completed, the student will write the final section of the report, which actually becomes the first section of the final report, the executive summary.

The Instructor will give a deadline a draft and final copy of each of these sections of the final report. The sections will be submitted via email to the instructor, so they can be reviewed. When the final report is completed, the student will present it to class in a 5-8 minute discussion.

11. What do I do if MAV LINK indicates some classes do not apply to my degree or do not meet any requirements?

Contact the Masters Program Coordinator, explain the problem, and he/she will address the issue.

12. Can I enroll in 9000 level courses?

Masters students can enroll in 9000 courses, but it is best if you check with your advisor and the instructor before enrolling. 9000 level courses often involve more extensive reading lists than typically found in 8000 level courses. Family and work commitments should be taken into account when considering 9000 level courses. Your advisor, the Masters Program Coordinator, and/or the instructor can help you decide if 9000 level courses work with your time commitments and plan of study.

13. What kind of feedback will I receive from my professors?

For graduate students, professors give extensive and critical feedback about the work. Some students are quite shocked that they are given a failing grade and/or extensive feedback on assignments, and some of them drop their classes or assume that the professor simply “does not like them.” In reality, professors give this kind of feedback because they need you to rise to the level expected for a graduate student and perform accordingly. You should welcome constructive criticism about your work and push yourself to do a better job. Take your assignments to your professor to discuss how to improve your work. Also, be prepared for this feedback by reminding yourself that the professor took the time to give you enough feedback to help you with future assignments. This means that they care about you and your work. Respond to this feedback by following their instructions and fixing each of the problems they point out.

