

**Criminal Justice Sciences  
Illinois State University**

**Curriculum Revision and Assessment Project**

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Discussion of curriculum revision has been an item for discussion for the last two years. The department felt there was a need to examine the curriculum and its relevance in today's society. The curriculum had not been seriously reviewed and no new courses added or outdated courses deleted for several years. In 1997 the CJS Professional Advisory Board was established for the purpose of providing input regarding the changing needs of the criminal justice profession and the skills and knowledge needed by today's graduates to meet those changing needs.

In the Fall of 2000 the faculty were asked to identify the skills students need to acquire prior to entering the field of criminal justice. Their responses were grouped by common theme and the Curriculum Committee developed the following Goals and Objectives based upon the faculty responses. In response to the IBHE Mandate-Assessment 2004 initiative, the Department was charged with the responsibility of identifying the program's student learning objectives. By the end of the Spring 2001 semester, the Department had completed the above-mentioned identification of a set a goals and objectives.

In addition, the CJS Curriculum Committee developed a survey for each course taught by all CJS faculty. The focus of the survey was to determine which courses were addressing the stated goals and objectives, to help identify content overlap or duplication, and to determine if the current courses were meeting the goals and objectives identified as important for our majors.

The themes or categories identified from the faculty responses include:

Administration Skills:

Communication/Writing Skills

Diversity/Community Issues

Ethics/Social Issues

Human Behavior

Reasoning Skills

The following are goals and objectives developed by the curriculum committee for the identified categories:

**I. Administration Skills:**

**GOAL**

Students completing the Criminal Justice Sciences curriculum should have a thorough understanding of how criminal justice organizations, and organizations in the public sector are

organized and managed. Students should be familiar with the concepts of hierarchy, division of labor, chain of command as well as how public organizations interact across their boundaries in solving problems and meeting public needs.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- Provide opportunities for the development of an understanding and comparisons of organizational structure within the criminal justice system.
  - Provide opportunities for the development of an understanding of the concepts of hierarchy, division of labor, and chain of command within the criminal justice system of organizations.
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## **II. Communication/Writing Skills**

### **GOAL**

Criminal justice students must be able to communicate, orally and in a myriad of written forms, with those (1) served, processed, and supervised by the criminal justice system; (2) professionals working in other agencies; (3) agencies and officials in wider political, social, and economic contexts; (4) and persons from multiple or diverse cultural backgrounds.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Provide opportunities for the development of foreign language skills, particularly those suited to growing populations served by the criminal justice system
  - Provide discipline-specific and more generalized training in communicating effectively in written reports, on-the-street interactions, court testimony, agency reports or planning documents, grants, etc.
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## **III. Diversity/Community Issues**

### **GOAL**

Criminal justice students must be able to understand and articulate issues related to diversity and the criminal justice system. Due to the diverse nature of law enforcement, courts, and correctional populations, students must be exposed to how these issues impact the everyday operations of the system and the community in which they serve.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Provide students with information on issues of diversity and how they affect criminal justice decision-making.
  - Provide discipline-specific and more generalized information to effectively serve the criminal justice community.
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## **IV. Ethics/Social Issues**

## **GOAL**

Students majoring in criminal justice should be exposed to a broader understanding of ethics, social justice and moral responsibility through projects that draw on the strengths and confront the challenges of national, racial, ethnic, linguistic and religious pluralism.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- Introduce students to ethical issues in the context of political, business, and social needs.
  - Acquaint students with issues of individual liberty, social, economic, and environmental justice at home and abroad.
  - Familiarize students with approaches used by individuals, organizations, and governments to achieve justice.
  - Help students identify and develop creative and collaborative approaches to achieve individual, social, economic, and environmental justice.
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## **V. Human Behavior**

### **GOAL**

Students graduating with a Criminal Justice Sciences degree will be expected to interact and communicate with all ages and backgrounds. They must have the ability to accurately assess a situation from a behavioral perspective. This assessment may be crucial in correctly evaluating the situation. Students should have a basic understanding of normal and abnormal behavior patterns and a basic understanding of expected behavior for all age groups.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Provide students with the opportunity to develop an understanding of normal human behavior development through out the life span.
  - Provide students with the opportunity to develop an understanding of behaviors that deviate from the norm.
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## **VI. Reasoning Skills**

### **GOAL**

Critical thinking, logical reasoning, and the application of the systematic approaches to resolving complex problems of human behavior at an individual and organizational level are fundamental skills in contemporary criminal justice agencies. Criminal Justice Sciences' students will acquire reasoning skills sufficient to meet the demands of a professional criminal justice workplace and should have a sufficient knowledge criminological theory to enable reasoned program development and logical skills necessary for program evaluation and organizational planning.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Provide students with the opportunity to acquire reasoning skills sufficient to meet the demands of a professional criminal justice workplace.
  - Provide students with the opportunity to acquire knowledge about criminological theory to enable reasoned program development and logical skills necessary for program evaluation and organizational planning.
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## **METHODOLOGY**

Questions were developed for each of the categories, trying to keep same basic format while addressing the uniqueness of each goal and objective.

