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*Handbook for the Criminal Justice Program
Penn State Altoona*

Full-Time Faculty/Staff Members:

***Mary Ann Probst, J.D., Program Coordinator**

103 Cypress, map141@psu.edu, 814-949-5352

Michael Arter, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

101 F Cypress; mla14@psu.edu; 814-949-5649

Amanda Cox, Ph.D. Assistant Professor

101E Cypress; akc11@psu.edu, 814-949-5176

L. Edward Day, Ph.D., Associate Professor

102 Cypress; led7@psu.edu; 814-949-5780

Scott Kelly, Ph.D. Student, Advisor & Part-Time Lecturer

C106 Smith Building; sak229@psu.edu; 814-949-5718

Kimberly Menard, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

101H Cypress, kmm157@psu.edu, 814-949-3320

Other Faculty members that advise CJ Students:

Amir Marvasti, Ph.D. Associate Professor

Smith Building; abm11@psu.edu; 814-949-5448

Welcome Aboard!



The purpose of this handbook:

Resource for students interested in Criminal Justice

Guide to obtaining key resources

Information on how to approach your criminal justice professors

Academic and career planning

Integration into the Penn State Altoona Community and beyond

Created by Scott Kelly

The Criminal Justice Program Mission Statement

"The Criminal Justice program at Penn State Altoona offers broad-based education in the liberal arts tradition. In addition to breadth and depth of knowledge about criminal justice, the program cultivates skills in critical thinking, oral and written communication, issue analysis and problem solving. Students who graduate from this program should be adaptable and flexible, participate in the civic and intellectual life of the community, appreciate cultural diversity and practice ethical behavior."

Source:

<http://www.aa.psu.edu/cj>. (2005). Criminal Justice Mission Statement. Retrieved from the World Wide Web on September 8, 2005.

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ALL CRIMINAL JUSTICE DEGREE PROGRAM FORMS are located at <http://www.aa.psu.edu/cj/degrees.htm>

CJ Forms include: Degree Checklists (Associates in Science - 2CJ, Bachelor of Arts - CJBA, and Bachelor of Science - CJBS); Recommended Academic Plans (Associates In Science - 2CJ, Bachelor of Arts - CJBA, and Bachelor of Science - CJBS); and the Skills Enhancement Form.

Available Power Point Presentations (located at <http://www.personal.psu.edu/sak229>):

- 1. Making Connections Power Point Presentation (created by the Penn State Altoona DUS Office)**
- 2. Time Management Power Point Presentation (created by the Penn State Altoona DUS Office)**
- 3. When to do...Power Point Presentation (created by Mr. Scott Kelly)**

What to Expect in the Criminal Justice Program

The Penn State Altoona Criminal Justice Program includes the study of law enforcement, courts, and corrections. These courses will include study as individual courses and as components of a system, plus work in theories of crime causation, and crime control policy. Reading, writing, and critical thinking skills are absolutely essential to successful completion of this degree, as well as successful careers in criminal justice. Students should enter well-equipped in these skills, and should expect them to be rigorously developed and applied throughout the degree program.

Criminal Justice is a dynamic field that includes the study of the agencies and procedures set up to manage both crime and the persons accused of violating the criminal law. It has become one of the most popular undergraduate majors in the United States.

The criminal justice program at Penn State Altoona offers various options: (These forms are located and can be printed from <http://www.aa.psu.edu/cj/degrees.htm>)

- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Science (the “Skills Enhancement Form” is located on Mr. Kelly’s Web site)
- Associate of Science
- Minor in Criminal Justice (18 credits)

Students receiving a baccalaureate degree in criminal justice (either B.S. or B.A.) should develop an understanding of each of the three main components of the criminal justice system and their interrelationships, be able to evaluate critically both current and future crime control policy proposals and criminal justice research, and understand the complexity of the phenomena of crime and criminal behavior and its relationship to individual, social, and cultural factors.

The bachelor of arts degree in Criminal Justice provides a broadly based liberal arts background for the study of crime, justice, and the criminal justice system. The bachelor of science offers an opportunity for educational enrichment in fields not traditionally considered part of the liberal arts. Either degree is excellent preparation for a career in criminal justice, graduate or professional study, or informed citizenship. Both degrees require a minimum of 124 credits.

- An important part of the bachelor of science degree is a sequence of four courses chosen by students based on their own interests and career goals.
- All baccalaureate students are required to complete a minimum three-credit internship with a criminal justice agency.
- The criminal justice major at Penn State Altoona is based on the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences standards for criminal justice education.
- In addition to studying police, courts, and corrections, students learn about computer applications, statistics, ethics, social research and multi-cultural issues, as well as other key issues in modern criminal justice.

Entrance to major and graduation requirements can be located at: <http://www.psu.edu/bulletins/bluebook/lookmenu.htm>.

Please see attachments 2-4 or <http://www.aa.psu.edu/cj/degrees.htm> for outlines of the Associates in Science, Bachelors of Art, Bachelors of Science, and Skills Enhancement Forms.

