

# Criminal Justice BA/BS

## Goal #1: Development of Communication Skills

### Goal Description:

Students should demonstrate competency in communication skills.

**Providing Department:** Criminal Justice BA/BS

### RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

#### Demonstrate Effective Written Communication and Critical Thinking

##### Learning Objective Description:

Students will demonstrate effective communication and critical thinking skills important for employers in criminal justice and related fields and/or an advanced degree criminal justice or related field.

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

#### Assessment of Writing Assignments

##### Indicator Description:

Undergraduate criminal justice students will demonstrate effective written communication and critical thinking skills in criminal justice related areas.

A total of 258 artifacts from CRIJ 3378 Methods of Criminal Justice Research were scored as part of this writing assessment by 23 faculty and staff volunteers during a two-day in-person scoring session in July 2022 using a locally-developed writing rubric. This rubric was divided into four separate domains: (1) Ideas/Critical Thinking/Synthesis; (2) Style; (3) Organization; and (4) Conventions. A copy of this rubric is attached. Each domain was scored individually from 1 to 4, with 1 being the lowest and 4 being the highest. Each artifact was reviewed by two raters, with a third rater introduced when the scores were too far out of agreement (i.e., a score of 1 and 4 for the same domain). The third rater would only score those domains that were not in agreement, and the two closest scores would be kept. The individual domain scores for each student writing artifact were then averaged together to provide a total average score for the artifact.

Attached Files

 [Writing Assessment Rubric.docx](#)

##### Criterion Description:

Student scores will have improved from the 2018-2019 OAPA scores.

**Contextual Information:** The last time OAPA scored writing artifacts was in 2018-2019. The Department of CJ and Crim Undergraduate Committee scores writing assessments in the years that OAPA does not. Given that this year was a year in which OAPA did the scoring, results can be compared and determine if improvements have been made.

##### Findings Description:

A table comparing this year's writing assessment scores to the 2018-2019 writing assessment scores indicates that improvements (albeit mostly minor) were made in the Style, Organization, and Convention domains. The ideas/critical thinking/synthesis domain scores remain identical. Please see the attached table for in-depth results.

OAPA also provided evaluator comments that identified problems they found to be most often present in the papers they scored. Comments were provided by 6 of 23 evaluators (~25%). The most common issue in the Ideas/Critical Thinking/Synthesis rubric category was paraphrasing or summarizing without explaining or applying the information to provide new ideas. For the Style category, evaluators felt the writing style was often too informal. For the Organization category, common issues were lack of flow and logical connection of ideas and the need for better transitions. For the Conventions category, evaluators discussed that students needed improvement in citing references and using in-text citations. Evaluators were also asked to provide additional comments about the papers, outside of the rubric categories. One evaluator expressed that sometimes the writing prompts were poorly defined, and one evaluator felt that overall, the writing skills were low-quality. Additionally, one evaluator expressed concern that some papers had similar language and phrasing and wondered if the papers had passed a plagiarism check.

Attached Files

 [Writing Scores Comparison Table.docx](#)

 [AWC Survey Feedback.pdf](#)

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

### **Systematic Process for Writing**

#### **Action Description:**

A report was written that provided the results, recommendations, and next steps. This report is attached here and was provided to the College, Department Curriculum Committee, and Graduate Development and Assessment Committee. A meeting was held with GDAC as well as with the PhD students who teach our CRIJ 3378 course in the Fall semester.

A summary of the recommendations and actions are listed below:

#### IV. Recommendations

We are working with the COCJ to develop specific recommendations for improving CJ students' writing. In the interim, consider:

1. Keeping these results and feedback in mind when developing writing assignments and incorporating them into your courses. Consider incorporating the characteristic features identified in the below rubric into your own feedback rubrics.
2. Encouraging students to use the services provided by the Writing Center in the Academic Success Center or using their established handouts in your own courses.
3. Scaffolding writing assignments in the course. Doing this would allow students to incorporate feedback into their work over the course of the semester so that they can improve on their writing skills.

