

DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE GRADUATE PROGRAM CURRICULUM

(FINAL VERSION ADOPTED July 14, 2025)

Preamble: This curriculum and policy as adopted this 10 day of June 2025 takes effect and remains in force. Any changes to this policy document would be made only with the majority faculty approval at regularly constituted faculty meetings and must be reflected in the minute thereof.

1. **Admission requirements and guidelines:**

All regular requirements of the university, as set forth in the catalog, must be met prior to admission into the Master of Science Program in the Department of Criminal Justice. The departmental admission criteria are:

- a. Have a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited 4-year college or university, or equivalent from a foreign country.
- b. Have a minimum GPA of 3.0. (on a 4.0 scale) on overall undergraduate coursework.
- c. Three letters of recommendation from persons capable of adequately assessing the applicant's potential for success in the program.
- d. An interview or evaluation approval by the admissions committee.

2. **Provisional Admission:**

Applicants who fail to meet the above requirements may be admitted on a provisional basis. Provisional admission consideration will be based on fulfillment of all the following:

- a. Have a minimum GPA of 2.7 (on a 4.0 scale) on all work completed.
- b. Will not be allowed to register more than 9 credit hours in the first semester in the program and must maintain a minimum grade of "B".
- c. Provide three letters of recommendation from person's capable of adequately assessing the applicant's potential for success in the program.

3. **Academic Probation:**

See Graduate School policy.

4. **Academic Suspension:**

A student may be suspended from the program if he/she

- a. made two "C" grades
- b. has a cumulative GPA of less than 3.0.

5. **Removal of Academic Suspension:**
A suspended student may be conditionally readmitted after:
 - a. sitting out for one calendar year.
6. **Academic Dismissal:**
A student shall be dismissed from the program if he/she:
 - a. Made three “C” grades or less in one semester.
 - b. Made two “C” grades in one semester while under provisional admission status.
7. **Minimum Core Course Requirement**
All students must make a minimum grade of “B” in all core courses
8. **Non-Degree Registration:**
A student who has not been formally admitted into the Criminal Justice Graduate program may be allowed to take no more than six (6) credit hours of classes per semester as a non-degree seeking student. Such grades earned will not in any way count towards qualifying conditions for admission purposes. Such registration must follow the school-wide Graduate School requirements (see p.3 of Graduate Admission brochure).
9. **Course Offerings:**
The following courses will be offered
 - a. **Core Courses**
 - i. **MCCJ 600 Proseminar in Criminology and Crim. Justice (3)**
 - ii. **MCCJ 620 Theoretical Perspectives on Crime and Justice (3)**
 - iii. **MCCJ 625 Research Methods in Criminology and Criminal Justice (3)**
 - iv. **MCCJ 631 Applied Statistics and Computer Application in Criminal Justice (3) - CR; LEC; CDP**
This is an advanced applied social statistics course with computer applications, using examples from criminological issues and crime-related data. Statistical procedures to be studied - descriptive and inferential statistics, and linear regression techniques – are those typically used to analyze data to understand and explain criminological issues.
Prerequisite: Undergraduate or graduate introduction to Statistics.
 - v. **MCCJ 640 Minorities, Crime, and Justice (3)**
 - b. **Supportive Courses** * (see accompanying listings)

10. Course Registration Sequence:

- a. All newly admitted students are required to take MCCJ 600 in the first semester of registration in the program. Where the course is not offered, it must be taken in the second semester.
- b. Students are expected to register and pass MCCJ 625 (preferably in the first semester) prior to registering for MCCJ 631.
- c. All other courses may be taken in any order. It may however be advisable for students (especially those without criminal justice or sociology background) to take MCCJ 620 as early as possible to acquire a theoretical foundation necessary in applications relating to the master's program.

11. Conflict of Interest:

In any case of perceived or potential conflict of interest, a faculty should reclude her/himself from acting as major professor or serving in the comprehensive examination committee of the concerned student, nor shall a student be permitted to enroll in a class where perceived or potential conflict of interest will be created. An example of conflict of interest is faculty having a direct family member as student in the program (sibling, spouse, parent, child, immediate in-law). When such other potential conflict of interest arises, an ad hoc committee would be established to deal with the issue on a case-by-case basis.

