Criminal Justice (CJ)

Course information contained within the Bulletin is accurate at the time of publication in June 2025 but is subject to change. For the most up-to-date course information, please refer to the Course Catalog.

CJ 5001. Evidence-Based Policing. 3 Credit Hours.
The aim of this course is to introduce police professionals to the growing body of research and knowledge about their job, and develop a desire to merge evidence-based practice into their professional life. Evidence-based practice is about making decisions through the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of the best available evidence from multiple sources by asking an answerable question, acquiring evidence, critically appraising the trustworthiness and relevance of the evidence, aggregating the evidence together, applying the evidence into the decision-making process, and assessing the outcome. The course is also designed to help practitioners understand what is necessary to develop their own evidence about work practices. On successful completion of the course, students will be able to contrast the evidence-based approach to opinion, expertise and experience; summarize influential studies in policing; and systematically gather, collate, assess and weigh evidence on a topic from various sources.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 5012. Crime Science Tools and Techniques. 3 Credit Hours.
The aim of this course is to provide a structure and framework for the development of skills in crime science, and the evaluation of crime prevention strategies. Course components will include structuring projects for evaluation, the appreciation of crime prevention mechanisms, data preparation, process and outcome evaluation, time series analysis, and the use of spatio-temporal techniques such as the weighted displacement quotient. On successful completion, students will be able to set up crime prevention projects, monitor ongoing implementation, and assess any crime reduction outcomes.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 5021. Ethical Governance. 3 Credit Hours.
Ethical governance refers to organizational practices designed to achieve value-driven policing across the ranks. It strives to align everyday policing operations (both internally and externally) with enduring democratic values, including policing by consent, access to justice, equality, equity and respect for human rights. In a democratic society, such values must be sustained both within police organizations as well as externally, through relationships with citizens. Police leaders, policy-makers and scholars are looking afresh at mechanisms for enhancing ethical governance, particularly in light of recent threats to police legitimacy. In order to balance evidence-based policing with core organizational values, police leaders must cultivate and develop officers that perform with the highest levels of community commitment, integrity, and innovation. This course canvasses important concepts, debates, visions and practices in ethical governance, providing students with the tools to critically examine challenges and opportunities in their own organizational environments. The aim of this course is to identify and critically examine the ethical dimensions of leadership in a democratic society, and to explore ways of aligning police operations and administration with enduring organizational values.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 5022. Developmental Leadership. 3 Credit Hours.
This course will help graduate policing students develop an appreciation for formal and informal leadership roles and how best to influence differing groups of followers. In light of increasing public and media scrutiny of police interactions with minority group members, understanding leadership in tense or in extremis situations is invaluable. Understanding detractors from effective leadership such as bias and the potential for dehumanization are important to understanding the common reactions when in the role of police officer. Students will consider the need for flexibility across the various environments and activities encountered by police.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 5023. Seminar in Executive Management. 3 Credit Hours.
The aim of this executive seminar program is to ask students to reflect on their core values, and those of their agency and to think more critically about how these interact with the competing core values of other branches of city government, other police departments and aspects of the judicial system, and stakeholders from outside of government, such as private industry, the media, community and protest groups. In a seminar setting alongside the course instructor as moderator and an invited guest, each week provides an opportunity to meet leaders from outside of policing, identify areas of common ground, and cultivate a deeper, more critical understanding of the student's role leading one of the major arms of government. Students will emerge with a clearer sense of their role in directing and forming the vision, culture and ethos of their organization.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8101. Decision Making in Criminal Justice. 3 Credit Hours.
Core Course. Conceptualizes criminal justice as a series of interrelated decision stages. Examines organizational, legal and research issues related to each decision stage.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8102. Research Methods in Criminal Justice. 3 Credit Hours.
Core course. Assumes prior familiarity with basic methodology and statistics. Prepares students to conduct criminal justice research and evaluation. Covers topics of causality, reliability, validity, and quasi-experimental methods.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8104. Law and Social Order. 3 Credit Hours.
Core Course. Examines moral, practical, legal, and constitutional limitations of law as a means of securing social order. Classes and readings are designed to promote critical analysis of primary (constitutions, statutes, cases) and secondary (legal, philosophical, social science literature) sources of law, with special focus on the role of the Supreme Court in balancing state vs. individual interests and on rules and standards by which the Court's discretion and decision-making can be assessed.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8105. Statistical Issues and Analysis of Criminal Justice Data. 3 Credit Hours.
Core Course. Introduces criminal justice graduate students to simple and multiple regression analyses in criminal justice research. Extended treatment of the detection of non-normal data through the use of graphical and statistical techniques, and the statistical implications of highly non-normal data that are encountered in many areas of criminal justice. Clarifies relations between statistical assumptions, results, and use of results for decision making purposes.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8106. Theories of Crime and Deviance. 3 Credit Hours.
Core Course. The goal of the course is to provide an appraisal of the foundations for understanding criminal behavior. Students read major current and classic works couched at different levels of analyses about the origins of criminal behavior including not only violent and property crime but also delinquency, white collar crime and regulatory violations.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8202. Corrections. 3 Credit Hours.
Analyzes the theory, practices and policies of the American correctional system, covering the nature and administration of both institutional and community sanctions and agencies. Students explore competing penal theories and review evidence on the effectiveness of correctional practices. The course investigates the historical development and evolution of imprisonment, trends in the use of confinement, and the effects of incarceration on offenders, families and communities. Students analyze the characteristics of correctional populations and debate the causes and implications of race, class and gender differences. The course identifies significant current issues and reviews the ethical, legal and practical dimensions of proposals for reform. Note: Prior to fall 2016, the course title was "Correctional Philosophy and Administration."

