

ASSESSMENT PLAN:

Criminal Justice Program

Department of Sociology, Anthropology,
and Criminal Justice

University of Michigan-Flint

Submitted to the
Academic Assessment Committee

April 11, 2003

Introduction

Consistent with the goals of the Sociology and Anthropology programs, the primary goal of the Criminal Justice program is to introduce students to a social scientific understanding of our Criminal Justice System. As such, all faculty members within the Department of Sociology/Anthropology/Criminal Justice strive to develop students' abilities for critical thinking and analytical reasoning.

The work of the Criminal Justice program is fully supportive of the mission of the College of Arts and Sciences and the University of Michigan-Flint. The strong emphases in the Criminal Justice program on excellent teaching and expectation of faculty scholarship are totally consistent with the College of Arts and Sciences and University of Michigan -Flint priorities. Furthermore, all programs in our department directly contribute to the College of Arts and Sciences mission of creating and sustaining "a community of lifelong learners in an environment that emphasizes literacy, critical thinking, and humanistic and scientific inquiry."

The Criminal Justice majors are assumed to have a number of unique characteristics. Firstly, upon entering the program, students have very little exposure or academic understanding of the criminal justice system. Indeed, most of the information they receive from the mass media is misinformation. Therefore, our assessment need not address the issue of value added knowledge. Secondly, students graduating with a major in Criminal Justice must be prepared to pursue a variety of careers, including, graduate school, law school, and management positions within the criminal justice system. Finally, given the number of students matriculating through the program, the assessment plan will need to efficiently accommodate up to 40 students per year.

In general, our plan aims to provide a fair, unbiased, and objective assessment of the extent to which the students graduating with a major in Criminal Justice have succeeded in: a) meeting the educational objectives their program and b) applying their knowledge to further their educational and/or career aspirations.

Program Mission

The hallmark of the Criminal Justice Program is to promote critical thinking, social justice, and civic responsibility through an academic curriculum designed to ensure that all students (majors and non-majors) understand the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of these concepts through a multi-disciplinary lens.

The mission of the Criminal Justice program is three-fold:

- To provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the structure and operation of the criminal justice system
- To provide students with a comprehensive understanding of how criminal justice relates to other social structures and institutions, and how those structures and institutions impact criminal justice.

- To prepare students to employ critical thinking, social justice, and civic responsibility in their decision-making processes as they pursue their careers and encounter life situations.

Educational Outcomes/Learning Objectives

At the time of graduation from the Criminal Justice Program, our students should:

1. make evident an understanding and command over fundamental concepts and data regarding society and the criminal justice system.
2. appreciate, and be able to critically evaluate, social research
3. demonstrate their ability to formulate a problem/topic, assemble relevant published background research, include an original explanation, conduct a new study, and/or provide new data toward the topic in a formal research paper or proposal
4. be prepared to apply their knowledge toward further studies or careers
5. exhibit an understanding of and the ability to apply criminological theories (theories of the making and enforcing of the criminal law and theories of criminal and deviant behavior) in explaining the entire criminal justice process.
6. display a working knowledge of quantitative and/or qualitative research methods
7. demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of a substantive area within the discipline of criminal justice. For example, such areas of specialization can include, but are not limited to, law enforcement, the courts and law, and corrections.

Assessment Methods

To assess the extent to which students are obtaining the skills and knowledge that serve as the basis for our degree program, the Criminal Justice division within the Department will depend primarily upon a portfolio review of the students' work. As an indirect measure, a telephone/email survey will be conducted.

Logistics of Portfolio Assembly:

When a student declares her or his major as Criminal Justice, their faculty advisor will explain their responsibilities regarding assembling a portfolio within the department. The policy will be clearly articulated in a handout that will be provided to each major, explaining the logistics and the advantages of compiling a portfolio (Appendix A).

Students will be encouraged to submit at least one example of their work from each course taken within their major. This may indeed be their best work from that class. To the extent that students approach the construction of their portfolio as an on-going project to be completed with their advisor, the portfolio should document growing competence in all areas as the student progresses through the Criminal Justice program. We will be achieve compliance by using the required Senior Seminar (CRJ 450) as a mechanism to coordinate our assessment activities.

Students will be asked to remove their name, grade, and instructor's name from each piece of work submitted using white correction fluid or correction tape before making a photocopy for their file. We are submitting a budget to cover this cost (Appendix B). Students will also provide documents relating to work experience or volunteer work that relates to their field and any other relevant information.

Portfolio Assessment (Direct Measure)

Faculty advisors will explain the Criminal Justice's assessment goals and plan to each student upon declaration of a Criminal Justice major. Faculty advisors will encourage students to retain copies of course work in their major and to submit these papers to the file in the department office.

