

CRIMINAL JUSTICE, B.S. (UNIVERSITY COLLEGE)

Seven Penn State campuses are scheduled for closure after Spring 2027: DuBois, Fayette, New Kensington, Mont Alto, Shenango, Wilkes-Barre, and York. New students are not being admitted at these campuses.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: Beaver, DuBois, Fayette, Greater Allegheny, Hazleton, Lehigh Valley, New Kensington, Schuylkill, Shenango, Wilkes-Barre

Program Learning Objectives

Beaver, New Kensington, and Shenango Campuses

- **Core criminological knowledge and concepts:** Students will be able to describe the functioning of the American criminal justice system and applicable special topic areas in relation to relevant issues within the three primary branches of the Criminal Justice System (Law Enforcement, Courts, Corrections).
- **Apply analysis and evaluation strategies:** Students will be able to apply justice-related analysis and evaluation strategies, including applying theories of criminal and deviant behavior, to formulate solutions to criminological and societal problems.
- **Interpret research and data:** Students will be able to formulate research questions, implement criminal justice research methods which may include both quantitative and/or qualitative designs, and be able to explain and interpret research findings.
- **Understand Ethical and Contextual Relationships:** Students will be able to demonstrate the importance of ethics to the field of criminal justice by explaining the history and present-day relationships between culture, social class, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, as well as by applying ethical standards in appropriate settings.
- **Communicate effectively:** Students will be able to demonstrate effective interpersonal communication of major criminological issues in various forms which may include written, oral, and media formats.

DuBois and Greater Allegheny Campuses

- **Know Structure:** Demonstrate understanding around the history, structure, and function of the three branches of criminal justice (Courts, Law Enforcement, Corrections).
- **Know Context:** Demonstrate understanding around the relationship between culture, social class, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality and criminal justice involvement.
- **Know and Use Theory:** Demonstrate understanding of core theories in criminology and the sociology of deviance along with their relevance to different types of offenses and offenders.
- **Think Critically:** Demonstrate ability to solve criminal justice problems through an understanding of context, the identification of appropriate evidence, and appreciation of potential barriers and limitations.
- **Research:** Demonstrate ability to formulate research questions, implement basic quantitative and qualitative research methods, collect and analyze limited data.
- **Communicate:** Demonstrate ability to effectively communicate practical and theoretical criminal justice issues through papers, visual media, and oral presentations.

Fayette Campus

- **Application of research methods:** Students will create a plan to answer a specific research question related to crime and criminal justice.
- **Evaluation of strategies to reduce crime:** Students will evaluate the effectiveness of prominent crime control policies and strategies.
- **Identification of power structures:** Students will enumerate the motives and forces that determine the shape and scope of criminal law.
- **Identify Alternatives:** Students will identify alternatives to the formal criminal justice systems as a means of facilitating pro-social, non-criminal behaviors.
- **Knowledge of American Criminal Justice System:** Students will identify and describe the components of the American criminal justice system and the processing of cases.
- **Knowledge of crime theories:** Students will identify the elements that comprise the major biological, psychological, and sociological perspectives that attempt to explain the causes of crime.

Hazleton and Wilkes-Barre Campuses

- **Knowledge Base in Criminal Justice:** Students will develop knowledge and understanding of the major components of the criminal justice system and juvenile justice system as well as how these components interact. Student understanding of the criminal justice process will be enhanced through targeted courses in courts, corrections, and policing that highlight the unique needs, challenges, and operation of these components. Across the curriculum, students will be exposed to criminological theories that help to explain the role of gender, race/ ethnicity, and other background characteristics on offending, victimization, and criminal justice processing.
 - Describe key concepts, principles, and overarching themes in criminal justice
 - Develop a working knowledge of criminal justice content domains
 - Describe applications of criminological theory
- **Research Methods:** Students will understand the importance and practical use of social science research methods and the role these play in criminal justice policy.
 - Use scientific reasoning to interpret criminal justice policy
 - Demonstrate criminal justice information literacy
 - Engage in innovative and integrative thinking and problem solving
 - Interpret, design, and conduct basic criminological research
- **Professional Writing and Critical Thinking:** Students will practice writing and critical thinking skills through writing assignments across the curriculum and the completion of at least one writing intensive course.
 - Demonstrate effective writing for different purposes
 - Exhibit effective presentation skills for different purposes
 - Interact effectively with others
 - Demonstrate critical thinking skills concerning issues in criminal justice
- **Ethics:** Students will understand the role of ethics in criminal justice.
 - Apply ethical standards to evaluate criminal justice research and policy
 - Build and enhance interpersonal relationships
 - Adopt values that build community at local, national, and global levels
- **Placement:** Students will be prepared for placement in the criminal justice field through an internship experience.

- Apply criminal justice content and skills to career goals
- Exhibit self-efficacy and self-regulation
- Refine project and time-management skills
- Enhance teamwork capacity
- Develop meaningful professional direction for life after graduation

Lehigh Valley Campus

- **Analysis and research:** Students will be able to analyze how social scientific concepts, theories, and research relate to contemporary problems of the justice system.
- **Communication:** Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively and specifically demonstrate an ability to design, write, and produce a professional document.
- **Knowledge of crime theories:** Students will identify the elements that comprise the major biological, psychological, and sociological perspectives that attempt to explain the causes of crime.

Schuylkill Campus

- Students will be able to have a basic understanding of the nature of the three branches of Criminal Justice System (Legal, Law Enforcement, Corrections)
- Students will be able to have developed critical thinking skills to understand and to formulate solutions to problems relating to criminological issues.
- Students will be able to read and correctly interpret Criminal Justice research and data. Data will be collected from CRIMJ 494 the capstone course for the program.
- Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge and application skills regarding the fact that the criminal justice professional must operate in a climate of tolerance and respect where opposing viewpoints can be exchanged openly.
- Students will recognize the importance of research and be able to utilize quantitative and qualitative research methods in the field.
- Analyze the nature of crime and criminal behavior and their impact on policy related to crime and public safety.