

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Criminology and Criminal Justice
2026-2027 Graduate Handbook

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In conjunction with the University Graduate Bulletin, this guide is intended to provide graduate students with a reference concerning graduate degree requirements, graduate committees, and required forms. Please consult the University Graduate Bulletin for academic regulations and procedures and student services. Any questions you have about your graduate career in the FSU College of Criminology and Criminal Justice may be directed to the College's Graduate Office:

Graduate Program Administrator
Ana Palomino
apalomino@fsu.edu

Director of Graduate Studies
Marin Wenger
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Introduction

The College of Criminology and Criminal Justice

The College is a center of excellence that expands the knowledge of the discipline and advances in criminological research linking science and theory to matters of effective and responsible public policy. We are dedicated to fostering a community that has a shared commitment to a supportive and stimulating environment that encourages collaboration and scholarship for faculty and students. In the College of Criminology and Criminal Justice, you will learn from criminologists who are leaders in the field, and you will gain an education and experience that will enable you to be a leader in shaping America's response to crime.

Graduate Degree Programs

Home to the nation's oldest doctoral criminology program, the College offers multiple master's degree options, a doctoral degree, and a combined BS to MS pathway.

Doctoral Degree

The Doctor of Philosophy in Criminology and Criminal Justice is a research degree designed to train individuals as critical scholars.

Master's Degree

The master's program emphasizes the critical link between scientific theory and research and its application through policies and programs. It prepares students for an administrative or research career in the criminal justice system and other related areas.

One Year Master's Degree

This program is designed for students aspiring to leadership or advanced positions and concludes with an internship taking students from classroom to career in one year.

Online Master's Degree

The master's program in criminal justice studies is specifically designed for working criminal justice professionals and others who want the rigor and challenge of a first-rate graduate program but also need the convenience and flexibility that distance learning provides.

Joint Graduate Pathway with Public Administration

This joint graduate pathway in criminology and public administration prepares graduate students for overlapping careers in criminal justice management.

Joint Graduate Pathway with Social Work

This joint graduate pathway is for graduate students who want to expand their understanding of the connection between the fields of criminology and social work and gain expertise in working with forensic clients.

Combined BS to MS Pathway

This program provides academically talented undergraduate students the opportunity to expeditiously complete both degrees by taking graduate courses in their senior year that count as hours toward a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in criminology. A maximum number of 12 hours can be transferred and a minimum grade of B or better must be earned.

Notes:

Master's Program

Master's Degree Options

The College of Criminology and Criminal Justice offers Master of Science (MS) and Master of Arts (MA) degrees.

Master of Science in Criminology

The general requirement (see exceptions below) for the MS degree includes 33 hours of coursework. Of these, at least 24 hours must be taken within the College, and 21 of the 24 hours must be graded (not S/U). Students must earn at least a C (2.0) in each of the five required courses, or they will have to be repeated. No grade below a C minus can be counted toward the degree program. Students also must earn an overall GPA of at least 3.0 in their master's level work to graduate and stay in good standing.

Master of Arts in Criminology

The MA degree includes the same credit and grade point average requirements as the Master of Science. However, these students must complete 6 semester hours in graduate-level humanities courses (non-CCJ elective courses). They must also demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language, which may be accomplished in any of the following ways.

- 12 semester hours of a single foreign language in a college or university with an earned average of 3.0 in those courses
- four years of a single foreign language in high school
- satisfactory performance on the Graduate School Foreign Language Test
- certification of proficiency by the appropriate FSU language department

Joint Graduate Pathways

Master of Public Administration and Master of Science in Criminology

FSU's School of Public Administration and College of Criminology and Criminal Justice offer a joint graduate pathway leading to the Master of Public Administration and Master of Science in Criminology. The program is intended to prepare students for positions in public, private, and nonprofit organizations requiring criminology and management knowledge. The two- to two-and-a-half-year program consists of 66 credit hours, including eight requirements: basic methods, criminology core, administration core, criminology electives, administration electives, internship, professional paper, and general electives. Those interested in learning more about this option should contact the College's graduate program administrator.

Master of Social Work and Master of Science in Criminology

A joint graduate pathway is offered by the College of Social Work and the College of Criminology and Criminal Justice. This program is 79 credit hours and leads to the Master of Social Work and Master of Science in Criminology degrees.

This intensive program takes two years to complete, including studying full-time during the summer semesters. Students who are interested in being eligible for a clinical social work license in the state of Florida are required to take three additional social work graduate electives. Contact the graduate program administrator for more information.

Degree Tracks

There are two regular degree tracks or options of study within the Criminology and Criminal Justice MA or MS degree programs: a course work only option and a thesis option.

1. Course Work Only Option:

The course work-only option requires the completion of 33 credits of coursework. Students may select to complete 33 hours of coursework only or may choose to complete 27 credit hours of coursework along with 6 area paper credit hours or may choose to complete 24 credit hours with a 9 credit hour graduate internship. Students completing the area paper option must nominate a master's directive committee, consisting of a major professor and two other faculty members. The committee supervises the preparation of the paper and must approve the paper's format, though it need not conform to the University's formal thesis guidelines. An oral defense of the paper is not a College requirement, though the student's committee may request it.

Note: *Students choosing the course work only or internship options who later decide to continue their studies may be admitted to the Ph.D. program after completing the thesis or area paper.*

2. Thesis Option:

The thesis option requires the successful completion of 24 semester hours of coursework and 6 hours of thesis credits. Unlike either of the other options, the minimum requirement for the thesis track is 30 credits. Students completing a thesis must identify a major professor and supervisory committee. This option requires an oral thesis defense and thesis submission in a University approved format. Students completing the thesis option are required to register for 2 hours each semester enrolled until thesis completion (even after the minimum of 6 credit hours is met).

Master's Program

Thesis and Area Paper Distinction

Typically, the area paper takes two semesters to complete and involves a high-quality literature review and critique focused on one subject the student is particularly interested in investigating. Conversely, a thesis is based on manipulating and analyzing a particular body of data. In most cases, the thesis also requires two semesters to complete. When completing a thesis, it is not necessary that the student is the one who originally collected the data; secondary data analysis is typically done. An area paper only needs to be approved by our department, while a thesis needs to be approved by our department and the University's Graduate School. All area papers or theses involving data analysis must have IRB approval and Graduate School recognition of this approval before data analysis.

