

GONZAGA UNIVERSITY
College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Criminal Justice

Degree: B.A. in Criminal Justice

The criminal justice program is designed to help students acquire the following competencies:

1. **Knowledge and awareness of sociological theories of deviance and crime.** As a sociology-based criminal justice program, one of our primary goals is for our students to develop an understanding of the dominant theories of crime and deviant behavior as they apply to criminology, deviance and juvenile delinquency. All of our Criminal Justice majors are required to take at least one of three courses that emphasize these theories: SOCI 350, Deviant Behavior; SOCI 351, Criminology; and SOCI 353 Juvenile Delinquency. The instructors of these courses have agreed to emphasize theories of crime and deviance. Many students take two or more of these courses, counting one toward the theory requirement and the other(s) as electives. In addition, our capstone course, CRIM 499, Criminal Theory and Measurement emphasizes these theories. We strive to help our students develop a critical understanding of the major theories.
2. **An understanding of research methods and statistics.** Empirical verification of theory, and development of theory from empirical examination of social processes and social structure is central to sociological thinking. Accordingly, all Criminal Justice majors must complete SOCI 304, Sociological Research Methods and a statistics course. The capstone course, CRIM 499, Criminal Theory and Measurement also includes a research methods component. We strive to help our students develop an understanding of quantitative and qualitative methods, research design, measurement, application of statistics to sociology, and research ethics.
3. **An understanding of the administration of criminal justice.** Criminal justice involves three administrative processes: policing, the courts, and corrections. We strive to help our students develop an understanding of the procedures involved in the administration of criminal justice, and to be able to critically analyze the way criminal justice is administered in the United States. Students receive an overview of the administration of criminal justice in the required CRIM 101, Introduction to Criminal Justice. In addition, all of our majors are required to complete at least one advanced course dealing with the administration of criminal justice from the following: CRIM 240, Issues in Law Enforcement; CRIM 352, Corrections; and CRIM 390, The American Court System. Many students take two or more of these courses, counting

one toward the administration of criminal justice requirement and the other(s) as electives.

4. **Exposure to topics in Psychology and Political Science related to Criminal Justice.** Although the foundation of our program is sociological, we recognize that other disciplines, especially Political Science and Psychology, have contributed to scholarship in criminal justice. As a consequence, our students are required to complete one Psychology course that contributes to an understanding of the origin of criminal behavior, and two Political Science courses that contribute to an understanding of the administration of criminal justice in the United States. These courses are selected from a list of alternatives. Students may choose to take additional courses from the same list as electives.
5. **An opportunity to learn about law.** Although we do not require students to complete courses on criminal law, we offer several electives dealing with the law including CRIM 386, Criminal Law; CRIM 380, Criminal/Civil Trial Procedure (for mock trial team participants); POLS 303, Civil Liberties; POLS 323, Constitutional Law; and PHIL 240, Philosophy of Law.
6. **An opportunity to learn about specific forms of criminal activity.** Students may learn about a variety of criminal activities including both criminal and non criminal forms of deviant behavior, white collar and elite crime, domestic terrorism, and gender related aspects of crime and criminal patterns. Students are not required to take these courses, but they may take up to two to meet the two course elective requirement.
7. **Critical thinking.** Unlike more applied programs in criminal justice, a major focus of liberal arts based programs like ours is critical analysis of criminal justice. Our goal is not just to teach our students how criminal law is supposed to be created and applied and how criminal justice is administered in the United States, but also to help them develop the knowledge and skills to critically evaluate the law and current practices in the administration of criminal justice. Reflecting the Gonzaga University mission statement, we want our criminal justice majors to be able to critically evaluate the administration of criminal justice from the standpoint of social justice. To do so requires a number of critical thinking skills such as the ability to draw inferences from theories and data, comparing and contrasting ideas and theories, being able to recognize unstated assumptions, deduce conclusions from theoretical statements or data, interpret and weigh evidence, evaluate strengths and weaknesses of arguments and research methods, read and interpret quantitative data displayed in tables and graphs, and to apply concepts, hypotheses and theories to new problems.