Portfolios will be assembled which are anonymous (student name and any other personal identifying information) and, for each piece of work, the grade and professor's name is removed. Portfolios will contain samples of work produced in courses within the major, including samples of objective examinations and term papers.

An annual meeting will be convened after the end of Winter semester (in early May) at which a committee of Criminal Justice, Sociology, and Anthropology faculty (at least 2 from Criminal Justice) will apply standardized criteria in the assessment of each portfolio (Appendix C). The committee will then operate on the basis of forming a consensus with regard to each of the criteria included in the student's portfolio evaluation.

Graduate School and/or Discipline-related Career Accomplishments (Indirect Measure)

The faculty of the Sociology and Anthropology programs will track the activities of their majors after graduation by: a) retaining copies of letters of recommendation for graduate school admissions and/or job applications written on behalf of our majors and b) follow up the results of these applications via a telephone and/or electronic mail survey in the fall to determine the results of student efforts in this regard. Questions asked in the follow-up survey are outlined in Appendix D.

Assessment Goals

1. the portfolio will provide evidence that each student has correctly used fundamental concepts in the discipline of Criminal Justice in their written work and has examined data which relates directly to their field. We would expect that ALL students would score 2 or higher on Criteria 0.1.
2. that each student demonstrates an opportunity in at least one piece of work to examine and evaluate methods in the field of social research; this evaluation may address research that is qualitative or quantitative. Attention will be paid regarding the kind (qualitative, quantitative, or both) which have been considered by students. It is expected that ALL students will score 2 or higher on Criteria 0.2. This goal may be revised as faculty members consider the relative importance of both quantitative and qualitative methods in each program.
3. EVERY portfolio will contain a formal research paper or research proposal that demonstrates a student's organizational, analytical, and writing abilities. It is expected that ALL students will score 2 or higher on Criteria 0.3a, 0.3b, and 0.3c.

4. HALF of the formal research papers or research proposals submitted will be of sufficient quality that they could be used in a application for graduate school or for a job application requiring evidence of the applicant's scholarly work (Criteria 0.4)
5. In a review of research papers and or proposals, 75% of the students develop and/or apply a theoretical framework, i.e. score 3 or higher on Sociology criteria 1.1a and 1.1b.
6. In term papers or research proposals, 75% of the students understand research methods and/or the statistical techniques. If research proposals are evaluated, 75% of the students should be able to design a research project and (if applicable) indicate the appropriate statistical techniques to be used, i.e. score 3 or higher on 1.2a, 1.2b, and 1.2c.
7. In term papers or research proposals, ALL students should demonstrate a working knowledge of the area of specialization, i.e. all students score 2 or higher on 1.3a and 1.3b.

Feedback

The results of the Portfolio Assessment by the committee of Criminal Justice, Sociology, and Anthropology faculty will be summarized in a report to the faculty early in the fall semester. The committee will outline areas in which the program is successful and more importantly, identify areas of weakness. The report will also contain a quantified summary of the results of the portfolio. A qualitative component of the report will specifically:

- 3.1 address the identification of potential weaknesses as they may be articulated in student papers and/or other work that reflect problems in the quality of the program.
- 3.2 identify specific areas whereby students graduating from the respective programs would benefit from changes in the program.
- 3.3 submit recommendations to rectify any weakness in each program.
- 3.4 evaluate the assessment plan with regard to identifying additional educational outcomes, improving methods of assessment, and providing suggestions to improve the curriculum of each program to better meet the needs of the students and the community.

Appendix A

Informational Document provided to students upon declaring the intent to major in
Criminal Justice

To: Criminal Justice majors

From: Faculty of Department of Sociology/Anthropology/Criminal Justice

We would like you to be aware of an important new policy of the Department of Sociology/Anthropology/Criminal Justice as it applies to those of you majoring in Criminal Justice.

Your faculty advisor will, in addition to helping you organize your program of study, help you to organize a portfolio.

Your portfolio:

- Will contain samples of your work (research papers, book reviews, take-home exams, in class exams, etc.) from each course in your major. We would suggest one or two samples from each class.
- Will be a very valuable selection of work that you may wish to submit with your application to graduate school or a job application.
- Will be anonymous for purposes of departmental assessment. Your portfolio will include a photocopy of your submitted work with your name, grade, and instructor's name removed. These will be used in an assessment of our program that will be done at the end of your senior year (i.e. after you graduate).

We strongly encourage you to be an active participant in amassing your portfolio.

Please sign below that you understand and acknowledge the policy outline above. Provide the name and signature of the faculty advisor who will be advising and/or keeping your portfolio. Thank you for your participation in our efforts to keep our program excellent.