#### V. Actions:

Given that our doctoral teaching fellows primarily teach CRIJ 3378, Drs. Ren and Ingram reviewed all doctoral teaching fellows' syllabi and writing prompts prior to the start of the fall 2022 semester to ensure that writing prompts were appropriate and not "poorly written." This report was provided to Dr. Ren so that she can share with GDAC.

Assessment is intended to help make improvements to program goals. It is not intended to be an evaluation of individual instructors. The overall goal is to help our students become better writers. Thanks to everyone who has participated in this process in the past.

Attached Files

 [CJ Writing Assessment Report Draft.pdf](#)

## Goal #2: Development of Professional Skills

### Goal Description:

CJ students should demonstrate professional skills necessary to pursue employment in criminal justice related areas and/or an advanced degree in criminal justice or a related field, including comprehensive knowledge of communication and critical thinking skills.

**Providing Department:** Criminal Justice BA/BS

**Progress:** Ongoing

### RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

##### Student Preparedness for Future Career

###### Learning Objective Description:

Students will be evaluated by agency administrators and provide feedback on how well prepared they appear for a career in their respective field.

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

##### Internship Supervisor Evaluations

###### Indicator Description:

Student preparedness will be evaluated by end of semester evaluations sent to the direct supervisors of our student interns. A copy of the evaluation is attached. Note the pdf example says mid-semester, but the final evaluations are the same.

The evaluations will be used to assess the intern's capabilities in the field in the areas of: understanding job requirements (knowledge); understanding the structure, organization, and administration of the intern agency (knowledge); cooperation with staff (ability); communication (skill); courteous/responsiveness (ability); willingness to engage in self-improvement (ability); and adaptability (ability). Students are rated on these dimensions using the following scale: Exceeds Expected Level (3), Expected Level (2), Below Expected Level (1).

The evaluations cover students who took our CRIJ 4373 Undergraduate Internship Criminal Justice course in the Spring (n=30) and Summer (n=24) semesters. Internship supervisors were to complete the evaluation and go over it with the student. The student should then upload the evaluation into the course Blackboard page. Evaluations were uploaded for 16 of 30 enrolled students in the Spring 2022 semester and 19 of 24 enrolled students in the Summer 2022 semester. This provides an overall response rate of 65% of enrolled students.

Internship supervisor evaluations are used to assess the knowledge, skills, and abilities of our students. In doing so, it serves as one indicator of the following dimensions highlighted in our department's current mission statement: acquiring knowledge of the roles of criminal justice agencies, integrating ability and skills in criminal justice settings, and being equipped with the ability to adapt to the evolving nature of the criminal justice system.

In addition the evaluations serve as a way to measure essential skills and abilities deemed important by criminal justice hiring agencies based on our most recent program health check conducted by OAPA. These skills and abilities include communication and cooperation.

Attached Files

 [InternshipAgencyEvaluation.pdf](#)

**Criterion Description:**

80% of student interns will be rated at "expected level" or "above expected level" on each individual item assessed. This is the first time student interns have been assessed in our program. As such, we have no baseline for an established criterion. The internship is also not a program requirement and so no programmatic thresholds are established. Finally, there are no current professional or licensure passage standards for this indicator. In this regard, 80% was chosen as this would indicate that the large majority of our interns are performing at the expected level.

**Findings Description:**

The evaluations were coded for the following areas: understanding job requirements (knowledge); understanding the structure, organization, and administration of the intern agency (knowledge); cooperation with staff (ability); communication (skill); courteous/responsiveness (ability); willingness to engage in self-improvement (ability); and adaptability (ability). Students were rated on these dimensions using the following scale: Exceeds Expected Level (3), Expected Level (2), Below Expected Level (1).

Key Findings: 100% of interns with completed evaluations (N=54) were rated at either the expected level or exceeds expected level across each of the seven areas.

