









Online Assessment Tracking Database

Sam Houston State University (SHSU)
2014 - 2015

Criminal Justice PhD

Goal	Conduct Scientific Research  Enhance and develop student's ability to conduct scientific research that adds to the current body of knowledge in criminal justice and criminology.
Objective (L)	Doctoral Students Will Be Able To Conduct Original Criminal Justice And Criminology Research  Students completing the Ph.D. program will demonstrate the ability to produce original research by integrating knowledge, skills, and abilities learned throughout the program.
Indicator	Successful Defense Of A Research Portfolio  Doctoral students are required to submit and orally defend a portfolio of selected written research products that were developed during their tenure in the doctoral program to a panel of faculty members. The current policy states that the portfolio must contain at least two research articles that are deemed by the committee members as acceptable for submission for publication to a peer reviewed journal.
Criterion	Students Will Score A Pass Or High Pass   Students will receive a Pass or High Pass by the committee members based on the overall quality of the research papers presented. Students will have integrated the various disparate components of the literature on a specific criminal justice or criminological topic into a cogent review of literature, presented a well-defined research question, quantitative or qualitative analysis of data, a summary of results, and contextualized those results. A discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the research will also be included.
Finding	All Students Defending Their Portfolio Received A Pass Or High Pass  All students who defended their portfolio in AY14-15 (7/7) were admitted to candidacy and formally approved to begin work on their dissertation. 5 (71%) students received a score of Pass and 2 students (29%) received a score of High Pass.
Criterion	Students Defending Their Portfolio Will Have At Least 1 Paper Published Or Under Review  While the current policy states that the minimum requirement for a portfolio defense is two publishable articles, the Graduate Standards and Admissions Committee would like to start seeing Ph.D. students who are defending their portfolio have at least one paper either published or under review at a peer-reviewed journal at the time of the defense.
Finding	57% Of Students Defending Their Portfolio Had At Least 1 Manuscript Published Or Under Review  A review of the CVs of Ph.D. students who defended their portfolio in AY14-15 revealed that

57% (4/7) of them had at least 1 paper published or under review in a peer reviewed journal at the time of their defense.

Indicator

Successful Completion Of The Dissertation

Successful completion of an original research study as demonstrated by the defense of a Dissertation using a faculty-developed rubric. The rubric uses a 1 (insignificant) to 5 (critically significant) rating of specific criteria each dissertation should address. These criteria include: choice of problem, theoretical framework, mode of inquiry, execution of study, interpretation of results, analysis, written presentation, originality of idea and/or approach, and contribution to the field.

Criterion

Students Will Score At Least 80% On Each Of The 9 Criteria Of The Dissertation Rubric

Students will demonstrate their ability to engage in an original research study within the field of criminal justice and criminology. At minimum, a dissertation prospectus will include a literature review of relevant empirical literature and a well defined and defensible methodology. The final dissertation will include the statistical analysis appropriate to the methodology described, and the contextualization of the study results within the existing literature. Students defending their final dissertation will receive a score of 80% or above on each of the 9 elements outlined in the dissertation rubric.

Finding

Majority Of Students Scored An 80% Or Above On All 9 Elements Of The Dissertation


Overall, the majority of the students demonstrated competency in conducting original criminal justice and criminological research. Our findings revealed that only 1 student fell below the 80% threshold for "choice of problem" and "originality of idea and/or approach". Students seem to excel (as demonstrated by a score of 5/5 on the rubric) in the development of a theoretical framework (80%; 6/8), their mode of inquiry (80%; 6/8), the execution of their study (80%; 6/8), the originality of their ideas (80%; 6/8), and the contribution that their study makes to the field (80%; 6/8). Areas in need of improvement include the statistical analysis and the interpretation of the results, with 50% (4/8) and 38% (3/8) of students scoring a 4/5, respectively, which is the minimum requirement.


