

Core Question#1: What was the criminal justice program created to do in the first place?

The criminal justice program (initially entitled Police Science) began operation during the 1974-75 academic year. The program was initially funded by Law Enforcement Assistance Act monies provided by the Federal government. Beginning with the 1976-77 academic year the program has been funded with state monies.

The university catalogs from that period indicate that initially a one year certificate program was the only offering. Essentially this was the same program as the current Police Academy program. It was not until the 1976-77 catalog that the current three part program (academy, associate, and baccalaureate degrees) appears. At that time, a second position was created to teach the bulk of the non-Academy coursework.

In 1991, the B.S. curriculum was revised to create a two-track program. One track emphasizes law enforcement which had been the traditional emphasis of the program. The second track emphasizes corrections.

In 1998, the A.S. degree programs were revised. There are two options for an A.S. degree. The first option is for students who have completed the Police Academy Program. This option allows these students to apply the credit hours earned in the Academy program towards their A.S. degree. The second option is for students who have not attended the Police Academy. There were several reasons behind the revisions made in 1998. First, the core courses were revised to more closely match the core courses of the B.S. degree. This allows students to continue into the four year program without “losing” hours. Second, “option two” was revised to eliminate the law enforcement emphasis of this course of study. Finally, both options were given a stronger General Education component.

The discipline name was changed back to “Criminal Justice” in 2001. The baccalaureate degree was changed from a B.S. to a B.A.S. (Bachelor of Applied Science) in 2004. This change was triggered by a 2002 university policy that increased the requisite upper division hours for B.A. and B.S. degrees from 43 to 54 hours. This increase resulted in many transfer students unable to complete a baccalaureate degree without completing substantially more than 128 total hours. The B.A.S. degree requires 42 hours of upper division coursework.

The Extended University created a visiting faculty position in January, 2006 to allow the program to offer the entire baccalaureate degree program on-line. The discipline began offering graduate level courses that are dual listed with undergraduate courses at that time. (2015 Program Review)

Core Question#2: What is the criminal justice program doing now?

The POLICE ACADEMY is a five month program that meets legislative requirements for police officer training in New Mexico and is accredited by the New Mexico Department of Public Safety. Upon completion of the program, students take the state certification exam. Students are then certified as police officers upon employment with a police agency. Our graduates are very attractive to agencies because they are saved the time and expense of training.

WNMU also offers ASSOCIATE AND BACCALAUREATE DEGREES in Criminal Justice. Many larger police departments require an associate's or bachelor's degree. A bachelor's degree is required for many jobs in corrections such as probation and parole and for most federal law enforcement jobs. The degree programs are interdisciplinary . . . That is, students do not only study the criminal justice system, they also study psychology, political science, management, social work, and other topics relevant to an understanding of crime and the criminal justice system. BOTH DEGREES ARE AVAILABLE ON-LINE OR AT OUR GALLUP BRANCH. THE ASSOCIATES DEGREE IS AVAILABLE AT THE DEMING BRANCH.

Students may choose criminal justice as an emphasis in the MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES. This is a thirty six hour program that students tailor to their needs by selecting two to three areas of concentration.

The CRIMINAL JUSTICE MINOR is a great supplement for students in majors such as social work whose clients are often involved with the criminal justice system. The minor is flexible, allowing students to customize their degrees to meet their individual educational goals.

The BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE IN FOREST WILDLIFE LAW ENFORCEMENT degree is specifically tailored for students that want to pursue a career with either the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish or the New Mexico Parks Department. Offered in collaboration with the Department of Natural Sciences, it begins with a solid foundation in biological sciences relevant to conservation careers and combines it with a law enforcement academy. Students completing the degree are eligible for immediate employment with any law enforcement agency in New Mexico, but are uniquely qualified for careers as conservation officers and game wardens. No other program in New Mexico offers such a degree.

A GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN BORDER SECURITY STUDIES was approved in 2013. This eighteen hour certificate provides individuals interested in careers with not only the three federal agencies related to border security, but any policing agency located in a border state, with the background knowledge to help them better perform in their intended careers. It also provides individual already working in border law enforcement agencies with a deeper understanding of the underlying historical, cultural, political, and economic issues that affect their agencies.

UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE CERTIFICATES, AS WELL AS A MINOR IN DIGITAL FORENSICS were approved in 2014. These eighteen hour curricula are designed to provide students with expertise to combat the growing problem of "Cybercrime." They are being created as part of a National Science Foundation grant obtained in collaboration with Mississippi State University. Other components of the grant include provided advanced training for law enforcement. (Criminal Justice recruiting brochure)

Core Question#3: Should it be doing what it's doing now?

