

Criminal Justice BA

Overview

The **Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice** is offered by the Department of Criminal Justice. The mission of the Criminal Justice program is to foster a comprehensive understanding of the nature of crime and the effectiveness and fairness of society's efforts to prevent and control it. Students engage in a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of crime, offenders and victims, and the agencies, goals, laws, policies and processes of the criminal justice system. The Criminal Justice major emphasizes critical thinking about the kinds of questions and problems that shape developments in research, practice, policy and reform, and the skills utilized by scholars and professionals in the field.

Course Overlap Policy

Students may overlap no more than one course between multiple certificate programs. Students may overlap no more than two courses between the major in Criminal Justice and these closely related programs:

- major or minor in Psychology
- major, minor, or certificate in Cybersecurity and Human Behavior
- certificate in Forensic Psychology
- certificate in Law and the American Criminal Justice System
- certificate in Law Enforcement, Homeland Security and Public Safety

Similarly, students minoring in Criminal Justice may overlap only one course with any of the programs noted above.

Campus Location: Main

Program Code: LA-CJ-BA

Careers

Majoring in criminal justice helps to prepare students for careers as practitioners, researchers and academics in a variety of public and private sector professions in both adult and juvenile systems of justice, at the federal, state and local levels of government. Graduates obtain positions with many different public and private criminal justice-related agencies, including local, state and federal law enforcement; district attorney offices; public defender offices; juvenile and adult probation agencies; city, county and federal courts; crime victims advocacy agencies; organizations providing rehabilitation and reentry services; and social justice organizations.

Criminal Justice students learn the core liberal arts skills in oral and written communication, problem-solving, and critical thinking, also preparing them for career paths outside the traditional criminal justice occupations or for post-graduate education. Graduates move on to doctoral and master's degree programs in criminology and criminal justice, law school, social work, forensic psychology, business school, public policy, and a wide variety of other advanced degrees.

The department hosts an annual career fair every spring for Criminal Justice majors where representatives from over 40 local, state, federal, and private criminal and social justice related organizations gather to recruit Temple students for competitive internships and post-graduation careers.

Internship and Experiential Learning

Students are encouraged to enroll in our specialized internship program, earning 3 credits for CJ 4075 Criminal Justice Internship Seminar (which can be used toward the electives in the major) and 1–9 credits in CJ 4085 Criminal Justice Internship (which count towards the 123 credits required for graduation but may not be used to fulfill any requirements of the Criminal Justice major). This program runs in the Fall and Spring. Interested students should contact Cheryl Irons (cheryl.iron@temple.edu).

Many other courses in the department include experiential learning components. CJ 2701 Inside-Out Prison Exchange is part of an award-winning national and international program that originated here at Temple University's Criminal Justice Department. Students travel weekly to a local prison where they take a class with a select group of inmates. In other classes, students often take field trips, hear from guest speakers, and engage in hands-on research and policy-relevant projects.

Criminal Justice +1 Accelerated BA/MA Program

High-achieving undergraduates will be invited by the faculty of the Criminal Justice Department to apply for the +1 BA/MA accelerated program. Students admitted to this program begin taking graduate courses, along with their undergraduate curriculum, in their last three undergraduate semesters. After completing their Bachelor of Arts degree, they then complete the remaining requirements of a Master of Arts in Criminal Justice in the fifth year. Twelve credits of graduate work may count for both the Bachelor's and Master's degree programs; these are used as Criminal Justice major electives in the undergraduate degree. Eligible students will have a minimum 3.25 overall GPA and will be able to complete their Bachelor's degree in three semesters by the time they are admitted to the +1 program in the spring of their Junior year. Students must have completed or be enrolled in the following courses to be considered for this program: CJ 1001, CJ 2401, CJ 2597 and CJ 2602.

Eligible students will receive notification at the end of their Sophomore year, and applications will be accepted until September 30th of their Junior year. Interested students should contact Jennifer Horton (jhorton@temple.edu).

Student Organizations

Criminal Justice Society

The Criminal Justice Society hosts speakers from a variety of criminal justice related organizations, hosts information sessions on applying to graduate school and law school, and performs voluntary community service projects both within and outside the Temple community. Membership is open to all students majoring or minoring in Criminal Justice. For more information, contact the Criminal Justice Society advisor, Cheryl Irons (cheryl.iron@temple.edu).