Major Professor and Master's Supervisory Committee

Supervising faculty members play a significant role in the life of a master's student. Those choosing the coursework only option for the degree do not need a major professor, but instead should seek advising whenever needed from the director of graduate studies or the graduate program administrator. A major professor should be selected for those who anticipate doing an area paper or thesis (and perhaps entering the doctoral program). This should be done by the start of the 2nd year (the year in which the area paper or thesis will be completed), but selections can be made sooner. Students may choose any faculty member who has been designated as having graduate faculty status by requesting that the faculty member serve in this capacity. If the faculty member agrees to serve, the student must notify the graduate program administrator of the appointment and complete the declaration of major professor form.

The master's supervisory committee comprises the major professor and two other faculty members holding graduate faculty status. Students are expected to choose their additional committee members with the assistance of their major professor. The official form identifying the major professor and members of the advisory committee is included in this guide. This form should be submitted for full-time students before the end of the third semester of residence.

Master's Requirements

Master's students must complete either 30 or 33 credits for the degree depending on the degree track chosen. These credits are composed of required ("core") courses and CCJ elective hours and may include graduate elective hours taken outside of the College.

Required Courses*

All students must complete each of the following five core courses with a letter grade of "C" or better. If a lower grade is earned in these courses, they must be retaken. A required course may only be retaken once. Students are required to maintain an overall 3.0 GPA. Students planning to continue on to the doctoral program must earn a grade of "B" (i.e., a middle B) or better in all required courses.

- CCJ 5109 Theory in Criminology and Criminal Justice
- CCJ 5285 Survey of Criminal Justice Theory and Research
- CCJ 5606 Survey of Criminological Theories
- CCJ 5705 Research Methods in Criminology
- CCJ 5706 Applied Statistics in Criminology

*All required courses must be taken on campus.

Criminology Elective Courses

A total of at least 9 criminology elective hours are needed to complete the 24 criminology hours required for the degree. All master's students must complete at least 21 graded Criminology and Criminal Justice hours before earning their degree. Directed Independent Studies (DIS) courses, the master's area paper (6 credit hours), and the thesis (6 credit hours) are not graded (they are S/U courses), so students must be sure they have completed at least two graded courses in addition to the five core courses. Students in the campus program may take a maximum of 6 hours of online criminology electives that will count toward the degree. No required courses may be taken online.

Outside Elective Courses

The remaining required credit hours (6 or 9, depending on the chosen option) may be taken from graduate offerings in criminology or other departments. Students are encouraged to use this opportunity to take appropriate courses in one or more of the social or behavioral sciences, statistics, or another interest area. Students enrolled in joint pathway programs are not able to take outside graduate electives. All elective courses must be at the graduate level (5000 and above).

Master's Program

Transfer Credit

The University allows 6 credits to be transferred in from another graduate institution. The evaluation of courses for transfer credit will be completed once a student is enrolled. FSU transfer credit must be completed within the seven-year time limit to complete the master's degree. A grade of B or better must be earned, and courses must be at the graduate level and must be equivalent to FSU coursework. Contact the graduate program administrator to initiate this process. Courses may not be transferred if they were counted for another posted degree.

Electronic Submission of the Thesis

If a student chooses the thesis option within the master's degree program, the thesis must be submitted electronically. Information on formatting guidelines and requirements can be found on the Graduate School's website at gradschool.fsu.edu or on the student's Canvas site.

University Time Limits for Degree Completion

Florida State University requires that work toward the master's degree be completed within seven years of one's initial enrollment in an FSU graduate course.

Graduation

In addition to meeting all the master's requirements outlined on pages 3-5, students must complete the following:

- Request a graduation check with the graduate program administrator during the semester preceding graduation to determine eligibility for the degree.
- Apply for graduation at my.fsu.edu during the first two weeks of the last semester. (Those who apply for graduation but do not complete the necessary work during that semester must self-delete at the Registrar's Office and register again during the first two weeks of the semester in which they plan to graduate.)

The College of Criminology and Criminal Justice will clear master's students for graduation with only coursework if they are a terminal master's student and do not intend to apply for the doctoral program. All other students must have a completed area paper or thesis before.

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Master's Coursework

Master's Required Courses

- CCJ 5109 Theory in Criminology and Criminal Justice (offered spring)
- CCJ 5285 Survey of Criminal Justice Theory and Research
- CCJ 5606 Survey of Criminological Theories
- CCJ 5705 Research Methods in Criminology
- CCJ 5706 Applied Statistics in Criminology

Sample Electives

- CCJ 5016 Crimes of the Powerful
- CJC 5020 Penology
- CJJ 5020 Juvenile Justice
- CJE 5024 Police and Society
- CCJ 5050 Proseminar in Criminology
- CJL 5520 Structure and Process of the American Court System
- CCJ 5546 Prevention and Treatment of Crime and Delinquency
- CCJ 5607 History of Criminological Thought
- CCJ 5625 Ecology of Crime
- CCJ 5636 Comparative Criminology and Criminal Justice
- CCJ 5669 Race, Ethnicity, Crime, and Social Justice
- CCJ 5672 Gender, Crime, and Justice
- CCJ 6665 Victimology
- CCJ 6708 Seminar in Crime Research
- CCJ 6920r *Seminar in Theoretical Criminology

*CCJ 6920r may be repeated for a maximum of 12 hours as long as the course topic differs.

Master's Timeline

This timeline gives you a starting point for planning your graduate career. It is based on fall admission.