The basic questions include:

- Does the material for your course cover .....
- Do you feel it is appropriate for our DEPARTMENT (not necessarily your class) to include this material within the course structure:
- Do you feel it is appropriate for YOUR class (CJS \_\_\_\_\_) to include this material within your course structure:
- Do you feel students should gain this understanding during their college experience, but it is not our place to teach it.

Within the basic questions there may have been multiple responses required. This was based upon the nature of the goal and objective being responded too.

Because we were trying to keep the questions consistent it sometime made responding to the question difficult.

Questionnaires were given to faculty who had taught the course within the past two years. Required courses had usually had 3 or more faculty responding.

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## **Survey Based Upon Goals and Objectives Presented By Curriculum Committee**

### **I. Administration Skills**

#### **GOAL**

Students completing the Criminal Justice Sciences curriculum should have a thorough understanding of how criminal justice organizations, and organizations in the public sector are organized and managed. Students should be familiar with the concepts of hierarchy, division of labor, chain of command as well as how public organizations interact across their boundaries in solving problems and meeting public needs.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- Provide opportunities for the development of an understanding and comparisons of organizational structure within the criminal justice system.
- Provide opportunities for the development of an understanding of the concepts of hierarchy, division of labor, and chain of command within the criminal justice system of organizations.

1. Does the material for your course cover any aspect of:

YES NO a. organizational structure.

YES NO b. division of labor

YES NO c. concepts of hierarchy, i.e. division of labor or chain of command

2. Do you feel it is appropriate for our DEPARTMENT (not necessarily your class) to include this material within the course structure:

3. Do you feel it is appropriate for YOUR class (CJS \_\_\_\_\_) to include this material within your course structure:

4. Do you feel students should gain this understanding during their college experience, but it is not our place to teach it.

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## II. Communication/Writing Skills

### GOAL

Criminal justice students must be able to communicate, orally and in a myriad of written forms, with those (1)served, processed, and supervised by the criminal justice system; (2)professionals working in other agencies; (3)agencies and officials in wider political, social, and economic contexts; (4)and persons from multiple or diverse cultural backgrounds.

### OBJECTIVES

- o Provide opportunities for the development of foreign language skills, particularly those suited to growing populations served by the criminal justice system.
- o Provide discipline-specific and more generalized training in communicating effectively in written reports, on-the-street interactions, court testimony, agency reports or planning documents, grants, etc.

1. Does the material for your course cover any aspect of:

YES NO a. written communication.

YES NO b. oral communication

YES NO c. foreign language

2. Do you feel it is appropriate for our DEPARTMENT (not necessarily your class) to offer opportunities for students to continue to develop these communication skills?

YES NO a. written communication.

YES NO b. oral communication

YES NO c. foreign language

3. Do you feel it is appropriate for your class (CJS \_\_\_\_\_) to include this material within your course structure:

YES NO a. written communication.

YES NO b. oral communication

YES NO c. foreign language

4. Do you feel students should gain this understanding from their college degree but it is not our place to teach it.

YES NO a. written communication.

YES NO b. oral communication

YES NO c. foreign language

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### III. Diversity/Community Issues

#### GOAL

Criminal justice students must be able to understand and articulate issues related to diversity and the criminal justice system. Due to the diverse nature of law enforcement, courts, and correctional populations, students must be exposed to how these issues impact the everyday operations of the system and the community in which they serve.

#### OBJECTIVES

- o Provide students with information on issues of diversity and how they affect criminal justice decision-making.
- o Provide discipline-specific and more generalized information to effectively serve the criminal justice community.

1. YES NO Does the material for your course cover issues related to diversity.

2. YES NO Do you feel it is appropriate for our DEPARTMENT (not necessarily your class) to include this material within our course structure:

3. YES NO Do you feel it is appropriate for your class (CJS \_\_\_\_\_) to include this material within your course structure:

4. YES NO Do you feel students should gain this understanding from their college degree but it is not our place to teach it.