Student Name (please print)

Student Signature

Date

Advisor Name (please print)

Advisor Signature

Date

Appendix B

Annual Budget for Assessment

Budgetary Items & Narrative of Expenses:

1.	photocopying costs	\$140.00
2.	telephone calls	\$175.00
3.	miscellaneous office supplies	\$ 91.66
4.	lunch for portfolio review committee	<u>\$ 36.00</u>
	TOTAL	<u>\$442.66</u>

Itemized Expenses:

1. Photocopying Costs (Direct Measure)

A conservative estimate of the number of graduating students per academic year (August, December, May) would be 40.

The Print Shop reports that a department is charged 3.5 cents/copy. We estimate that each portfolio will require approximately 100 pages of photocopying for each student. Therefore:

$$\# \text{ students (40)} \times \# \text{ pages (100)} @ \$.035 = \$140.00$$

2. Telephone Calls –(Indirect Measure)

It is estimated that approximately one half of all students will require multiple telephone calls to locate and ascertain the circumstances of their post-graduation situation, either in the work force or in graduate school. Many of these calls will be long distance calls.

$$40 \text{ students} \times 2.5 \text{ calls} \times \$1.750/\text{call} = \$175.00$$

3. Miscellaneous Office Supplies

From the Boise-Cascade catalogue, the programs will require

a) 3 boxes file folders (500/box)	\$25.20
b) 1/3 cut hanging folders 3 boxes (25/box)	\$61.77
c) file folder labels (248/package)	<u>\$ 4.69</u>
Total:	<u>\$91.66</u>

4. Luncheon

In order to confine the portfolio review to an intensive session over a single day, funding for lunch for the members of the committee is estimated at \$9.00/person. Therefore,

$$\$9.00/\text{person} \times 4 \text{ persons} = \$36.00$$

Appendix C

Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice Portfolio Review Assessment Criteria Criminal Justice Students

All Students:

		Unaccept -able	Adequate	Good	Out- standing
0.1	Correct Use of <u>fundamental concepts</u> in Social Sciences	1	2	3	4
0.2	Critical <u>examination of literature</u> in one's area of specialization	1	2	3	4
0.3a	Ability to <u>organize relevant literature</u> as it pertains to the topic at hand	1	2	3	4
0.3b	Writing ability at the <u>sentence level</u> (e.g., spelling and grammatical errors)	1	2	3	4
0.3c	Writing ability: <u>structure of argument</u> , point, or thesis	1	2	3	4
0.4	Does the portfolio contain a research paper or Proposal of suitable quality for a graduate school/Job application requiring a writing sample	Yes _____		No _____	

Criminal Justice Students

		Unaccept -able	Adequate	Good	Out- standing
1.1a	Development or articulation of a theoretical framework in papers/research proposals	1	2	3	4
1.1b	Application of a theoretical framework in papers or research proposals	1	2	3	4
1.2a	Understanding of research methods and/or statistical techniques employed in literature	1	2	3	4
1.2b	If evaluating a research proposal, design of the research project	1	2	3	4
1.2c	If evaluating a research proposal, appropriate use of statistical techniques	1	2	3	4
1.3a	Depth of knowledge in one's area of specialization	1	2	3	4
1.3b	Breadth of knowledge in one's area of specialization	1	2	3	4

4. Student Assessment of Criminal Justice Program

A. Theory

On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being the most positive), how well did your theory training prepare you for your current situation?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Poorly	somewhat poorly	Neither poorly nor well	Fairly Well	Very Well

Comments: _____

B. Methods/Statistics

On the same scale of 1 to 5, how well did your methods/statistics training prepare you for your current situation?

1	2	3	4	5
VP	SP	NPNW	FW	VW

Comments _____

C. Primary Area of Specialization – Please Specify: _____

On the same scale of 1 to 5, how well did your training in your primary area of specialization prepare you for your current situation?

1	2	3	4	5
VP	SP	NPNW	FW	VW

Comments: _____

D. Secondary Area of Specialization – Please Specify: _____

On the same scale of 1 to 5, how well did your training in your secondary area of specialization prepare you for your current situation?

1	2	3	4	5
VP	SP	NPNW	FW	VW

Comments: _____

4. General Assessment of Program

A. Did the Criminal Justice program at U of M – Flint help to prepare you for your current position:

Comments: _____

B. Are there any particular courses that you wish you could have or should have taken in the program that might have better prepared you for your current position?

Comments: _____

C. Would you recommend the Criminal Justice program to a first year student at the University of Michigan –Flint?

Comments: _____

D. If you were revising the Criminal Justice program at the University of Michigan-Flint, what changes would you make?

Comments: _____