Forensic Psychology Club

This club brings together a mix of students from all majors who share interests in a wide range of topics at the intersection of psychology and the law, including forensic assessment, criminal behavior, victimology, or investigative techniques, careers in forensic psychology or simply those interested in criminal television such as Law & Order, CSI, Criminal Minds, Forensic Files, etc. We host a variety of activities, experiences and guest speakers that expose students to various topics in forensic psychology, while creating a sense of community. For more information please contact the forensic psychology advisor, Catresa Meyers (catresa.meyers@temple.edu).

Temple Ignite Organization

Our organization is empowering the next generation of women leaders in legal, civic and political duty, as well as leadership in general. We welcome and support all young women to determine which issues are important to them in areas of criminal justice and social justice while conducting service to our community. We are seeking creative students to expand the scope of our activities. Join us and help us build each other up! For more information please contact the Ignite advisor, Joanne Metzger (metzger@temple.edu).

The Law Enforcement & Government Service Club

We help students identify and explore opportunities for careers with federal, state, and local government agencies, help with career planning for public service careers, and provide an opportunity to network with other students with similar interests as well as active duty public service personnel and agency recruiters. The club hopes to provide interesting insights into the world of public service, make students more competitive as they pursue internship and career opportunities, and help them reach their goals of entering the career of their choice. For more information please contact the law enforcement and government club advisor, Douglas Green (douglas.green@temple.edu).

Distinction in Major

Criminal Justice majors may graduate with distinction in the major if they have earned a GPA of 3.5 in the major and a cumulative GPA of at least 3.25.

Contact Information

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Learn more about the Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice.

These requirements are for students who matriculated in academic year 2025-2026. Students who matriculated prior to fall 2025 should refer to the Archives to view the requirements for their Bulletin year.

Summary of Degree Requirements

University Requirements

- MATH 0701 (4 s.h.) and/or ENG 0701 (4 s.h.), if required by placement testing.
- All Temple students must take a minimum of two writing-intensive courses as part of the major. The specific courses required for this major are CJ 2597 and CJ 4097.
- Students must complete requirements of the General Education (GenEd) Program. See the General Education section of the *Undergraduate Bulletin* for more details.

College of Liberal Arts Requirements

- Completion of a minimum of 123 credits, including:
 - 90 credits in CLA/CST courses;
 - 45 credits of which must be at the upper level (numbered 2000-4999).
 - For **Social Science majors**, 6 upper level credits (numbered 2000-4999) must be taken in Humanities Subject Areas: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Greek (Ancient), Greek and Roman Classics, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Philosophy, Religion, Russian, and Spanish in the College of Liberal Arts, Art History in the Tyler School of Art and Architecture, or any department in the College of Science and Technology.
- A minimum GPA of 2.0, cumulatively, in CLA/CST coursework, and in the major.
- Only courses in which a student receives a grade of at least C- can satisfy GenEd, major, minor, or CLA Foreign Language and Global Studies requirements.
- **Professional Development Requirement**
 - All students in the College of Liberal Arts are required to take a 1 credit seminar in professional development. CLA 1002 Professional Development for Liberal Arts Majors is the general course option for any CLA major and Criminal Justice offers CJ 1002 Professional Development in Criminal Justice. Several other departments have alternatives to these courses which may be found on the CLA College Requirements page. Only one course in this category may count towards graduation.
- **Foreign Language/Global Studies Requirements:**
 - All students must complete or test out of the first and second levels of a foreign language - these courses are numbered 1001 and 1002;
 - All students must complete at least one course from the GenEd Global/World Society category; and
 - All Bachelor of Arts students must complete one of the following options:
 - Third semester of a foreign language;
 - Demonstrated proficiency beyond the third semester in a foreign language (placement exam or certification from the language department);
 - Take one Global Studies course from the list on the CLA College Requirements page;
 - Study Abroad at an approved program; or
 - Take a second General Education Global/World Society course.
- **Notes on Foreign Language Study**
 - The third level of language is numbered 1003 in French, Spanish, and Portuguese and numbered 2001 in all other foreign language subjects.
 - Students are strongly encouraged to take the third level of a foreign language as it is the minimum required for election to the prestigious honor society *Phi Beta Kappa*. (Taking the course does not guarantee admission but not taking it guarantees exclusion.)
 - See the College of Liberal Arts Policies section of this *Bulletin* for more information on the Foreign Language Placement, Regression in Coursework, and guidelines for students' other experiences with language.