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### IV. Ethics/Social Issues

## GOAL

Students majoring in criminal justice should be exposed to a broader understanding of ethics, social justice and moral responsibility through projects that draw on the strengths and confront the challenges of national, racial, ethnic, linguistic and religious pluralism.

## OBJECTIVES

- Introduce students to ethical issues in the context of political, business, and social needs.
- Acquaint students with issues of individual liberty, social, economic, and environmental justice at home and abroad.
- Familiarize students with approaches used by individuals, organizations, and governments to achieve justice.
- Help students identify and develop creative and collaborative approaches to achieve individual, social, economic, and environmental justice.

1. Does the material for your course:

YES    NO        a. Introduce students to ethical issues in the context of political, business, and social needs.

YES    NO        b. Acquaint students with issues of individual liberty, social, economic, and environmental justice at home and abroad.

YES    NO        c. Familiarize students with approaches used by individuals, organizations, and governments to achieve justice.

YES    NO        d. Help students identify and develop creative and collaborative approaches to achieve individual, social, economic, and environmental justice.

2. Do you feel it is appropriate for our DEPARTMENT (not necessarily your class) to include this material within our course structure:

YES    NO        a. Introduce students to ethical issues in the context of political, business, and social needs.

YES    NO        b. Acquaint students with issues of individual liberty, social, economic, and environmental justice at home and abroad

YES    NO        c. Familiarize students with approaches used by individuals, organizations, and governments to achieve justice.

YES    NO        d. Help students identify and develop creative and collaborative approaches to achieve individual, social, economic, and environmental justice.

3. Do you feel it is appropriate for your class (CJS \_\_\_\_\_) to include this material within your course structure:

YES    NO        a. Introduce students to ethical issues in the context of political, business, and social needs.

YES NO b. Acquaint students with issues of individual liberty, social, economic, and environmental justice at home and abroad.

YES NO c. Familiarize students with approaches used by individuals, organizations, and governments to achieve justice.

YES NO d. Help students identify and develop creative and collaborative approaches to achieve individual, social, economic, and environmental justice.

4. Do you feel students should gain this understanding from their college degree but it is not our place to teach it.

YES NO a. Introduce students to ethical issues in the context of political, business, and social needs.

YES NO b. Acquaint students with issues of individual liberty, social, economic, and environmental justice at home and abroad.

YES NO c. Familiarize students with approaches used by individuals, organizations, and governments to achieve justice.

YES NO d. Help students identify and develop creative and collaborative approaches to achieve individual, social, economic, and environmental justice

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## V. Human Behavior

### GOAL

Students graduating with a Criminal Justice Degree will be expected to interact and communicate with all ages and backgrounds they must have ability to accurately assess a situation from a behavioral perspective and this assessment may be crucial in correctly evaluating the situation. Students should have a basic understanding of normal and abnormal behavior patterns and a basic understanding of expected behavior for all age groups.

### OBJECTIVES

- o Provide students with the opportunity to develop an understanding of normal human behavior development through out the life span.
- o Provide students with the opportunity to develop an understanding of behaviors that deviate from the norm.

1. YES NO Does the material for your course cover normal and abnormal behavior patterns.

2. YES NO Do you feel it is appropriate for our DEPARTMENT (not necessarily your class) to include this material within our course structure:

3. YES NO Do you feel it is appropriate for your class (CJS \_\_\_\_\_) to include this material within your course structure:

4. YES NO Do you feel students should gain this understanding from their college degree but it is not our place to teach it.

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## VI. Reasoning Skills

### GOAL

Critical thinking, logical reasoning, and the application of the systematic approaches to resolving complex problems of human behavior at an individual and organizational level are fundamental skills in contemporary criminal justice agencies. Criminal Justice Sciences' students will acquire reasoning skills sufficient to meet the demands of a professional criminal justice workplace and should have a sufficient knowledge criminological theory to enable reasoned program development and logical skills necessary for program evaluation and organizational planning.

### OBJECTIVES

- Provide students with the opportunity to acquire reasoning skills sufficient to meet the demands of a professional criminal justice workplace.
- Provide students with the opportunity to acquire knowledge about criminological theory to enable reasoned program development and logical skills necessary for program evaluation and organizational planning.

1. YES NO Does the material for your course cover critical thinking, logical reasoning, and the application of the systematic approaches to resolving complex problems of human behavior

2. YES NO Do you feel it is appropriate for our DEPARTMENT (not necessarily your class) to include this material within our course structure:

3. YES NO Do you feel it is appropriate for your class (CJS \_\_\_\_\_) to include this material within your course structure:

4. YES NO Do you feel students should gain this understanding from their college degree but it is not our place to teach it.

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