

Department of Sociology and Criminology

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of Sociology and Criminology seeks to educate students about the richness and diversity of social life and prepare them for professional careers. Department faculty offer students opportunities to cultivate the development of sociological and criminological perspectives, which link the individual to history, society and culture. We accomplish this through a variety of pedagogical practices both inside and outside of the classroom, enhancing critical intelligence (independent thinking), fostering compassionate service, and encouraging students to become informed, deliberative and engaged citizens.

Drawing on the theoretical and analytical tools of sociology and criminology, students are taught to use the results of empirical investigation to look under the surface of social phenomena and to probe the taken-for-granted social world in which they live. Developing the requisite skills to accomplish this also prepares students to compete successfully in the 21st century global economy where critical thinking, writing, and oral communication are at a premium.

The Department of Sociology and Criminology contributes to a liberal arts education within the context of Catholic intellectual traditions by encouraging self-discovery and promoting social justice. The department educates students to understand their world and encourages them to work for social change.

LEARNING GOALS

The Department of Sociology and Criminology has identified the following specific learning goals for our students:

- 1) To develop an understanding of sociological and criminological approaches to analyzing and addressing the complex interactions between individuals and societal, historical and cultural forces;
- 2) To appreciate the diverse ways of being human and understand the need for multicultural awareness;
- 3) To better understand how social inequality is based upon divisions of class, race, ethnicity, gender, age, and sexual orientation;
- 4) To gain specific competencies in social research;
- 5) To acquire the essential skills for successful careers and post-graduate education.

MAJOR IN CRIMINOLOGY (13)

The major in Criminology is anchored in the discipline of sociology. Consequently, it provides students with a theoretically sophisticated understanding of crime as a social phenomenon, both regarding its causes and its consequences for society. Coursework in the major encompasses the study of how laws are made (the sociology of law), why some people break those laws (theories of crime), and the societal reaction to law-breaking behavior by the criminal justice system. Students who major in Criminology gain both a broad and deep understanding of the history of the field of criminology as an academic discipline; exposure to the theories of legal creation; knowledge of the sociological, biological, and psychological theories that offer explanations for why people engage in criminal behavior; and an appreciation of how the criminal justice system operates — from the time of arrest by the police, through formal processing by the courts, and extending to sanctioning (incarceration and supervision) and reentry.

As a social science with its roots in sociology, the Criminology major emphasizes the central importance of students gaining proficiency in social science research methods and sociological theories. Students who major in Criminology design, execute, and present a research project relevant to the field in the required two-semester Internship Seminar, taken in the senior year. In addition, the required Internship Seminar provides opportunities for experiential learning in agencies and organizations within the criminal justice system or closely allied professions (e.g., victim services agencies).

Students who complete the major in Criminology are prepared for graduate study in criminology, criminal justice, related social sciences, and the law. Should graduates aspire to more immediate employment opportunities, the Criminology major prepares them for careers in law enforcement, institutional corrections, probation and parole, in social and human service agencies that deal with crime victims, or in a number of diversion and treatment programs that are designed to provide alternatives to incarceration, especially for juvenile offenders.

Required Courses (7)

- SOC 121 Principles of Sociology **OR** SOC 122 Social Problems
- CRM 130 Introduction to the Criminal Justice System
- CRM 242 Criminology
- SOC 300 Statistics
- CRM 485 Internship I
- CRM 486 Internship II
- SOC 465 Sociological Research Methods

Elective Courses (6)

Choose three from Deviance/Law and Society and three from Structural and Cultural Factors.

Deviance/Law and Society (3)

- CRM 243 Juvenile Delinquency
- CRM 255 Special Topics
- CRM 272 Deviant Behavior
- CRM 275 Sociology of Law
- CRM 325 Victimology
- CRM 333 Prisoner Rehabilitation and Reentry
- CRM 335 Family Violence
- POL 316 Constitutional Law

Structural and Cultural Factors (3)

- SOC 206 The Sociology of Urban Life
- SOC 216 Racial and Ethnic Relations
- SOC 224 Gender Issues in Society
- SOC 232 Social Inequality in Society
- SOC 234 Social Policy
- SOC 250 Public Sociology
- SOC 315 Masculinities

RECOMMENDED FOUR-YEAR PLAN FOR THE MAJOR IN CRIMINOLOGY

The following plan is suggested for Criminology majors. The major prepares students both for the workforce or for graduate study in a number of disciplines. The major is flexible to allow for study abroad (including a semester in Washington, D.C.), additional internships beyond those required, and the addition of another major or minor(s). Students can successfully complete the major with spring of sophomore year being the latest point to start taking required courses.