Action


Encourage Students To Submit Research For Publication And Strengthen Statistical Abilities


For the upcoming year, the Graduate Standards and Admissions Committee will review the different standards across the various portfolio committees to see if a more uniformed approach is needed. In addition, portfolio committee members will encourage students to submit their


research articles for publication prior to the defense of the portfolio in an effort to increase marketability. The findings from our dissertation rubric also suggest that the Department needs to continue focusing on strengthening students' statistical abilities. This will be accomplished by 1. providing a faculty led 1/2 day workshop on statistics the summer prior to starting the Ph.D. program, 2. offering various statistics related elective courses for 2nd and 3rd year Ph.D. students who are beginning to work on their portfolio and dissertation, and 3. providing additional statistical and methodological workshops throughout the semester to further develop specific skills and abilities.



Goal	Doctoral Teaching Fellows Provide Quality Classroom Teaching
	 Enhance and develop student's ability to demonstrate high levels of teaching effectiveness.

Objective (L)	Provide Effective Undergraduate Classroom Instruction 
	Advanced doctoral students will develop and demonstrate their aptitude for providing high quality classroom instruction for undergraduate students.

Indicator	IDEA Evaluation Forms 
	Student ratings of Doctoral Teaching Fellows using the Individual Developmental Education Assessment (IDEA) Evaluation forms.

Criterion	Score Of 4.0+ On IDEA 
	Doctoral Teaching Fellows will perform at or above the similar/middle 40% box on the IDEA evaluation form. Summary Evaluation will be 4.0 or above for teaching evaluations on the following criteria 1. progress on objectives, 2. excellent teacher, and 3. excellent course.

Finding	Performance Of IDEA Evaluations 
	18 courses were taught by Doctoral Teaching Fellows in the Fall 2014, with 72% of them (13/18) scoring a 4.0 or above on the IDEA summary evaluations. More specifically, 72%, 83%, and 67% scored a 4.0 or above on the elements of progress on objectives, excellent teacher, and excellent course, respectively.
	14 courses were taught by Doctoral Teaching Fellows in the Spring 2015, with 79% of them (11/14) scoring a 4.0 or above on the IDEA summary evaluations. More specifically, 71%, 79%, and 64% scored a 4.0 or above on the elements of progress on objectives, excellent teacher, and excellent course, respectively.

Indicator	Faculty Observations  Doctoral Teaching Fellows teaching face-to-face will be observed in the classroom by a faculty member using a faculty-developed rubric. Elements being evaluated include Preparation for Lecture, such as organization, content, subject knowledge, and use of Powerpoint as well as Delivery of Lecture, such as professionalism, eye contact, enthusiasm, vocal properties, classroom management, body language, and length of presentation.
Criterion	Score Of At Least 80% Or Above On Faculty Observation   Faculty observations of a DTF led lecture will be conducted using the faculty-developed rubric. Students will obtain an average score of 80% or above on the overall rubric and on each of the elements.
Finding	Performance On Faculty Observations  All DTFs received a score of 80% or above on the faculty teaching observation rubric. The average score was 88.4 with a range of 80 to 95.5. A review of the average for each of the elements reveal that students excel at professionalism in the classroom (97%), maintaining eye contact with the students (92%), enthusiasm (94%), body language (92%), subject knowledge (91%), and use of Powerpoint (92%). Areas in need of improvement include vocal properties (82%), classroom management (82%), and length of presentation (80%).
Action	Teaching Effectiveness  We will continue to focus on improving Doctoral Teaching Fellows teaching effectiveness. Prior to being assigned an undergraduate class to teach, incoming DTFs will be required to 1. provide a guest lecture with a faculty observer, 2. attend SHSU's annual teaching conference, and 3. complete the Teaching Online with Blackboard Certification Series course. We will also provide a faculty-led discussion on setting and meeting objectives in the classroom as well as discuss and practice (with mock classroom scenarios) proper delivery of lectures and classroom management in CRIJ 7333 (a pre-requisite to teaching).