YEAR 1

Fall

- CCJ 5705 or CCJ 5706
- CCJ 5606 or CCJ 5285
- Elective

Spring

- CCJ 5706 or CCJ 5705
- CCJ 5285 or CCJ 5606
- Elective

YEAR 2

Fall

- CCJ 5109
- Start area paper/thesis (if applicable)
- Elective

Spring

- Complete area paper/thesis
- Elective
- Elective

****No grade below a C- can be counted toward the degree program.**

*****A grade of C or better must be earned in all required courses. Students are required to maintain an overall 3.0 GPA. Students planning to continue onto the doctoral program must earn a grade of "B" (i.e., a middle B) or better in all required courses.**

Master's Checklist

Course Work Only: 33 Credit Hours

Area Paper Option: 33 Credit Hours

Internship Option: 33 Credit Hours

Thesis Option: 30 Credit Hours

Required Courses: 15 Hours**

- CCJ 5109 Theory in Criminology and Criminal Justice
- CCJ 5285 Survey of Criminal Justice Theory and Research
- CCJ 5606 Survey of Criminological Theories
- CCJ 5705 Research Methods in Criminology
- CCJ 5706 Applied Statistics in Criminology
- CCJ Electives: 9 Hours

Graduate Electives

- 9 hours for a 33-credit-hour program
- 6 hours for a 30-credit-hour program
- Additional criminology credits can be taken for electives.
 - 24 criminology and criminal justice credit hours are required for the master's degree.
 - 21 of these credit hours must be graded hours (not pass/fail).

Graduate Survey (Required)

Must complete and return exit survey before graduation.

Graduate Funding

Graduate Funding

The College provides several forms of financial assistance to doctoral students. Funding is competitive and is awarded to the top students. Some graduate assistantships are created through grant-funded faculty research. These grants fluctuate each year and depend on the current projects' status. Some will end and not be refunded. Others may be continued for one or multiple years. New funds may also become available as faculty bring in new grants.

Graduate Work Assignments

Graduate assistantships call for a 20-hour-per-week commitment from the student. In addition, all funded students must take at least a 9-credit-hour load each semester to retain funding.*

International graduate students must take at least 9 credit hours regardless of their funding status.

Summer monies may be available, though there is a limited supply. The College's summer budget is allocated during the spring semester, providing short notice for summer funding opportunities. Students accepting summer appointments for Session C must register for 9 graduate credit hours. Students appointed for Summer Session A or B must register for 6 graduate credit hours. Students appointed during Sessions A and B must register for 9 graduate credit hours.

**All funded students are required to reside in Tallahassee.*

Funding Decisions

The regular graduate funding decisions are made each year during the spring semester for the upcoming academic year (August-May). The College's Academic Committee, where relevant, and the Director of Distance Learning, make these decisions based on the available pool of financial support, teaching needs, and faculty requests for assistance.

When additional monies become available or an assistantship is relinquished during the year, the Academic Committee may convene to appoint a new assistant. Previously unfunded graduate students will be considered for the vacant position, and the Committee will choose the best-qualified person to fill it.

Assistantships are awarded on a competitive basis. In making assistantship selections, the Academic Committee uses key academic performance indicators. GPA and the overall strength of the admissions application are paramount for first-year applicants to the program. For students already in the program, meritorious performance in the program is a major consideration. This is assessed by considering such things as:

- program GPA
- progress through the required courses
- Progress through program milestones (e.g., master's degree comprehensive exams, dissertation prospects)
- indicators of professional activity (e.g., conference presentations, manuscripts submitted, and publications)
- ability to help with specific teaching needs of the college

These strong performance indicators are well represented on the Annual Doctoral Student Progress Report that all doctoral students must submit each Spring. (The student's C.V. should be submitted as well.)

Students who we award an assistantship can anticipate having 5 years of funding, contingent on funding availability and satisfactory progress in the program. These students may request a 6th year.

The Academic Committee also selects some students to teach their own course in exchange for a one-semester flat stipend with tuition waivers. The same performance criteria noted above are used in these selections, although with a greater focus on perceived teaching ability.

The committee errs on the side of selecting students who are relatively far along in the program. This includes those with a master's degree and – when possible – have completed most required courses and comprehensive exams. A student who has failed a comprehensive exam cannot teach until the failed exam has been retaken successfully.

Tuition Waivers

All funded students receive tuition (in-state matriculation) waivers. Tuition waivers do not cover fees. All fees are the responsibility of the student.

Non-Florida residents may receive out-of-state tuition waivers depending on the availability of waiver funds.

The College will provide in-state matriculation tuition waivers; however, non-Florida residents may be responsible for the out-of-state tuition and fees.

Non-Florida residents may become eligible for state residency and are encouraged to apply for this status at the earliest opportunity. Although not required, non-Florida residents can apply for Florida residency, which will eliminate the cost of out-of-state tuition & fees. If choosing, non-Florida out-of-state students must start the process of obtaining Florida residency before the first day of classes.

Graduate Funding

Performance Evaluations

Each year, the Academic Committee evaluates every funded student's work performance. The committee may provide recommendations and, when called for, set specific target goals for students. Evaluations must be turned in per university policy to be considered for funding.

Scholarships and Fellowships

In addition to teaching and research assistantships, the College and University offer various scholarships and fellowships. To get the most current information about availability, qualifications, and award amounts, visit our website at criminology.fsu.edu or call the College's graduate office at 850-645-9169.

**Second-year funded graduate students are required to take 12 credit hours per semester. During this year, the fall semester should include 3 hours of supervised teaching, and the spring semester should include a 3-hour DIS in research.*

Funded Students and Outside Employment

Graduate studies should be engaged as a full-time endeavor. Students who are supported on a qualifying assistantship are expected to be fully engaged with their studies. Additional employment or activity, especially outside the Program, is discouraged to ensure the timely completion of one's degree. Requests for additional or outside employment or activity will be evaluated for conflicts of interest in accordance with the CBA. Funded students are required to notify the College before accepting any outside employment.

Notes:

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Doctoral Program

Degree Program

The College offers the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Degree.

The Major Professor and the Doctoral Supervisory Committee

Students are required to select a major professor by the end of their third year of doctoral funding and are encouraged to select their supervisory committee by their third or fourth year in graduate school. The major professor must be selected and agree to serve.

The major professor plays a critical role in assisting a doctoral student with developing a program of study, selecting a dissertation topic, and completing the degree. Given the importance of these activities, it is imperative that students carefully choose their major professor. Students may consult the faculty pages of the College website to learn about faculty members' areas of interest and expertise.

The major professor will serve as the principal advisor and mentor to students throughout their graduate experience and will play a vital role in developing and completing the dissertation. The major professor must also annually assess the student's degree progress. The selection of a major professor is limited to faculty with graduate faculty status with the University.