Generally, yes. As the 2015 Program Review concluded:

Strengths

1. A strong interdisciplinary curriculum for both the A.S. and B.A.S. degrees. The required curriculum for both degrees has an unusually high number of required courses which are outside the discipline. The ACJS guidelines discuss the need for required courses in six substantive areas within criminal justice (administration of justice, criminological theory, law enforcement, law adjudication, and corrections, research and analytical methods), but also “cognate courses” designed to develop “critical thinking; communication, technology, and computing skills; quantitative reasoning; ethical decision-making; and an understanding of diversity.” (Standard B.9, *Certification Standards for Baccalaureate Degree Programs*) Courses covering the six substantive criminal justice areas are required by both the A.S. and B.A.S. degree plans except that A.S. degree students are not required to take a research methods course. Approximately ½ of the credits in the associate degrees are outside of the criminal justice field. Baccalaureate degree students complete the standard university general education courses, but also must take courses in statistics, research methods, and understanding diversity. Additionally, the B.A.S. degree requires fifteen hours of “guided electives,” which are generally courses outside, but related to, the discipline. Guided elective allow students to obtain a minor in Chemical Dependency which is not available anywhere else in the state.
2. A well-defined outcomes assessment program. Feedback from the ACAT standardized test and from employer and alumni surveys and an advisory board has been used to modify and improve the program. However, some assessment activities such as the advisory board the employer survey have not been utilized since the last program review. Another measure that has not been utilized in several years is an advising feedback card that students completed and turned into a box anonymously after meeting with an advisor.
3. A growing on-line degree program.
4. Most of the faculty have substantial experience in various criminal justice professions.

Core Question#4: If not, what should it be doing?

As the 2015 Program Review noted, there are opportunities for improvement:

Concerns

1. The credentials of two of the full-time the faculty do not meet ACJS guidelines.
2. Inadequate “hands-on” or “service” learning component in the degree. Other than internship, no criminal justice course has obtained an SL designation.

Additional concern:

3. While on-line enrollment has held steady, enrollment in the face-to-face program has not. We need to get more students into face-to-face courses on main campus.

Core Question#5: How should it do what it should be doing?

The 2015 Program Review also addressed this question:

Recommendations

1. While there is a concern that the guidelines adopted by the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences do not differentiate between programs that have graduate programs and those that do not in their suggestions for faculty credentials, future faculty searches should consider making compliance with ACJS guidelines a preferred, if not required, part of the job announcement.
2. Develop a plan to strengthen and expand service learning opportunities.
3. Continue to improve the curriculum through the outcomes assessment process. Return to regular use of an advisory board, employer and alumni surveys, and perhaps the advising feedback form.

Additional recommendations related to program growth and enrollment:

1. The program currently at Cochise College, Dona Ana Branch, and CNM. However, these students almost unanimously do not come to Silver City and instead complete the on-line program. The recent enrollment drop has been most significant in the face-to-face enrollment at main campus. We need to develop a plan to recruit students into the face-to-face program.
2. The program is currently pursuing a plan to begin offering face-to-face courses at CNM in Albuquerque. CNM is the largest source of enrollment in the on-line program, however the criminal justice program director at CNM indicates that Lewis University's face-to-face program in Albuquerque gets more of their students than we do as the majority of their students would prefer face-to-face courses. This is a huge opportunity for program growth.
3. Face-to-face students for the Gallup branch are recruited at UNM-Gallup. Students in Gallup most commonly continue to take coursework at UNM-Gallup after completing their associates degree. The program has explored offering coursework at UNM-Gallup's campus to make going to both schools simultaneously more convenient for students, however while the Executive Director at UNM-Gallup is supportive, there has been resistance from the Dean of Instruction who is retiring this year. The program should continue to work towards offering the bachelors degree completion program at the UNM-Gallup campus. Legislation currently pending in the NM Senate would facilitate this.
4. As the on-line program has grown in the last ten years, we have expanded the number of courses in criminal justice by created several new courses which are taught primarily by adjuncts. While we cut back on the number of adjunct taught courses this year by taking most of those courses to a bi-annual rather than annual rotation, we should examine the number of courses in the catalog and perhaps eliminate some of them to further cut back on the total number of courses offered and thereby increase average class enrollment.

Appendices

Number of Majors 2015-2016

	Majors	Minors	Concentration	Total
Fall 2015	186	18	27	231
Fall 2016	165	21	26	212

Number of Graduates 2011-2016

	A.S.	B.A.S. Policing	B.A.S. Corrections	B.A.S. undesign	TOTAL B.A.S.	B.I.S. CJ conc.	MAIS CJ conc.	TOTAL
2011-12	11	6	5	2	13	-	6	30
2012-13	10	20	7	3	30	-	5	45
2013-14	9	19	8	0	27	2	9	47
2014-15	7	33	7	0	40	1	11	59
2015-16	12	22	10	0	32	2	9	55

Average Class Size 2016-2017

Fall 2015	14.0
Spring 2016	17.1
Fall 2016	15.1
Spring 2017	16.7

The department significantly cut back on the use of adjuncts in FY 17. Most adjuncts' load was reduced by half. However, due to an overall drop in enrollment, the average class size was not significantly affected.

Student Credit Hour Production 2016-2017 (does not include Police Academy or variable credit)

Fall 2015	1344
Spring 2016	1440
Fall 2016	1314
Spring 2017	1101