First Year

Fall	Spring
CRM 130 Introduction to the Criminal Justice System	SOC 121 Principles of Sociology OR SOC 122 Social Problems

Sophomore Year

Fall	Spring
CRM 242 Criminology	Elective
	Elective

Junior Year

Fall	Spring
Elective	SOC 465 Sociological Research Methods
Elective	Elective

Senior Year

Fall	Spring
SOC 300 Statistics	CRM 486 Internship Seminar II
CRM 485 Internship Seminar I	Elective

DOUBLE COUNTS IN THE CORE FOR CRIMINOLOGY MAJORS

Person and Society (Social Science) CRM 130 Introduction to the Criminal Justice System or CRM 242 Criminology
Person and Society (2nd Social Science) SOC 121 Principles of Sociology or SOC 122 Social Problems
Second Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning SOC 300 Statistics

Please note that additional courses taken as electives for the Criminology major may serve as additional double counts in the core. We recommend consulting with an advisor in the department.

ADVISING TIPS

- Students are strongly encouraged to switch to an advisor in the department upon declaring the major.
- Students may begin to explore the Criminology through CRM 130, CRM 242, or any CRM elective course they are eligible to take (first year students are not eligible to take CRM 325 Victimology or CRM 335 Family Violence).
- At least one structural and cultural factors elective and at least one deviance/law and society elective is offered every semester.
- Other than SOC 121, SOC 122, CRM 130, and CRM 242, all other courses in the department are offered at most once per year (some electives are not offered in a given year).
- The major is designed for students to take SOC 465 Sociological Research Methods junior spring, SOC 300 Statistics and CRM 485 senior fall, and CRM 486 senior spring. This is the preferred order of the courses and allows for cohorts of majors to bond as a group.
- Many majors take advantage of the accelerated double major with Sociology, which requires only 18 courses to complete both majors.
- Students may take advantage of the special double major with Human Services and Rehabilitation Studies. Interested students must start the double major curriculum their freshman year. All Criminology and Human Services and Rehabilitation Studies double majors are advised by the chair of the Criminology department in consultation with Clinical Coordinator in Human Services and Rehabilitation Studies.
- Few, if any, criminology courses are offered in the summer through Assumption, so Criminology majors should not plan to take courses in the major during the summer.
- To maintain the academic integrity of the major, it is expected that courses for the major will be completed through the Assumption College day school. Transfer courses will be reviewed under strict conditions and should be submitted to the department for review before registering for the course.

WHAT CAREERS DOES A MAJOR IN CRIMINOLOGY LEAD TO?

Recent Criminology alums from Assumption are active in careers in business, education, institutional corrections, law, law enforcement, the military, parole, probation, sales, social services, and youth services. Others have or are still pursuing additional education, including degrees in business, counseling psychology, criminal justice, education, homeland security, public administration, school counseling, and social work. To keep up with the latest department happenings, follow us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/AssumptionSociology/>

Although only a few of our graduates will seek federal employment, the U.S. Department of Justice's webpage on careers provides a nice overview of some of the federal opportunities in that agency: <https://www.justice.gov/careers>

This page also has helpful information for a wide range of careers in criminal justice system and allied professions, such as victim services: <http://www.cjstudents.com/careers.htm>

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

CRIMINOLOGY (CRM)

CRM 130 INTRODUCTION TO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

This survey level course introduces students to the purpose, structure, and function of the criminal justice system, which represents the government's official response to crime. Students will learn about the role of the various aspects of the criminal justice system (i.e., law enforcement, courts, and corrections) in responding to and controlling crime. A significant focus of the class will be on critical analysis of criminal justice policy and programs, such as mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses, New York City's stop and frisk campaign, sex offender residency restrictions, mandatory arrest laws for domestic violence, day reporting centers for probationers and parolees, and victimless prosecution of domestic violence cases. The course will also force students to consider the challenges facing the criminal justice system, including an aging prison population, the impact of incarceration on families and communities, the pressure to efficiently process high caseloads, and protecting personal liberties while keeping citizens safe. This course counts in the Core Curriculum as a social science in either Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning or Person and Society. (Fall, Spring)

Kaufman-Parks/Three credits

CRM 242 CRIMINOLOGY

The course examines the patterns, causes, and consequences of crime, and the ways in which the criminal justice system attempts to deal with the crime problem in the United States. Specific substantive topics will include analyses of how laws are created; theories of crime causation; penology; the relationship between crime/criminal justice and social class, race/ethnicity and gender; fear of crime; the social construction of crime in the media; the growth of the prison system; and an assessment of the efficacy of alternative "crime-fighting" strategies, such as community policing. This course counts in the Core Curriculum as a social science in either Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning or Person and Society. (Fall, Spring)

Cares, Prior/Three credits

CRM 243 JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

This course examines the history of "juvenile delinquency" as a societal category and as a social problem. While the main focus is on competing theories of delinquent behavior and the relative effectiveness of various policy responses to juvenile crime, the course will also focus extensively on media portrayals of juvenile criminals and the broader topic of the social construction of the juvenile crime problem. Specific topics include: decriminalization; deinstitutionalization; court diversion; radical nonintervention; community arbitration; and community-based corrections.