Once students have identified the faculty member they want to serve as their major professor, they should approach that person and ask if they are willing to assume that role. When a faculty member agrees to serve as a major professor, students must contact the graduate program administrator and process the official paperwork. As students approach the end of their coursework, they will prepare to undertake the College's comprehensive exams. The major professor must certify that the student is prepared to take exams by providing written approval to the graduate program administrator several weeks before the exam is scheduled.

The major professor plays an important role in appointing the supervisory committee. He/she serves as the committee chair, coordinating the students' and their mentors' activities.

The doctoral supervisory committee oversees the preparation and approval of the prospectus and dissertation. The committee consists of a chair (the dissertation director/major professor), and a minimum of three other members. Committees may be larger if necessary. Regardless of the total number of committee members, one member must be a representative-at-large selected from an FSU unit outside the College. At least four committee members must have graduate faculty status and receive University approval. Members who do not have graduate faculty status may serve on the committee in addition to at least four other members with graduate faculty status.

The student and major professor select members of the supervisory committee. The student should ask each potential member if he/she is willing to serve.

All appointments of committee members must be reported on a form provided for this purpose (see appendix). It is the student's responsibility to see that these requirements have been met.

Students aren't required to remain with their major professor throughout their graduate career. If the relationship between the two persons does not work out or the student's interests change, the student may switch to another professor and must complete a new major professor form. A new major professor may be identified following the same procedures. The student should notify the original major professor of the decision.

The Annual Doctoral Student Progress Report must be filled out each Spring to document the student's progress towards the doctoral degree. The four-page form is included in the appendix. Each student should complete the first three pages of this form no later than March 15, arrange an appointment with their major professor, and then review and (if necessary) revise or add to the form in the meeting with the major professor. The major professor then fills in the last page of the form, retains the final completed version, and supplies one copy each to the student and the Graduate Program Administrator no later than March 31.

Doctoral Requirements

The Doctor of Philosophy in Criminology is a research degree designed to train individuals as critical scholars. The degree is only granted to students who have accomplished the following:

1. mastered the body of knowledge in criminology and criminal justice.
2. demonstrated a capacity to do an original and independent investigation or creative work in the fields of criminology and criminal justice
3. demonstrated an ability to integrate their knowledge of criminology and criminal justice with the larger domains of knowledge and understanding

Scholarly Engagement Requirement

The University requires that doctoral students are active participants in the scholarly community. To meet the Scholarly Engagement requirement, doctoral students should interact with faculty and peers in ways that may include enrolling in courses; attending seminars, symposia, and conferences; engaging in collaborative study and research beyond the university campus; and using the library, laboratories, and other facilities provided by the University.

Doctoral Program

Doctoral Credit Hours

There is not a fixed number of credit hours required for the Ph.D. The student's doctoral committee determines how many credits must be completed. That number varies depending on the student's prior education, mastery of research methods, statistics, theory, and a substantive area in the discipline, their level of preparation for the comprehensive exams, and the successful completion of the dissertation. Given these considerations, there may be considerable variation in the actual number of hours that doctoral students are required to finish. Many doctoral students complete 30 to 45 credit hours of actual coursework.

Required Courses

- CCJ 5109 Theory in Criminology and Criminal Justice
- CCJ 5285 Survey of Criminal Justice Theory and Research
- CCJ 5606 Survey of Criminological Theories
- CCJ 5705 Research Methods in Criminology
- CCJ 5706 Applied Statistics in Criminology
- CCJ 5740 Data Analysis in Criminology and Criminal Justice
- CCJ 5981r Prospectus Development
- CCJ 6065 Professional Development in Criminology
- At least two of the advanced research methods courses:
- CCJ 6741r Advanced Data Analysis in Criminology and Criminal Justice (repeatable)
- CCJ 6749 Advanced Statistics in Criminology

Students must earn a "B" or above in all required courses or retake the course. A course may only be retaken once. Students should recognize that this list of required courses represents a bare minimum of coursework. It should not be regarded as sufficient for passing comprehensive exams or completing a dissertation.

Dissertation

- Prospectus defense
- 24 dissertation hours
- Completed dissertation
- Successful dissertation defense

The doctoral curriculum is designed to be used flexibly so that programs of study can be tailored to suit the individual needs of each student. Students should not infer that only required courses are needed to pass the comprehensive examinations or to complete a dissertation successfully. Students should consult with their major professor regarding which elective courses (possibly including some from outside the College) would benefit them, and should also consider which courses would best prepare them for their postdoctoral careers.

Comprehensive Exam Requirements

To be admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree and begin work on a dissertation, students must first pass comprehensive exams in (1) Theory in Criminology and Criminal Justice and (2) Research Methods and Statistics. To take a comprehensive exam, students must first obtain their major professor's written or emailed approval, certifying that they are prepared. Students must also notify the graduate program administrator of their intent to take comprehensive exams. The two different exams can be taken in the same semester or in different semesters.

A doctoral student must be registered for the preliminary exam during the semester in which they complete the attempt (up to two attempts possible for each exam). Each exam attempt will be graded and noted on the student's transcript as a Pass (P) or Fail (F). If a student fails the preliminary examination before being admitted to candidacy, a reexamination may be offered by the student's supervisory committee or other relevant decision-making body within each department or unit, per that department or unit's doctoral student handbook. The Academic Dean's office should be notified of the outcome of any preliminary exam attempt.

Students can take the preliminary examination for admission to candidacy only two times. A second failure on the preliminary exam makes the student ineligible to continue in the degree program. The second attempt at the preliminary exam shall occur no sooner than six full class weeks after the results of the first attempt are shared with the student. For the purpose of this policy, a "full class week" is defined as a week with five days during which classes are held at FSU. Students must be registered separately for their first and second attempt, if necessary within the same semester, and must receive either a "pass" or a "fail" grade for each attempt.

An exception request regarding the timing of the re-examination can be submitted for consideration to the Academic Dean's Office by either the student or the supervisory committee. Students who allege that academic regulations and/or procedures were improperly applied for the re-examination of their preliminary exam may have their grievances addressed through the general academic appeals process.