On the 3 point scale, the average ratings were as follows:

1. Willingness to engage in self-improvement: 2.88
2. Communication Skills: 2.86
3. Adaptability: 2.83
4. Cooperation with staff=2.80
5. Courteous/Responsive=2.79
6. Understands Structure, Organization, Administration of Agency=2.68
7. Understands Job Requirements= 2.68

What the program discovered as a result of the findings: Based on the submitted evaluations, our student interns are rated very highly by their supervisors. Not a single intern was rated below expected level on any of the dimensions. The results imply that the objective was met: More than 80% of interns were rated at the expected level or above expected level across all categories.

Areas for improvement: Approximately 35% of students did not submit their supervisor evaluation via Blackboard precluding their inclusion in the results. This has led to a change in the submission process for the next assessment cycle. Supervisors will be sent a qualtrics survey to be completed and then reviewed with the intern. The survey will also expand on the knowledge, skills, and abilities measured.

While all the results are positive, the two lowest scores were knowledge based: understanding job requirements and the structure, organization, and administration of the agency. This information can be used to make improvements during the interns' onboarding period.

Finally, while a useful indicator of students' professional skills, CRIJ 4373 is an advanced CRIJ elective and not a program requirement. The results only reflect approximately 1% of our CJ BA/BS majors. Including additional indicators to assess this goal would be beneficial.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action - Internship Supervisor Survey

Action Description:

Based on the results, the following actions will be taken:

- 1. The COCJ Internship Director and Internship Assistant have agreed to assist with future efforts to assess intern's knowledge and skills.
- 2. The results of this assessment report will be provided to them so that they can continue to monitor and enhance student success in career development.
- 3. The evaluation will be conducted electronically moving forward. This should reduce the amount of missing information.
- 4. Feedback will also be solicited for interns who fail to complete the internship for the entire semester.
- 5. This year only end of year evaluations were conducted. Next year, there will be a mid-semester and an end of semester evaluation.
- 6. Think about identifying another indicator of student preparedness given that the internship is not required and only represents 1% of our majors.

Goal #3: Revise Curriculum Map

Goal Description:

The Curriculum and Assessment Committee needs to review the curriculum map document to make sure the learning objectives and core courses are still appropriately matched and to determine if objectives are still being introduced, reinforced, and mastered in the courses they are listed under. Furthermore, the map needs to identify how writing and oral communication skills are incorporated throughout the curriculum. After that, the committee should work with faculty who regularly teach the core courses listed on the map to identify possible indicators within the courses to assess the learning objectives. Once updated, the new map should be included as part of the Assessment Plan in Campus Labs. The committee should work with Lori Rodriguez in the College of Criminal Justice to revise the map.

Providing Department: Criminal Justice BA/BS

Progress: Ongoing

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Update Curriculum Map

Performance Objective Description:

Align learning objectives in the major core to identify when skills are being introduced, reinforced, and mastered in the courses they are listed under. Include writing and oral communication skills into the curriculum map. Identify possible indicators within the courses to assess the learning objectives.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Curriculum Map instrument

KPI Description:

Identify possible indicators within the courses to assess the learning objectives. Furthermore, the map needs to identify how writing and oral communication skills are incorporated throughout the curriculum. After that, the committee should work with faculty who regularly teach the core courses



listed on the map to identify possible indicators within the courses to assess the learning objectives. Once updated, the new map should be included as part of the Assessment Plan in Campus Labs. The committee should work with Lori Rodriguez in the College of Criminal Justice to revise the map.

**Target Description:**

The performance objective will be met when the new curriculum map is developed by the committee.

**Results Description:**

The College of Criminal Justice began a college-wide curriculum mapping project during the Fall 2022 semester. The undergraduate curriculum committee will provide assistance to the College Retention and Assessment Specialist who is leading the project. Based on this method, the curriculum map should be completed by the end of Spring 2023.

**RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3**

**Action - Curriculum Map Instrument**

**RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3**

**Revise Curriculum Map**

**Action Description:**

The College has developed a 3 phase plan for the curriculum mapping project. Our committee will assist the college with tasks as asked. Below is the College's action plan.