Kaufman-Parks/Three credits

CRM 255 SELECTED TOPICS IN CRIMINOLOGY

This course will permit the study of a selected topic within Criminology. The topic may change each time the course is offered.

Staff/Three credits

CRM 272 DEVIANT BEHAVIOR

This course examines how particular acts, beliefs, and conditions come to be defined as deviant; who confers the label of "deviant" upon whom; and how a deviant identity is managed by those persons successfully labeled "deviant." The main theoretical approach employed in this course, social constructionism, argues that deviant behavior cannot be understood in isolation from differentials in social power that permit some groups in society to define their lifestyles, beliefs, and status as superior and preferred. Specific topics to be covered include crime and delinquency; mental illness; drug and alcohol addiction; "alternative" lifestyles; the social organization of deviant subcultures; and elite deviance (white-collar crime).

Prior/Three credits

CRM 275 SOCIOLOGY OF LAW

This course examines the interrelationship between law and society by focusing on the “law in action” versus the law “on the books.” It will offer a broad introduction to the law as a social institution, and it will analyze how the law shapes the form and function of other key social institutions such as the family, the economy, and the state (politics). Specific substantive topics to be covered include: theories of legal creation; types of legal systems; theories of social control and punishment; how laws are used to effect social change (the controversy over “judicial activism”); how racial and class inequalities in society affect the creation and administration of law; and how the work of key theorists in the discipline of sociology (primarily Marx, Weber, and Durkheim) have contributed to the field. There will be less emphasis on the content of law (i.e., legal doctrine and case law) than on the study of how laws represent and shape core societal values.

Staff/Three credits

CRM 325 VICTIMOLOGY

This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of the complexity of criminal victimization from multiple perspectives: the victim’s, society’s, and the criminal justice and other response system’s. The course begins by exploring the nature and extent of the problem. Then, it moves on to explore theoretical frameworks used to explain criminal victimization. Next, it examines the consequences of victimization for victims, their loved ones, and society at large. The course concludes with a selection of special topics. Students should be at least sophomore standing.

Cares/Three credits

CRM 333 PRISONER REHABILITATION AND REENTRY

This course combines classroom and experiential community learning to examine prisoner rehabilitation and reentry programs in the United States. Students will gain an understanding of the reasons for and against prisoner rehabilitation, the various types of rehabilitation services which may be offered, and how rehabilitation and reentry programs have an effect on continuing crime rates in the country. This course also entails a critical analysis of how the availability of rehabilitation programs impacts families, communities, and the safety of society overall. Students should be at least sophomore standing.

Kaufman-Parks/Three credits

CRM 335 FAMILY VIOLENCE

This course combines classroom and experiential community learning to examine the phenomenon of family violence in the United States. Students will gain an understanding of the prevalence, risk factors and consequences of child maltreatment, intimate partner violence and elder abuse specifically. This course also entails a critical analysis of how definitions of and responses to family violence impacts individuals, families, communities, and the safety of society overall. Students should be at least sophomore standing.

Kaufman-Parks/Three credits

CRM 485 INTERNSHIP SEMINAR I

This seminar provides interns with the opportunity to examine the internship experience along with other student interns. Students also examine related issues: social policy development; program planning, evaluation, and research; the social scientist’s responsibilities for the use of her or his research; the political role of the social scientist; the “value-free” debate among social scientists; applied versus pure sociology; the role of the social scientist within private and public organizations; management of human service agencies; and career options for social scientists. (Fall)

Prior/Three credits

CRM 486 INTERNSHIP SEMINAR II

This seminar provides interns with the opportunity to examine the internship experience along with other student interns. Students also examine related issues: social policy development; program planning, evaluation, and research; the social scientist’s responsibilities for the use of her or his research; the political role of the social scientist; the “value-free” debate among social scientists; applied versus pure sociology; the role of the social scientist within private and public organizations; management of human service agencies; and career options for social scientists. Prerequisite: CRM365. (Spring)

Cares/Three credits