Both comprehensive exams must be attempted within four years of admission to the PhD program. **Not doing so counts as a failed attempt for any exam not taken.** If an exam is failed, the student must retake it by the end of the fifth year. If the student fails to meet these deadlines, they will be dismissed from the program.

Doctoral Program

For students who formally withdraw from the University and are later readmitted, only semesters in which they were enrolled for course credit are counted towards these time limits. Thus, a student who was enrolled for 2 years, withdrew from the University and was absent 3 years before being readmitted has used up only 2 years towards the time limits. Students are admitted to candidacy upon passing both the Theory and Methods comprehensive exams, and they may take dissertation hours at the same time as the Prospectus Development course.

Exam Administration and Grading

The Theory and Methods Exams will each be created and graded by a standing College exam committee, the Comprehensive Exam in Theory Committee and the Comprehensive Exam in Methods and Statistics Committee, respectively. These committees will typically be composed of five College faculty members, appointed annually by the Dean.

The Theory and Methods Exam will be offered in the Fall and Spring semesters. They are generally scheduled in early November and in late March to early April. The exam dates vary depending on dates for national professional conferences.

There is generally about a two-week turn-around time between exam completion and the results announcement. The results will ordinarily be communicated orally to the student by the major professor and later in writing from the dean. The chair of each exam committee will certify the exam results in a letter or email to the Dean, with a copy sent to the graduate program administrator.

Theory and Methods Exam Conditions

Each student will take exams in the College's graduate computer lab. Students may not bring books, notes, computers, computer files, or any other study aids into the exam room. The College will provide pens, pencils, and blank sheets of paper. Food and drinks are not permitted in the exam room. Each exam will be given over a two-day time frame lasting four hours each day. Accommodations for physical or learning disabilities that have been certified by the FSU Office of Accessibility Services will also be made if the accommodations are approved in advance by the relevant exam committee.

When a student takes possession of the exam at the start of the exam period, the student is considered to have attempted to take the exam, regardless of whether they complete the exam, hand in any answers, or remain for the full exam period. At that point, the exam can have one of only two outcomes for the student: Pass or Fail.

Admission to Candidacy

After successfully completing the comprehensive exams, an Admission to Candidacy form is sent to the Registrar's Office, and the student becomes a candidate for the doctoral degree. At this stage, the student can register for dissertation credit hours (at least 24 dissertation credit hours are required).

The University requires a minimum period of six months between admission to candidacy and granting of the degree. However, it is extremely rare for a student to complete a dissertation within such a short time frame. Most students take a year or longer to complete a dissertation.

Prospectus and Prospectus Defense

After being admitted to candidacy, students focus primarily on their dissertations. The major professor and supervisory committee assume major roles in helping students define an acceptable project and follow through on its completion. The College requires that doctoral candidates prepare a dissertation prospectus that will enable the committee to determine if the project is acceptable.

Students must also take and pass a dissertation Prospectus Development course under the supervision of their major professor. This is a Directed Individual Study course (CCJ 5981r) titled "Prospectus Development," graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis.

The prospectus defense is a special meeting of the doctoral student and doctoral committee members. During this session, the group strives to reach a consensus regarding the proposal and study methodology. If the prospectus is approved, the student may move ahead with the study as described, subject to any changes the committee may request. Once the student has satisfactorily defended the prospectus, the dissertation director, committee members, and dean will sign the Prospectus Defense Form, which will be put in the student's file. Students may not proceed with dissertation research until the committee has approved the prospectus. All dissertations must have IRB approval and Graduate School recognition of this approval before data analysis.

The student's committee members determine the exact parameters of the prospectus. Generally, the prospectus includes a problem statement and introduction, a literature review, and the research methods to be used.

Dissertation and Dissertation Defense

Doctoral students are required to complete at least 24 dissertation credits while working on a dissertation. Students are expected to register for several credits each semester in which they complete work associated with the dissertation. Until the dissertation is completed, students must register for at least 2 dissertation credits each semester, even after they have completed the University minimum of 24 credits.

Doctoral Program

Generally, the candidate works most closely with his/her dissertation advisor/major professor, although regular contact is also expected with other committee members. Once the dissertation is judged acceptable by the major professor, the student schedules a formal dissertation defense date. The University requires that the student provide all participating faculty members with a copy of the dissertation at least four weeks before the scheduled defense date. The student will need to electronically submit their defense announcement to the Graduate School at least two weeks prior to the dissertation defense. The defense is open to anyone in the University, and students should expect that some strangers might be present.

The university requires that all committee members and the student must attend the defense in real-time, either by being physically present or participating via distance technology. In the college, it is almost always the case that the student and all committee members are physically present.

The final version of the dissertation that the supervisory committee approves must be submitted electronically to the university manuscript clearance advisor in The Graduate School within 60 days of the defense date, or the student must re-define.

Doctoral theses must be presented in an acceptable form before they will receive clearance from the University. The submission process and formatting requirements for electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs) can be found on the Graduate School's website at gradschool.fsu.edu/forms. All students must submit their thesis, treatise, or dissertation electronically. University deadlines for submissions of the final document are established for each academic semester and must be met, or graduation will be delayed.

University Time Limits

The University has established that the requirements for the doctoral degree be completed within five calendar years of the date the student achieved candidacy (this occurs after the successful completion of the required comprehensive exams). In the event that this does not occur, the student will be required to retake comprehensive exams. Under exceptional circumstances, the College may petition the dean of the Graduate School for a short extension of the time limit without requiring the student to retake the exams.

Electronic Submission of the Dissertation

The dissertation must be submitted electronically. Students must create an account in the ProQuest ETD Administrator before uploading their manuscript for an initial format review. All submissions (initial and revised) must be completed through the ProQuest ETD Administrator. When creating an account on the ProQuest ETD Administrator, a lot of information is required upfront, including access preferences and optional paid services like purchasing bound copies of the manuscript and filing for copyright. ProQuest will publish the final approved manuscript and implement student publishing preferences and any paid services after the FSU Manuscript Clearance Office has approved the manuscript and the Registrar's Office has confirmed the student's graduation.

General Advice to Students: Collaboration Is Critical to Your Success.

