

Criminal Justice BA/BS

Comprehensive knowledge

Goal Description:

Exiting seniors should exhibit comprehensive knowledge of key components of the criminal justice system, criminological theory, and methods of inquiry.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Exhibit Comprehensive Knowledge

Learning Objective Description:

Students will demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of the structure and functions of the various components of the criminal justice system

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Senior Exit Exam

Indicator Description:

Each semester, all graduating seniors are asked to complete an exit exam, through Survey Monkey, an online data collection/response validation website. This survey provides faculty a means of assessing students' comprehension and retention on key concepts provided to them during their educational experience. The 60-item Exit Exam, created by faculty, assesses learning in seven core areas.

Criterion Description:

Graduating students will achieve an average of 70% on the exit survey. Last year this average was below 70% but our department will continue to strive toward this goal.

Findings Description:

For 2015-2016, graduating seniors who took the exit exam overall averaged a 68.9%. The exam covered 8 topical areas. Average scores for each topic include: criminal justice (74.3%), law (75.0%), police (77.7%), courts (74.3%), corrections (74.1%), theory (56.5%), methods (55.4%), and diversity (60.3%). Individual topic area results highlight areas of concern, which should be the focus of improvement efforts this next year.

Attached Files

 [Senior Exit Exam Question Bank 2015-2016](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Develop Active Assessment Schedule

Action Description:

In order to better integrate the assessment process, an assessment schedule will be developed to implement and gather indicators of student success from the core classes in which they are taught. The schedule will be based on the curriculum map that ties assessment indicators to program objectives within the core courses.

Attached Files

 [Curriculum Map](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Develop Comprehensive Writing Assessment Toolkit

Action Description:

In order to better assess the variety of student writing occurring in multiple sections of writing enhanced research methods courses, an assessment toolkit will be developed that offers options for assessment activities that are better suited to different forms of student writing.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Theoretical Foundations

Learning Objective Description:

Students will understand the prevailing theoretical foundations of criminology.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

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Development of professional skills

Goal Description:

Exiting seniors 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 various research strategies, communication and critical thinking skills, and legal issues.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Communication and Critical Thinking

Learning Objective Description:

Students will demonstrate effective communication and critical thinking skills necessary to pursue employment in criminal justice related areas and/or an advanced degree criminal justice or related field.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Development Of Scholarly Research Proposals

Indicator Description:

Undergraduate criminal justice students will develop a scholarly research paper proposal in their core required Research Methods course (CRIJ 3378). Writing and research skills will be scored by a rubric agreed upon by a faculty committee. Each professor will utilize this rubric when grading the student research paper proposals. These guidelines include areas of organization, content, quality of proposed research, hypothesis construction and writing.

Criterion Description:

Students will score at 70% or above on the research paper scoring rubric.

Attached Files

 [Rubric for Research Proposal](#)

Findings Description:

Evaluation of the writing assessment process was ongoing throughout this past academic year by the Department's assessment committee. Curriculum mapping was conducted to determine other options for the evaluation of student writing. The assessment committee determined that it evaluating writing samples from all writing enhanced courses would provide a more comprehensive picture of the status of student learning. The new writing assessment process will be implemented for AY2016-2017

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RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1**Knowledge of Methods****Learning Objective Description:**

Students will demonstrate knowledge of the methods used to generate useful scientific knowledge in the fields of criminal justice and criminology.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2**Senior Exit Exam****Indicator Description:**

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RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Law and Legal Process

Learning Objective Description:

Students will understand the goals and procedures of law and the legal process.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Senior Exit Exam

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Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

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

As the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology begins its third year as a distinct department, it is increasingly evident that additional focus needs to be placed on the assessment plan. The first two years of assessment were relatively transitory as the organizational structure of both the

College and the Department have occurred. Entering into the new academic year, a renewed emphasis on "doing something more" is underway but potentially not apparent as part of the documented assessment plan to date.

First and foremost, to improve our assessment ability of the BA/BS in Criminal Justice, a working group/committee comprised of Department of CJC faculty members will be convened beginning in August 2016. For many years, the assessment of this degree plan existed at the College level which was then turned over to the department chair to perform in consultation with faculty. Enhanced inclusion of faculty in this process and diffusion of this responsibility will allow for the stimulation of both faculty "buy in" and new ideas for approaches to assessing student learning across the curriculum. The department has historically relied upon a post test only/ exit exam strategy with our graduating seniors as a major criteria for assessment in addition to assessing scientific writing. Additional efforts for assessment of student during their studies will be considered. It would behoove the department to have a number of approaches to ongoing feedback rather than relying on "end of the line" product assessment.

If the avenues of assessment are to continue, a key aspect for the improvement of our assessment efforts will include obtaining a large subset of our undergraduate students for the scientific writing assessment. The current sample size is small by comparison and limited to three sections of a course that used a common assessment rubric. Additional faculty and instructor "buy in" will be needed to achieve this goal. The Department Chair will accept the responsibility for strongly encouraging faculty utilize this redesigned rubric to grade a scientific writing assignment.

We will also provide specific feedback to all of our faculty and instructors regarding the strengths and weaknesses displayed by our students in their writing so that broad based efforts can be made by all faculty members to develop our student's scientific writing ability.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

A standing assessment committee was formed where members are faculty from varied areas within criminal justice, in order to provide insight into opportunities to improve the assessment process throughout the Department.

The committee has been working to improve the assessment process and develop a culture of assessment, which will allow for access to better indicators of student success by moving away from the emphasis on the senior exit exam as a primary indicator to implementing smaller scale assessment activities throughout core courses.

Additional work is underway to examine the writing assessment process. In order to improve the reach of the writing assessment process, the committee has proposed to develop an assessment toolkit that will offer options for instructors to choose from that are better suited and the most appropriate for the variety of writing assessments conducted in different course sections.

Plan for Continuous Improvement

Closing Summary:

For the 2016 - 2017 academic year, the Department of Criminal Justice & Criminology will continue to place needed focus on implementing and improving the assessment plan.

A new assessment schedule has been put in place in order to reduce the burden the changes in the assessment plan might place on instructors in the classroom. This schedule will allow for the capture of indicators of student success throughout the academic year, in addition to the senior exit exam sent out at the end of each Fall and Spring semesters.

Additional development of the communication and critical thinking assessment will continue to better capture where and how assessment activities are already taking place and improve faculty "buy-in". This will, hopefully, improve the sample size available for evaluating this assessment indicator.

Based on the development of the assessment committee, it is now possible to have a mechanism through which assessment activities and results can be shared with the other faculty members. The Assessment Committee chair will work with the Department Chair in order to make sure the faculty are informed of assessment activities and will work regularly to encourage participation in collecting assessment indicators.