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8203. Issues in Law Enforcement. 3 Credit Hours.
This course focuses on conceptual models of policing and how they affect operational priorities and resource decisions in law enforcement. Topics include community policing, problem-oriented policing and intelligence-led policing, among others. This is a wide-ranging course that explores policing from an international perspective and through the lens of the varying contentious issues of the day.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8204. Policy and Practice in Juvenile Justice. 3 Credit Hours.
This course is designed to increase the student's understanding of the purposes, structure and processes of this distinctly American invention, the juvenile justice system. Together, we explore its recent development and current policy initiatives that are reshaping its role in our society. We also look at the target of this system: delinquent kids. We examine the juvenile justice system in terms of its underlying aims, its historical foundations, and its sociopolitical contexts, explanations of delinquency, theories of child development, case law, legislation, changes now occurring with respect to its goals, and recent initiatives to increase dependency on scientific evidence of effectiveness. In doing so, we seek to understand the system's limitations, contradictions and strengths. At the same time, we examine the role that research plays in shaping the policies and programs that constitute this system.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8205. Aggression and Violence. 3 Credit Hours.
Students will learn about different types of violence in the United States, including homicide, assault, robbery, family violence, youth violence, drug related violence, and gun- related violence. A three-part, interdisciplinary perspective guides this inquiry: (1) examination of patterns and trends, (2) examination of correlates and causes, including biological, psychological and sociological theories, and (3) investigation of different policy responses to violence. At the conclusion of the course, students should be able to do two things: (1) critically discuss major explanations that have been offered for different kinds of violent behavior, and (2) critically evaluate policies for preventing and controlling specific types of violence.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8222. Simulation Modeling. 3 Credit Hours.
Social organization involves complicated systems, such as organizations, institutions and families - and their component parts. The components of systems frequently interact in a complex fashion. Simulation models offer a useful approach to understanding this complexity. Simulation models allow for the creation of theoretically informed representations of complex dynamic systems. These representations can be used to conduct virtual experiments with the goal of strengthening theories and developing better designs for empirical research. The course covers different types of simulation modeling, but focuses on applications of Agent-Based Modeling. Students will gain experience developing conceptual models and programming simple simulation models.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8223. Risk, Prediction and Classification. 3 Credit Hours.
This course focuses on issues surrounding prediction and classification in criminal justice. We examine different perspectives on risk and danger, risk assessment models, the possibilities of accurate predictions, and the implications (practical, social, ethical) of prediction and classification in criminal justice. These include career criminal models and their repercussions in criminal justice policy, the role of risk assessment instruments in community corrections, inmate classification and release, and others. In addition to these practical applications, we will consider the implications of the increasing salience of the notion of "risk" in public and policy discourse.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8224. Drugs, Crime and Justice. 3 Credit Hours.
This advanced graduate course considers the problems of drug abuse, crime and the justice system's response to drug-related crime. A multidisciplinary perspective is used to analytically and critically explore these issues from social, legal, political, public health, enforcement, and criminological perspectives. Specific topics covered include theoretical explanations for drug abuse, drug legalization and decriminalization, drugs and violence, treatment alternatives to incarceration, public health effects, and mandatory sentencing laws for drug offenders. Readings, papers, and in-class discussions and formal debates are used to further students' understanding of the connections between drug abuse and crime, effective criminal justice responses to drug-related crime, and drug policies.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8225. Rehabilitation, Reentry and Recidivism. 3 Credit Hours.
Numerous prison- and community-based approaches have been developed in recent years to help ex-offenders successfully reintegrate into the community. Promising in-prison approaches include comprehensive risk/needs assessment, drug treatment, cognitive behavioral treatment, vocational and basic education, prison industries, and prerelease planning. Community-based approaches include a wide range of options that provide reintegration assistance and linkages to community social services. In this class, we examine theoretical models of rehabilitation (e.g., principles of effective correctional intervention) and recidivism (e.g., life course and reintegration perspectives), including related research, and we investigate current re-entry initiatives at the national, state, and local levels.