Learning at the College is a collaborative enterprise where students can benefit from fellow students and faculty. For this reason, students should develop study relationships with their fellow students, perhaps participating in study groups in which the collective wisdom of the group produces benefits for each individual member that they otherwise would not enjoy. In the doctoral program, we emphasize learning by doing. Students engage in the research process as well as mastering extensive research-based knowledge through reading and lectures. In this light, doctoral students are advised to develop relationships with faculty members fairly early on in their careers here, with a view toward collaborating on research with one or more faculty members. Students will have research opportunities linked with their thesis, area paper, or dissertation, and in some cases, research done in connection with employment as a research assistant. Students should also consider other research, perhaps on topics of their own choosing, that could be done collaboratively with faculty or other graduate students.

Students need not wait for a faculty invitation but can initiate a meeting to discuss a proposed project. They can identify faculty members likely to be amenable to a potential project by going to the College website and reading faculty vitae and descriptions of their research interests. The sooner these relationships are established, the better. Doctoral students planning on academic careers need publications to compete for good jobs, and those with publications beyond those generated from their dissertations are in a better position than those without.

Graduate Student Association

The Florida State University College of Criminology and Criminal Justice Graduate Student Association (GSA) represents students pursuing a graduate degree within the College. The goal of the Association is to promote cooperation and understanding between the graduate students, the faculty, and the administration of the College. Additionally, the GSA strives to enhance academic opportunities and secure resources for graduate students.

Professional Associations

Graduate students, especially doctoral students, are strongly urged to join one or both of the principle professional associations to which most active scholars in our field belong: the American Society of Criminology (ASC) and the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS). Joining such an association is an important part of becoming a scholar and communicating with one's fellow scholars. As their names suggest, ASC is more oriented to those whose interests focus primarily on criminology, theory, explanation of criminal behavior, and so on, while ACJS is more oriented to criminal justice issues and is more practitioner-oriented. Membership in the associations bring many benefits, including subscriptions to professional journals (Criminology and Criminology and Public Policy for ASC, Justice Quarterly, and the Journal of Criminal Justice Education for ACJS) and the right to present papers at their annual meetings. Students may join ASC by going to their website, asc41.com, and may join ACJS by going to acjs.org/signup.

Doctoral Timeline

The doctoral timeline below is a guide, and it assumes a Fall admission. Some students may move more quickly through this timeline, especially if entering the program with a Master's degree in Criminology/Criminal Justice. Also, students entering with a Master's degree from another program can be advised by the Graduate Director on whether courses taken elsewhere will allow the 5705 and 5706 required courses to be waived.

YEAR 1

Fall

- 1st class: CCJ 5705
- 2nd class: CCJ 5706
- 3rd class: CCJ 5050
- For students entering with the Master's and getting waived from 5705 and/or 5706: 5285, 5606, or an elective can be taken instead.

Spring

- 1st class: CCJ 5740
- 2nd class: 5606 or 5285 or 5109 (5606 is best taken before 5109)
- 3rd class: Elective
- Submit ASC abstract in March for November presentation (done each spring moving forward)

YEAR 2

Fall

- 1st class: CCJ 6749
- 2nd -3rd class: Elective or 5109 or area paper hours or DIS
- 4th class: Supervised teaching or supervised research (for those on assistantship)
- Start area paper (for those entering without the Master's)

Spring

- 1st class: CCJ 6741
- 2nd-3rd class: 5109 or electives or area paper hours or DIS
- 4th class: Supervised teaching or supervised research (for those on assistantship)
- Complete area paper by end of the Spring or Summer

YEAR 3

- A mix of electives, DISs, and comp prep hours
- CCJ 6065
- Students are encouraged to attempt at least one comprehensive exam.
- Submit manuscript(s) for publication

YEAR 4

- A mix of electives, DISs, and comp prep hours
- CCJ 6065 (can be taken sooner)
- Attempt both comprehensive exams by the end of Year 4 (required)
- Continue work on manuscripts and ASC presentations
- Start dissertation and then defend prospectus

YEAR 5

- Electives, DISs, or dissertation hours
- Pass both comprehensive exams by the end of Year 5 (required)
- Continue work on manuscripts and ASC presentations
- Preparation for the job market/submit job applications
- Defend the dissertation and complete the PhD

Doctoral Coursework

Doctoral Required Courses**

- CCJ 5109 Theory in Criminology and Criminal Justice
- CCJ 5285 Survey of Criminal Justice Theory and Research
- CCJ 5606 Survey of Criminological Theories
- CCJ 5705 Research Methods in Criminology
- CCJ 5706 Applied Statistics in Criminology
- CCJ 5740 Data Analysis in Criminology and Criminal
- CCJ 5981r Prospectus Development
- CCJ 6065 Professional Development in Criminology

Advanced Research Methods Courses (minimum of two)

- CCJ 5707 Qualitative Methods in Criminology
- CCJ 5709 - Survey Research Methods in Criminology and Criminal Justice
- CCJ 6741r Advanced Data Analysis in Criminology and Criminal Justice
- CCJ 6749 Advanced Statistics in Criminology

**A grade of B or better must be earned in all required courses

Scholarly Engagement Requirement

Comprehensive Exams

Pass the Comprehensive Theory Exam

Pass the Comprehensive Research Methods and Statistics Exam

Prospectus defense

24 dissertation hours

Dissertation and dissertation defense

Sample Electives

CCJ 5016 Crimes of the Powerful
CJC 5020 Penology
CJJ 5020 Juvenile Justice
CJE 5024 Police and Society
CCJ 5050 Proseminar in Criminology
CJL 5520 Structure and Process of the American Court System
CCJ 5540 Prevention and Treatment of Crime and Delinquency
CCJ 5607 History of Criminological Thought
CCJ 5625 Ecology of Crime
CCJ 5636 Comparative Criminology and Criminal Justice
CCJ 5669 Race, Ethnicity, Crime and Social Justice
CCJ 5672 Gender, Crime and Justice
CCJ 6109r* Advanced Seminar in Criminological Theory
CCJ 6665 Victimology
CCJ 6708 Seminar in Crime Research
CCJ 6920r* Seminar in Theoretical Criminology

* May be repeated for a maximum of 12 hours as long as the course topic differs.