12. Track Options:

The program shall offer a two-track master's degree options – thesis and non-thesis, as follows:

- a. **Thesis Option** (30 credit hours) - The thesis option requires the successful completion of twenty-four (24) semester hours of course work and a minimum of three (3) hours of credit on an original thesis. Students will take MCCJ 734 Directed Individual Study (3-credit hours) as a required course for the Thesis Option. Students will take this course in alignment with their selected concentration area, which should be aligned with the focus of their selected thesis topic. This research- oriented option of thirty (30) credit hours is designed for students who anticipate pursuing their academic career to the doctoral level. Students electing this option must form a thesis committee. A minimum committee consists of a major professor and two additional faculty members, all of whom must be faculties of the UMES graduate school. The major professor and one member of the thesis committee should be selected from the Department of Criminal Justice Faculty. One committee member must be selected from outside the department and be a campus-approved graduate faculty. A successful oral defense of the thesis is required.

Core courses	15 credits
Concentration courses	12 credits
Thesis	3 credits
Comprehensive Exam	0 credits

- b. **Non-Thesis Option/Course Work** (36 credit hours) – The non-thesis option requires the successful completion of thirty-six (36) credit hours of course work. This option does not require a thesis, however, students electing this option must complete MCCJ 798 Masters Seminar paper.

Core courses	15 credits
Concentration courses	18 credits
Masters Seminar Paper	3 credits
Comprehensive Exam	0 credits

13. **Retention and Exit Requirements:**

All students regardless of area of concentration or program option chosen must maintain an overall 3.0 grade point average, complete degree requirements in five (5) years or less, and successfully pass a written comprehensive examination.

14. **Comprehensive Examination:**

The comprehensive examination will follow procedures approved and adopted by the Criminal Justice faculty (see policy on comprehensive examination procedures).

15. **Scholarship and Assistantship:**

Scholarships and assistantships will be awarded to students based on the availability of funds. The graduate program director and department chair determines the graduate assistants. Graduate Assistants could work remotely based on the approval of the Department chair. Criteria for disbursement include:

- a. Minimum GPA of **3.0** for Assistantships and **3.5** for Scholarships.
- b. Three letters of recommendation submitted to the committee from faculty who are familiar with applicants' academic ability.
- c. Optional personal letters from students demonstrating financial need.
- d. Awardees must remain full-time students during the entire academic year for which the assistantship is awarded.
- e. Completed application deadline is as set forth by the committee. Late applications may only be processed on an extra fund-availability basis.

Note: Terms for scholarships may vary depending on specifications from granting source.

16. **Graduate Record Examination (GRE):**

A GRE score is not required for admission to, or graduation from, the MCCJ Program.

17. Choosing an Academic Mentor

All graduate students are encouraged to pick a mentor of their choice any time after completing one semester of study. **The Graduate Program Coordinator will serve as the academic advisor to MCCJ students.** Only the student's advisor can sign off on student's registering for taking the comprehensive examination. A faculty member from the Department of Criminal Justice must serve as chair of the student's thesis committee should the student opt for thesis option (students should be advised to choose a professor with the required graduate status if they intend to write a thesis).

18. Application Deadlines:

Fall Semester - April 15

Spring Semester - October 30

Summer Session - April 15

19. Supportive Courses (see listing)

(NOTE: Courses for different areas of concentrations are designated as follows: LEC = Law Enforcement and Courts, and CDP = Corrections and Delinquency Prevention).

MCCJ 642 Women, Crime, and Justice (3)

Theories of gender, society, and their relationship to crime are explored. Empirical knowledge of causal theories will be used to explore reasons for female involvement in the criminal justice system. An exploration of the meaning and application of justice for women will also be included.

MCCJ 644 Organized Crime (3) LEC

This course provides the student with both an historical and contemporary analysis of organized crime and the fight against organized crime in the United States; considers factors that led to the rise of organized crime in the United States during the turn of the 20th Century and how those factors continue to influence organized crime today. It also considers multiple theories of organized crime and explores many of the methods used by law enforcement to curtail/eliminate organized crime.

MCCJ 646 Special Topics in Criminology and Criminal Justice (3) - LEC; CDP

This course analyzes current research and policy issues of priority from a range of perspectives in criminology and criminal justice (focus of course is on specific research expertise of faculty and importance of justice issues).

MCCJ 648 Criminal Justice Administration (3) - LEC; CDP

This course acquaints students with a basic understanding of organization/administrative theory and behavior, and their assumptions. The course will explore administrative theories within a criminal justice context as students learn the impact of organization structure, environment, and behavior on such issues as leadership, control, and decision making.