Course Attributes: SI

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8226. Transnational and Global Crime. 3 Credit Hours.
Global criminology is an emerging field covering international and transnational crimes that have not traditionally been the focus of mainstream criminology or criminal justice. This course will examine the diverse dimensions of global and transnational crime. Students will examine and discuss historical and contemporary patterns, modus operandi, capabilities, and vulnerabilities of global and transnational criminals and organizations. Course content includes an introduction to global and transnational crime, a discussion of the "problem" of global and transnational crime, a review of illicit activities of criminal organizations, an examination of the link between transnational crime and harms, and a review of contemporary approaches to combating global and transnational crime. The seminar will include a review of organized crime, corporate crime, cybercrime, and terrorism and war in Europe, Russia, the Middle East, Asia, Africa and The Americas.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8227. Contemporary Issues in Youth Crime: Gangs. 3 Credit Hours.
This course explores the modern urban street gang by investigating the extensive history of theory and research on street gangs. The first half of the course will attempt to answer such questions as: Why do youth and young adults join gangs? Why do they leave? Are street gangs similar to other deviant groups, delinquent networks and/or pro-social groups such as fraternities? The second half of the course will focus on the community response to gangs with a heavy emphasis on comparing and contrasting a variety of "evidence-based" models of gang prevention and intervention. By the end of the semester students will have an in-depth understanding of why the problems of gangs and gang violence remain so intractable today, and will be able to identify a number of areas where theory, research and practice have failed to connect.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8228. Race, Crime, and Justice. 3 Credit Hours.
The strong connection between race and crime in the United States occupies the discourse of media, policy-makers, and scholars, alike. This course considers the examination of race as a central concern for scholars of criminal justice especially in an era of mass incarceration. Specifically, we engage in the following questions: How large are racial and ethnic differences in criminal involvement? How do we theoretically construct and measure race and how do these measurements impact how we understand racial categories and crime? What are the implications of these "facts" on the popular understanding of the race-crime connection? What role do criminal justice apparatuses (police, courts, jails, for instance) play in reproducing and amplifying ideas about race and crime? Using various interdisciplinary theoretical approaches, we examine the complex ways in which race-crime-criminal justice is both a product of societal forces and an "engine" reproducing racial arrangements and power relationships in society.

Course Attributes: SI

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8232. Crime Mapping. 3 Credit Hours.
Spatial distribution of crime and criminals is examined in relation to the geographic processes that influence this distribution. This course involves half seminar and half lab work. Seminars include the structure of geographic information and spatial analysis techniques, alongside spatial theories of crime and how these theories can explain crime patterns. Lab work instructs students in the use of GIS to map and analyze crime events, from the national level down to the city level. The GIS and crime mapping component assumes no prior knowledge of GIS, uses the latest ArcGIS software, and concentrates on crime in the City of Philadelphia. Note: Prior to fall 2016, the course title was "Geographical Perspectives of Crime."