Exit Survey (Required)

Must fill out exit survey before graduation

Notes:

2026-2027 Faculty

Claudia Anderson, Assistant Professor

Ph.D. University of Cincinnati

Theories of crime and social control, punishment, inequality, social reform.

Bill Bales, Professor Emeritus

Ph.D. Florida State University

Sentencing, assessing the effectiveness and consequences of punishment strategies, evaluation of correctional practices and programs, community reentry.

Kevin Beaver, Judith Rich Harris Professor of Criminology

Ph.D. University of Cincinnati

Biosocial criminology, genetic/biological correlates of offending, life-course/developmental criminology and stability of violent behaviours.

Tom Blomberg, Dean, Sheldon L. Messinger Professor of Criminology

Ph.D. University of California at Berkeley

Delinquency, education, and crime resistance, penology and social control, victim services, criminological research and public policy.

Julie Brancale, Assistant Professor

Ph.D. Florida State University

Juvenile and criminal justice policy evaluation, victimization across the life course, police use of technology, education and delinquency, qualitative methods.

Cecelia Chouhy, Associate Professor

Ph.D. University of Cincinnati

Cross-national approach to testing criminological theories, the effectiveness of correction programs, sources of public opinion.

Billy Close, Assistant Professor

Ph.D. Florida State University

Race and justice, political economy of crime and social control, popular perceptions of crime and punishment, media representation of crime and punishment, sociological and criminological theory.

Jennifer Copp, Professor

Ph.D. Bowling Green State University

Intimate partner violence, consequences of incarceration, neighborhoods and crime, adolescence and young adulthood, health and well-being.

Kimberly Davidson, Assistant Professor

Ph.D. Pennsylvania State University

Criminology, corrections, programming and rehabilitation, community entry, substance abuse.

Emma Fridel, Assistant Professor

Ph.D. Northeastern University

Lethal violence, communities and crime, quantitative methods.

Marc Gertz, Professor Emeritus

Ph.D. University of Connecticut

Public opinion and the criminal justice system, organization politics and the courts, comparative courts, interest groups, voting behavior.

Carter Hay, Professor

Ph.D. The University of Texas at Austin

Family and parenting related causes of adolescent crime, development of self-control and its implications for crime, criminological theory, life course criminology.

Bryan Holmes, Assistant Professor

Ph.D. Pennsylvania State University

Sentencing, courts, race/ethnicity, corrections, inequity in punishment, quantitative methods.

Young-An Kim, Associate Professor

Ph.D. University of California-Irvine

Neighborhoods and crime, criminology of place, crime patterns in street segments, sociology of health, urban sociology and quantitative research methods.

Gary Kleck, Professor Emeritus

Ph.D. University of Illinois at Urbana

Gun control, crime control, violence.

Megan Kurlychek, Professor

Ph.D. Pennsylvania State University

Impact of criminal justice system involvement on later life outcomes with focus on juvenile justice, sentencing, disparities and the collateral consequences of a criminal record on employment and education.

Brendan Lantz, Associate Professor

Ph.D. Pennsylvania State University

Group crime and co-offending, social networks, violence, hate and bias crime.

David McElhattan, Assistant Professor

Ph.D. Northwestern University

Punishment, inequality, law and society, criminal records, collateral consequences.

Dan Mears, Mark C. Stafford Professor of Criminology

Ph.D. The University of Texas at Austin

Crime and delinquency, juvenile and criminal justice, crime theory, public policy and opinion, domestic violence, immigration, mental health, religion, sentencing, corrections and reentry.

George Pesta, Associate Professor

Ph.D. Florida State University

Correctional education juvenile justice, translational criminology, delinquency and education.

Sylwia Piatkowska, Associate Professor

Ph.D. State University of New York at Albany

Crime and deviance, comparative and international criminology, hate crime, policing, social control, spatial analysis advanced quantitative methods.

Joseph Schwartz, Associate Professor

Ph.D. Florida State University

Biosocial criminology, life-course/developmental criminology, traumatic brain injury, behavioral endocrinology, behavior genetics, quantitative research methods, criminological theory.

Keller Sheppard, Assistant Professor

Ph.D. Northeastern University

Police use of force, police discretion, communities and crime, quantitative methods.

Sonja Siennick, Professor

Ph.D. Pennsylvania State University

Crime and deviance, life course, quantitative methods.

Brian Stults, Professor

Ph.D. University at Albany, State University of New York

Race and crime, neighborhoods and crime, residential segregation.

Gordon Waldo, Professor Emeritus

Ph.D. Ohio State University

Research methods, law and social control, corrections, delinquency, juvenile justice.

Patricia Warren, Professor

Ph.D. North Carolina State University

Racial profiling, race and class inequalities, disparities in criminal justice processing, crime and social control.

Marin Wenger, Associate Professor

Ph.D. Pennsylvania State University

Stratification, hate crime, communities and crime deviance, quantitative methods.

Steven Zane, Associate Professor

Ph.D. Northeastern University

Evidence-based crime policy, law and social control, juvenile transfer policy, intersection of social science and law.

APPENDIX

Prospectus Defense Approval Form

Student Name

Defense Date

Prospectus Title

Dissertation Committee Members

Printed

Signature

Approval

(Major Professor)

Yes ☐ No ☐

(Member)

Yes ☐ No ☐

(Member)

Yes ☐ No ☐

(University Representative)

Yes ☐ No ☐

APPENDIX

Declaration of Major Professor

The major professor must be a member of the graduate faculty.

Please return the signed, completed form to the Criminology and Criminal Justice Graduate Office. To change your major professor, a new form must be resubmitted with the signature of the new professor.

Student Name

Student Signature

Date

Major Professor

Major Professor Signature

Date

Previous Major Professor (if any)

APPENDIX

Master’s Thesis or Area Paper Committee

☐ Committee Declaration
☐ Final Thesis/Area Paper Approval (Please Check One)

☐ Thesis ☐ Area Paper (Please Check One)

Students are required to gain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval prior to commencing any research involving human subjects. The student’s name must appear on the approval form as a PI or co-PI for the period of time when the student’s research was conducted. Also, Graduate School recognition of this approval must be gained. Failure to obtain the required approvals may result in thesis/area paper being permanently embargoed and unpublishable in any form.