MCCJ 650 Private and Industrial Security (3) - LEC; CDP

This course deals with historical, philosophical, and modern perspectives of private and industrial security - survey of its principles, its legal authority and its effects on society in general. Included in the course are institutional security, challenges of violence in the workforce, industrial and retail security, various forms of preventing losses, and risk management.

MCCJ 652 (3) Survey of Correctional Field (3) - CDP

This course examines the dynamics of American correctional techniques and rationale from the 1700 to date. It familiarizes students with the history, philosophy, and evolutions of correctional practice in America.

MCCJ 654 History of African American Criminological Thought (3) - LEC; CDP

This course is designed to provide the student with knowledge of and understanding of African American perspectives on criminology and criminal issues. The course is intended to give graduate students perspectives that are often omitted from mainstream undergraduate criminal justice curriculums. The materials used in this course are relatively broad covering both historical and contemporary African American thought. Each perspective considered has analyzed the above issue with an emphasis on how they impact and are impacted by race.

MCCJ 656 Law Enforcement (3) - LEC; CDP

This course analyzes the problems, practices, and philosophies of law enforcement in contemporary society. It gives special attention to areas such as personnel selection, police-community relations, crisis intervention, patrol intervention, police brutality, and criminal profiling.

MCCJ 658 Law and Courts (3) - LEC; CDP

This course considers the definitions and development of criminal law, criminal procedure, criminal rights, and constitutional theory and practice. It also examines the structure, functions, and operations of the courts, with special emphasis on principles of legality as provided by the US constitution.

MCCJ 659 Theories of Juvenile Delinquency (3) - LEC; CDP

This course examines theories of juvenile delinquency, environmental influences on juvenile offenders, control, and corrections of the juvenile offender. It will investigate the special forms of justice applied to non-adults by arrest, detention, adjudication and juvenile corrections.

MCCJ 700 Public Policy in Criminal Justice System (3) - LEC; CDP

This course examines the assumptions, context, and environment for the formulation and implementation of public policy. The issues of morality and politics will provide a subtext for discussion and identification of stakeholders.

MCCJ 710 Law and Social Control (3) - LEC; CDP

Selected topics in Law and Social Control are examined in this course. Topics -- which may vary from semester to semester--include mental illness and the law, individual rights and public welfare, comparative criminal law and procedure, sanction law and public order, authority and power, and indirect social control in criminal justice.

MCCJ 720 Seminar in Community Policing (3) - LEC

This course focuses on the problems and practices of contemporary law enforcement and uses current scholarships to understand police-community relations.

MCCJ 730 Seminar in Terrorism (3) - LEC; CDP

This course is a review of historical and contemporary knowledge on the many terrorism-crime relationships. It includes a survey of the literature that examines patterns of terrorism, domestic, global, and technological terrorism and a review of articles that examine theories, causes, ideology, typologies, security problems, media, structure, and issues in counterterrorism.

MCCJ 734 Directed Individual Study (3) - LEC; CDP

This course involves chosen individual topic study under the supervision and guidance of a faculty member. The course may be repeated once for a maximum of six (6) credits.

MCCJ 740 Comparative Criminology and Criminal Justice (3) - LEC; CDP

This course examines criminal justice institutions comparatively in several countries. The purpose will be to describe the variety of criminal justice experiences, to understand the determinants of these variations, and enhance the understanding of what works, what doesn't, and why in the criminal justice system.

MCCJ 750 Seminar in Probation and Parole (3) - CDP

This course is an in-depth examination of selected areas within the broader field of corrections. Specific attention will be paid to analysis of theories and practice of probation and parole, responses of paroling authorities to public pressures, and court controls and their implications for rehabilitative efforts. It assesses the feasibility and effectiveness of treatment of individuals under sentence in the community.

MCCJ 760 Qualitative Methods in Criminology (3) - LEC; CDP

This course is an examination of ethnographic and qualitative fields' methods and their application to problems of crime and criminal justice. It is focused on familiarizing students with the nature and utility of qualitative fieldwork in various areas of criminological research.

MCCJ 770 White Collar and Governmental Crimes (3) - LEC; CDP

Special Topics in White Collar and Governmental Crimes are examined in this course from a criminological perspective. White collar crimes and government crimes include fraud, embezzlement, price-fixing, antitrust violations, income - tax evasion, misuse of public funds, and abuse of political and legal powers.

MCCJ 780 Seminar in Criminological Theory and Research (3)

This course is an exploration of the etiology of crime, theory development and crime causation. Emphasis will be placed on theoretical perspectives, research, and ideological dialectics. Bio-criminology employing integrated systems approaches will also be examined.