General Electives are typically one-third of a student's program of study and can be focused on a second major, a minor, or towards some other personal enrichment or professional goals. See an academic advisor for assistance in developing an academic plan for these courses.

Major Requirements (36 credits)

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Specifically Required Courses		
CJ 1001	Introduction to Criminal Justice	3
CJ 2401	Nature of Crime	3
CJ 2501	Introduction to Criminal Law	3
CJ 2597	Criminal Justice Research Methods	3
CJ 2602	Criminal Justice Statistics	3
CJ 4097	CJ Capstone Seminar	3

Electives in Major ¹

Select three Criminal Justice electives numbered 2000-4999	9
Select three Criminal Justice electives numbered 3000-4999	9
Total Credit Hours	36

¹ A student may count CJ 4075 toward the Criminal Justice major electives. CJ 4085 does not count toward the major electives but up to 12 credits may count as free electives.

Suggested Academic Plan

Please note that this is a **suggested** academic plan. Depending on your situation, your academic plan may look different.

Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice**Suggested Plan for New Students Starting in the 2025-2026 Academic Year**

Year 1		Credit Hours
Fall		
ENG 0802	Analytical Reading and Writing [GW]	4
or ENG 0812	or Analytical Reading and Writing: ESL [GW]	
or ENG 0902	or Honors Analytical Reading and Writing [GW]	
GenEd Quantitative Literacy Course [GQ]		4
Foreign Language 1001 - first level		4
GenEd Breadth Course		3
Credit Hours		15
Spring		
IH 0851	Intellectual Heritage I: The Good Life [GY]	3
or IH 0951	or Honors Intellectual Heritage I: The Good Life [GY]	
Foreign Language 1002 - second level		4
CJ 1001	Introduction to Criminal Justice	3
GenEd Breadth Course		3
GenEd Breadth Course		3
Credit Hours		16
Year 2		
Fall		
IH 0852	Intellectual Heritage II: The Common Good [GZ]	3
or IH 0952	or Honors Intellectual Heritage II: The Common Good [GZ]	
CJ 2401	Nature of Crime	3
CJ 2597	Criminal Justice Research Methods [WI]	3
GenEd Breadth Course		3
Select one of the following:		3
Foreign Language - third level		
GenEd Global/World Society Course		
Internationally-Focused Course From Approved List		
Credit Hours		15
Spring		
GenEd Breadth Course		3
GenEd Breadth Course		3
CJ 1002	Professional Development in Criminal Justice	1
CJ 2501	Introduction to Criminal Law	3
CJ 2602	Criminal Justice Statistics	3
CLA/CST 0800-4999 Elective		2
Credit Hours		15

Year 3**Fall**

Criminal Justice 2000+ Course	3
Criminal Justice 2000+ Course	3
CLA/CST 2000+ Elective	3
CLA/CST 2000+ Humanities/CST Course	3
CLA/CST 0800-4999 Elective	3
Credit Hours	15

Spring

GenEd Breadth Course	3
Criminal Justice 2000+ Course	3
Criminal Justice 3000+ Course	3
CLA/CST 2000+ Humanities/CST Course	3
CLA/CST 0800-4999 Elective	4
Credit Hours	16

Year 4**Fall**

Criminal Justice 3000+ Course	3
Criminal Justice 3000+ Course	3
CLA/CST 0800-4999 Elective	3
CLA/CST 0800-4999 Elective	3
CLA/CST 0800-4999 Elective	3
Credit Hours	15

Spring

CJ 4097	CJ Capstone Seminar [WI]	3
CLA/CST 2000+ Elective		3
CLA/CST 0800-4999 Elective		4
Electives at Any Level in Any School or College		6
Credit Hours		16
Total Credit Hours		123

Accelerated Programs

Students may opt to pursue an accelerated +1 program, enabling them to complete both a bachelor's degree and master's degree in less time than the traditional route.

The following accelerated programs may be of interest to students in the Criminal Justice BA:

College of Liberal Arts

- Criminal Justice MA

Fox School of Business and Management

- Information Technology Auditing and Cyber Security MS