The chair and supervisory committee must be members of the graduate faculty with master’s directive status and their appointment must be approved by the dean. The committee shall consist of three members of the graduate faculty.

Please return the signed, completed form to the Criminology and Criminal Justice Graduate Office. If there are any changes to the composition of the committee, a new form is to be filed with the Graduate Office.

Student	
Chair	Date
Committee Member	Date
Committee Member	Date

Please submit this form, as well as your approved area paper/thesis, to the graduate program administrator after successfully completing the area paper/thesis.

APPENDIX

Doctoral Dissertation Committee

- ☐ Committee Declaration
☐ Final Defense Approval
- (Please Check One)

Students are required to gain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval prior to commencing any research involving human subjects. The student's name must appear on the approval form as a PI or co-PI for the period of time when the student's research was conducted. Also, Graduate School recognition of this approval must be gained. Failure to obtain the required approvals may result in the dissertation being permanently embargoed and unpublishable in any form.

The major professor and supervisory committee must be members of the graduate faculty with doctoral directive status. Their appointment must be approved by the dean. The committee shall consist of a minimum of four members of the graduate faculty; one of who must be a representative-at-large of the graduate faculty drawn from outside the student's department.

Please return the signed, completed form to the graduate program administrator. If there is a committee member change, a new form must be resubmitted.

Student	
Major Professor	Date
Committee Member	Date
Committee Member	Date
Representative-at-Large	Date
Dean	Date

Annual Doctoral Student Progress Report

Please provide recent curriculum vitae**General Information:**

Student's Name:

Major Professor:

Semester student began at FSU:

Current FSU Graduate GPA:

Do you wish to be considered for an assistantship? (Check one) Yes: No:

Recent Coursework:

List each course recently taken, grade earned, and courses in which you are now enrolled:

CourseGrade

Fall 20

Spring 20

Master's Degree Work (if applicable):

Status of Master's Thesis or Area Paper

Completed (date): _____ Not completed (expected date): _____

Master's Thesis/Area Paper Committee members (if not completed yet):

Chair: _____

Member: _____

Member: _____

Ph.D. Course Requirements:

For each of the following requirements, circle whichever one of these codes best describes your status:

1. Have not taken the course yet
2. Currently enrolled in the course, for the first time
3. Have taken course before, received grade below a middle B, and currently retaking it
4. Have taken course before, received grade below a middle B, have not retaken it.
5. Have taken course before, received grade below a middle B, retook it and received a B or better the second time
6. Took the course once and received a middle B or better
7. Requirement was waived due to work completed elsewhere

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CCJ 5109 Theory in Criminology and Criminal Justice							
CCJ 5285 Survey of Criminal Justice Theory and Research							
CCJ 5606 Survey of Criminological Theories							
CCJ 5705 Research Methods in Criminology							
CCJ 5706 Applied Statistics in Criminology							
CCJ 5740 Data Analysis in Criminology and Criminal Justice							
CCJ 5981r Prospectus Development							
CCJ 6065 Professional Development in Criminology							
Advanced Research Methods (must take at least two):							
CCJ 6749 Advanced Statistics in Criminology							
CCJ 6741r Advanced Data Analysis in Criminology and CJ							

Comprehensive Exam Status:

For each exam (Theory and Methods), write the exam name(s) on the line that best describes your status.

1. Passed exam the first (and only) time you took it: _____
2. Failed exam first time, passed it the second time: _____.
3. Failed exam first time, have not yet retaken it (semester you plan to retake it): _____.
4. Have not taken exam yet (semester you plan to take it): _____.

Dissertation:

Dissertation Committee members:

Major Professor: _____

Committee Member: _____

Committee Member: _____

Outside Member: _____

Dissertation Prospectus Status: Approved (date): _____

If not approved, expected date of approval: _____

Dissertation Status - Please briefly describe the status of work on your dissertation (if not yet begun, you need only write "Not yet begun.")

Other Accomplishments:

Please list all publications, presentations at scholarly meetings, or manuscripts completed during the last year that you intend to submit for publication. Also, list any honors or awards you have received this year.

Assistantships:

Check the terms you were funded, note the name of supervisor and briefly describe your duties for each:

(a) Fall 20____: Supervisor: _____

Duties:

(b) Spring 20____: Supervisor: _____

Duties:

Major Professor's Comments:

As a major professor, are you satisfied with the student's progress toward the doctorate degree?

- Extremely satisfied: _____
- Somewhat satisfied (there are issues to address): _____
- Not satisfied: _____

What issues should the student address in making progress towards the degree? What recommendations do you offer this student regarding his or her progress?

Student comments:

Student's signature: _____ Date: _____

Major Professor's signature: _____ Date: _____

NOTE: Each student should complete the first three pages of this form no later than March 15, arrange an appointment with their major professor, and then review and (if necessary) revise or add to the form in the meeting with the major professor. The major professor should complete the form, retain the final completed version, and supply one copy each to the student and the graduate program administrator no later than March 31. (The latter will make copies for the Dean of the College, and the Director of Graduate Studies, and record on the University's graduate tracking system that the annual review has been performed.)



*The Florida State University
Graduate Assistant Performance
Evaluation*

Evaluation term/year: _____

Employee's Name: _____

Supervisor's Name: _____

Summary of Duties: () Teaching () Research () Other: _____

Work Performance:

☐ Satisfactory

☐ Official concern

*If official concern is cited, options for remediation must be communicated in writing as an addendum to this form. A copy of this form with addendum should be forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate School who will then forward the documents to the appropriate person in Human Resources.

COMMENTS:

*Written comments are helpful for the student, even if performance is satisfactory.

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

*Has this evaluation been discussed with the employee? Yes No (attach explanation).

NOTE: Each student should provide this form to their supervisor no later than March 15, arrange an appointment with their supervisor, and then review the form in the meeting with their supervisor. The supervisor should complete the form, retain the final completed version, and supply one copy each to the student and the graduate program administrator no later than March 31. (The latter will make copies for the Dean of the College, and the Director of Graduate Studies, and record on the University's graduate tracking system that the evaluation has been performed.)