MCCJ 782 Advanced Seminar in Police and Society (3) - CDP

This course is a survey of literature examining historical and current issues and problems in policing with emphasis on the legal aspects of law enforcement.

MCCJ 786 Field Practice in Criminal Justice (3) - LEC; CDP

This course involves firsthand experience in the day-to-day operation of a criminal justice program under the guidance and supervision of a faculty member and a practitioner in the field. Course may be repeated once for a maximum of six (6) credits

MCCJ 790 Master's Comprehensive Examination (0) - S/U Grade only

This course is a cumulative final examination required of students involved in the Master of Science program. A student must be registered for at least one class when taking this exam and must obtain the consent of the major professor.

MCCJ 798 Masters Seminar Paper (3) - LEC; CDP *

This course culminates in the completion of the Master's Seminar Paper for those students electing the non-thesis option. The paper (to be deposited in the library) focuses on a major criminology or criminal justice issue.

MCCJ 799 Master's Thesis (1-6) - LEC; CDP

This course is required by all students involved in preparation, data collection, and writing of the Master of Science (MS) thesis.

DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMPREHENSIVE EXAM PROCEDURES

1. Scheduling Examination

- a. A standing comprehensive examination committee of at least three graduate faculties will be maintained by the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology. The committee will always consist of an odd number of members.
- b. Two comprehensive examinations should be scheduled each academic year: one during the spring semester and one during the fall semester.

2. Qualifications to Sit for the Comprehensive Examination

- a. Students must satisfy all regular admission requirements to sit for the comprehensive examination. In essence, students currently under provisional or special admittance status are not eligible to sit for the comprehensive examination.
- b. Students must be in good academic standing.
- c. Students must have successfully completed all core course work as required by their program option (thesis option, non-thesis option).
Students may, however, register for up to six credit hours during the semester in which his/her exam is taken.
- d. A student must register (MCCJ 790) to take the comprehensive examination during the normal course registration for the semester during which the examination will be administered.
- e. The comprehensive exam will be administered online.

3. Number of Times a Student Can Take the Comprehensive Examination

- a. A student may re-take the exam if they do not pass in the first attempt
- b. Students would have 3 opportunities to take the exams.

4. Identification of Students Sitting for the Comprehensive Examination.

- a. The **identity** of the students sitting for the comprehensive examination will not be known by the faculty members grading the comprehensive examination. **Accordingly**, students will be assigned an identifier that will be unknown to the grading committee. This identifier will be used on the examination instead of the student's name. **This procedure ensures an objective "blind review" of the exams by the grading committee.**

5. Submission of Examination Questions

The Chair of the comprehensive exam committee will solicit comprehensive exam questions from the graduate faculty. These questions should be accompanied by source information so that all comprehensive exam committee members will have access to the resources used by that committee member to construct the question.

Ultimately, the blind review by each committee member will be assessed based upon the comp exam rubric shared with the students. The Comprehensive Exam Committee will meet no later than 1 month prior to the Comprehensive Exam to review the questions which were submitted and determine which questions will comprise the exam.

6. Grading of Comprehensive Examination

- a. A committee of at least three (3) graduate faculty members from the Criminal Justice Department will grade the examination strictly according to the comprehensive exam rubric. There will always be an odd number of graders. Rubric will be developed and shared with the students.
- b. The students must earn a passing grade according to the comprehensive exam rubric to earn a pass on a question,
- c. Each student must pass all four questions answered to pass the comprehensive examination.
- d. A student will only re-sit the failed section of the entire examination utilizing a quarter of the total time allocated for the comprehensive exam for each section.

7. Notifying Students of Comprehensive Examination Outcome

- a. The Committee Chair will notify the Graduate Coordinator in writing of test results within fourteen (14) days of examination completion.
- b. The Graduate Director will notify the students in writing of test results.
- c. The Graduate Director and the Grading Committee, when requested, will provide students with sufficient information to discuss with the students about problems with their exam responses and ways to improve their performance.
- d. Examination answers will not be returned to the students.

8. Comprehensive Exam Appeal Policy

The Department of Criminal Justice Comprehensive Exam Committee (Committee) is responsible for grading comprehensive exam (exam) answers. Upon receipt of exams, the Committee will have two weeks to grade the exams and provide each participant with a feedback report sent to students via the Graduate Director. A student will have three attempts at the comprehensive exam. There is no appeal for the comprehensive exam results.