**Phase I: Course Descriptions Compliancy (Fall 2022):**

- Review undergraduate course syllabi (by section)/course descriptions from catalog to make sure they match (in progress)
- Report any discrepancies to Dept Chairs (mid-Sept)

**Phase II: Identifying Learning Objectives (Fall 2022):**

- Review all course syllabi (by section) and identify learning objectives. (Complete by Oct 1)
- Review of all worksheets to identify variances & report to Dept Chairs (by early November)

**Phase III: Curriculum Mapping (Spring 2023) The timeline for this phase will be impacted by the last step in Phase II. If there are significant discrepancies among Learning Objectives, Depts will be asked to review and evaluate findings of report before Phase III begins.**

- Distribute Course Learning Objectives to Faculty
- Ask faculty to identify indicators for learning objectives
- Incorporate into Curriculum Map (**Major requirements only**)

**New Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item**

**Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):**

**Closing Summary**

In order to improve on our assessment plan, the assessment committee will focus on two areas for the upcoming cycle:

1. Action: Revise our curriculum map. The Curriculum and Assessment Committee needs to review the curriculum map document to make sure the learning objectives and core courses are still appropriately matched and to determine if objectives are still being introduced, reinforced, and mastered in the courses they are listed under. Furthermore, the map needs to identify how writing and oral communication skills are incorporated throughout the curriculum. After that, the committee should work with faculty who regularly teach the core courses listed on the map to identify possible indicators

within the courses to assess the learning objectives. Once updated, the new map should be included as part of the Assessment Plan. A similar process was used by the MS in Victim Service Management program with success. The committee should work with Lori Rodriguez in the College of Criminal Justice to revise the map.

2. Goal/Learning Objective: Demonstrate Effective Written Communication Skills. The committee will continue efforts for assessing written communication skills. Two areas of improvement will be:
  1. A. Developing a systematic process for collecting written artifacts by the department.
  2. B. Getting the results from the last 3 years of assessments out to the faculty, especially those that teach our WE courses, along with recommendations for improving critical thinking, style, organization, and conventions in students' writing.

#### **Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:**

1. The curriculum map was not updated. A college-level curriculum mapping project is underway.
2. 2a. This year, the written artifacts were scored by OAPA. The process for data collection was developed by the College and was carried out.
3. 2b. This was completed a report was written covering the last 4 years of assessments. Currently, this report has been distributed to the College Retention and Assessment Specialist, the department curriculum committee, and the graduate development committee and includes recommendations.

#### **New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item**

##### **Closing Summary:**

1. Action: Create a new curriculum map. The Curriculum and Assessment Committee will work with the COCJ Retention and Assessment specialist to create a new curriculum map document to make sure the learning objectives and core courses are appropriately matched. Once created, the new map should be included as part of the Assessment Plan. A similar process was used by the MS in Victim Service Management program with success. The committee should work with Lori Rodriguez in the College of Criminal Justice to revise the map.
2. Action: Summary of actions for assessing career readiness. Based on the results, the following actions will be taken:
  1. The COCJ Internship Director and Internship Assistant have agreed to assist with future efforts to assess intern's knowledge and skills.
  2. The results of this assessment report will be provided to them so that they can continue to monitor and enhance student success in career development.
  3. The evaluation will be conducted electronically moving forward. This should reduce the amount of missing information.
  4. Feedback will also be solicited for interns who fail to complete the internship for the entire semester.
  5. This year only end of year evaluations were conducted. Next year, there will be a mid-semester and an end of semester evaluation.
  6. Think about identifying another indicator of student preparedness given that the internship is not required and only represents 1% of our majors.
3. Action: Summary of written communication skills. We are working with the COCJ to develop specific recommendations for improving CJ students' writing. Keeping these results and feedback in mind when developing writing assignments and incorporating them into your courses. Consider incorporating the characteristic features identified in the below rubric into your own feedback rubrics.
  2. Encouraging students to use the services provided by the Writing Center in the Academic Success Center or using their established handouts in your own courses.
  3. Scaffolding writing assignments in the course. Doing this would allow students to incorporate feedback into their work over the course of the semester so that they can improve on their writing skills.

4. New initiative: Based on the results of the curriculum mapping project summarized above, we will work to identify another program goal, learning objective, and indicator to directly assess student learning.