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8233. Communities and Crime. 3 Credit Hours.
This course addresses the connections between features of community, and crime, fear and disorder, at various levels of analysis ranging from the community to the street block. It covers varying theoretical perspectives on these connections, with the aim of educating students in the relative strengths and weakness of these various perspectives. Students learn to apply these various perspectives and tools to case studies and actual locations.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8234. Criminal Victimization and Criminal Justice. 3 Credit Hours.
This course explores the problem of victimization [general vs. criminal], the types of victims [direct vs. indirect; individual vs. collective, etc.], and the harms involved [financial vs. physical vs. mental]. It also examines the fairness and efficacy of a wide variety of preventive, remedial, extra-legal and legal [civil, criminal] responses by society and by the criminal justice system. Emphasis is upon data sets and research studies shedding light upon the levels, correlates, dynamics, and consequences of major forms of victimization, as a basis for critical analysis of victimization theory and existing and potential laws, policies, programs, practices, and technologies for reducing its incidence and impact.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8236. Organized Crime. 3 Credit Hours.
Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8237. Program Planning and Evaluation in Criminal Justice. 3 Credit Hours.
Program evaluation is the systematic acquisition and assessment of information to provide useful feedback about a program. In other words, program evaluation facilitates improvements in program performance and outcomes. Evaluation also enables policy makers and funding agencies make decisions about continued support of a program or program replication. Students in this course will develop the capacity to develop and produce useful feedback. They will gain a thorough knowledge of the methods of program evaluation, from the point of framing the goals of the evaluation to communicating findings. Topics will include: assessing the evaluability of the program, logic models and theories of change, formative and summative evaluations, experimental and quasi-experimental designs, data sources and data collection, analyzing and interpreting data, reporting findings, the utilization of results, and synthesizing findings across evaluation studies.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8302. Advanced Methods and Issues in Criminal Justice Research. 3 Credit Hours.
Course involves students in hands-on activities allowing them to learn how to conduct and evaluate different types of research approaches commonly used in criminal justice. Course assumes a solid grounding in graduate-level research methods, and strong multivariate quantitative skills. These "learning by doing" activities, ideally organized around a single topic and conducted for a specific client, are complemented by high level discussions of and readings about key ongoing philosophical, pragmatic, and policy related research issues, and how those issues apply to and play out in the fields of criminal justice and criminology.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8305. Advanced Statistical Issues in Criminal Justice Data. 3 Credit Hours.
Focuses on multivariate statistical techniques particularly important in criminal justice research questions. Course may cover multilevel modeling, or other techniques important to the discipline such as time series, clustering, and automatic interaction detection.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

CJ 8310. Special Topics Seminar. 3 Credit Hours.
Special topics in criminal justice research are examined. Special topics courses are developed to cover emerging issues or specialized content and they do not repeat material presented by regular semester courses.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

CJ 8320. Seminar in Criminal Justice Policy. 3 Credit Hours.
Special topics in current criminal justice policy are explored. Special topics courses are developed to cover emerging issues or specialized content and they do not repeat material presented by regular semester courses.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

CJ 8330. Seminar - Advanced Research Topics. 3 Credit Hours.
Advanced topics in criminal justice and criminological research are explored.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

CJ 9082. Independent Study. 1 to 3 Credit Hour.
Permits individualized study of a specific topic in consultation with a faculty member. Not intended as a substitute for any required course.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

CJ 9083. Directed Readings. 1 to 9 Credit Hour.
Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

CJ 9991. Directed Research. 1 to 9 Credit Hour.
Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

CJ 9994. Preliminary Examination Preparation. 1 to 6 Credit Hour.
Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

CJ 9996. Thesis Research. 1 to 6 Credit Hour.
Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

CJ 9998. Pre-Dissertation Research. 1 to 6 Credit Hour.
Registration required each semester after Preliminary Examinations while researching the dissertation proposal.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

CJ 9999. Doctoral Dissertation Research. 1 to 6 Credit Hour.
Restricted to students who have passed the Preliminary exams and filed an approved proposal with the Graduate School.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.