Previous Cycle's "Plan for Continuous Improvement"

For the 2014-2015 academic year, an increased emphasis will be on strengthening our doctoral teaching fellows teaching skills by providing detailed feedback by faculty observers. Students will also be encouraged to present their original research at University-sponsored events and/or national professional conferences. The development of our PhD students statistical skills is contingent on access to the latest versions of various statistical software programs used in the social sciences (e.g., STATA, MPlus, HLM, etc.). Further, the utilization of the portfolio process as evidence of doctoral student writing ability and research competency will be examined to determine its feasibility in future assessment cycles. A review of the current curriculum is also needed to ensure that we remain current and competitive.

Please detail the elements of your previous "Plan for Continuous Improvement" that were implemented. If elements were not implemented please explain why, along with any contextual challenges you may have faced that prevented their implementation.

The newly developed Graduate Standards and Assessment Committee members provided teaching observations to all DTFs in an effort to provide feedback on their strengths and areas for improvement in teaching.

In AY14-15, 21 PhD students presented their research at the American Society of Criminology conference in San Diego, CA in November 2014 and 22 PhD students presented their research at the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences in Orlando, FL in March 2015.

19 PhD students presented their research at SHSU's Graduate Research Exchange in February 2015 and 7 PhD students presented their research at the Woodlands Center Research Symposium in April 2015.

The Graduate Standards and Admissions committee is continuing to discuss the utilization of the portfolio process as evidence of doctoral student writing ability and research competency.

A careful review of the Ph.D. curriculum by the Graduate Standards and Admissions committee compared to other top-ranking CJ Ph.D. granting institutions resulted in a curriculum change for required courses. Doctoral students must now chose 2 out of 4 additional core requirements: 1) Legal Aspects of the Criminal Justice System (CRIJ 7375), 2) Seminar in American Courts (CRIJ 7338), 3) Seminar in American Corrections (CRIJ 7336), or 4) Seminar in American Policing (CRIJ 7334) rather than only requiring Legal Aspects of the Criminal Justice System (CRIJ 7375).

Plan for Continuous Improvement - Please detail your plan for improvement that you have developed based on what you learned from your 2014 - 2015 Cycle Findings.

For the 2015-2016 academic year, continued emphasis will be placed on strengthening doctoral student research and teaching skills with an overall goal of placing our graduates in academic positions.

In addition to discussing the utilization of the portfolio process as evidence of doctoral student writing ability and research competency, the Graduate Standards and Admissions Committee will review the different standards across the various portfolio committees to see if a more uniformed approach is needed. In addition, portfolio committee members will encourage students to submit their research articles for publication prior to the defense of the portfolio in an effort to increase marketability.

The Department will focus on strengthening students statistical abilities by 1. providing a faculty led 1/2 day workshop on statistics the summer prior to starting the Ph.D. program, 2. offering various statistics related elective courses for 2nd and 3rd year Ph.D. students who are beginning to work on their portfolio and dissertation, and 3. providing additional statistical and methodological workshops throughout the semester to further develop specific skills and abilities.

Students will be encouraged to publish their research findings in peer-reviewed journal articles as well as present their research at national conferences and University-sponsored events. The Department will start tracking Ph.D. student peer-reviewed publications.

The development of our PhD students statistical and research skills is contingent on 1. access to the latest versions of various statistical software programs used in the social sciences (e.g., STATA, MPlus, HLM, etc.), 2. student travel and professional development funds, and 3. summer research fellowships.

The Graduate Student Development and Assessment Committee will continue to provide formal faculty observations of Doctoral Teaching Fellows. This year, the committee will also include informal "pop-in" observations throughout the semester to provide additional feedback for improvement. Furthermore, to promote excellence in teaching, incoming DTFs will be required

to 1. provide a guest lecture with a faculty observer, 2. attend SHSU's annual teaching conference, and 3. complete the Teaching Online with Blackboard Certification Series course. The instructor of CRIJ7333 (a pre-requisite to teaching) will also discuss setting and meeting objectives in the classroom and practice (with mock classroom scenarios) proper delivery of lectures and classroom management techniques.

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