Why Major in Criminal Justice?

Nationwide, criminal justice is a labor intensive, growth industry; careers in criminal justice, especially corrections, continue to show strong growth. According to the [Occupational Outlook Handbook \(OOH\), 2008-09 Editions](#), employment of police and detectives is expected to grow 11 percent over the 2006-16 decade; employment of correctional officers is expected to grow 16 percent between 2006 and 2016; and employment of lawyers is expected to grow 11 percent during the 2006-16 decade. For a list of Criminal Justice Career Opportunities, please see Dr. L. Edward Day's web page (<http://www.personal.psu.edu/faculty/l/e/led7/links.html>), Mr. Scott Kelly's web page (http://www.personal.psu.edu/sak229/cj_links.htm), or visit the Career Center on campus (SLEP Student Center).

What Do Criminal Justice Majors Do?

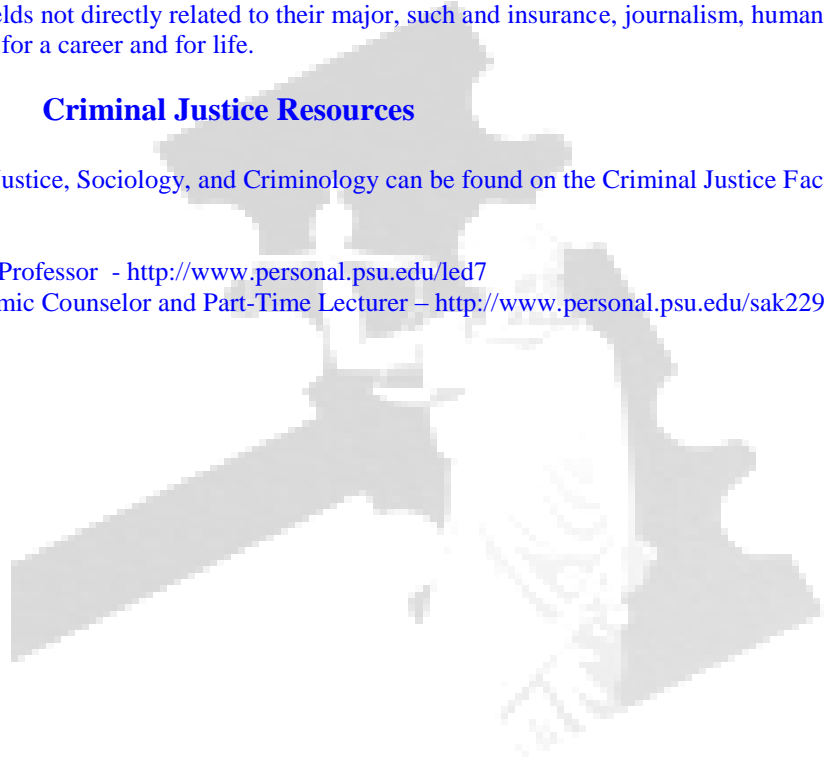
A degree in criminal justice is solid preparation for many careers. While many criminal justice majors indicate a preference for law enforcement, others find careers in prisons, community corrections, or court administration. Government positions in criminal justice are available at the local, county, state and federal levels, and private security is a growing and important source of jobs for criminal justice students.

The criminal justice major at Penn State Altoona focuses on one of the most important public policy areas in our country today, and is good preparation for graduate study in law, criminology, and other fields. Also, like students in other majors, criminal justice students often find employment and build careers in fields not directly related to their major, such as insurance, journalism, human services, and the military. It is an excellent major both for a career and for life.

Criminal Justice Resources

Resources pertaining to the field of Criminal Justice, Sociology, and Criminology can be found on the Criminal Justice Faculty/Staff home pages.

- a. L. Edward Day, Ph. D., Associate Professor - <http://www.personal.psu.edu/led7>
- b. Scott Kelly, Ph.D. Student, Academic Counselor and Part-Time Lecturer – <http://www.personal.psu.edu/sak229>



Internships (CRIMJ 495):

The primary goal of this course is to provide students with field experience in criminal justice, complement their criminal justice course work, and enhance their knowledge of the criminal justice system. A secondary function is to demonstrate the potential of our Penn State Altoona students for professional employment in the criminal justice professions.

Some internships are paid internships, which means, the student gets paid while applying practical solutions learned in the classroom to their job. Most internships are not a “paid” position, but either paid or unpaid you will be earning credits for graduation and you will earn valuable experience by applying what you have learned in the classroom to the “real world.”

Prior interns act as student guides by discussing their experiences. There are booklets and pamphlets on internships available in your advisor’s office for review. The opportunity for research is also provided.

Eligibility for CJ Internship

1. 5th semester standing (should apply during the 5th semester when planning to actually start it during the 6th semester)
2. Cumulative GPA must be a 2.0 or higher
3. No internships for the 2 CJ Degree Program; only for CJBA/CJBS students
4. CRIMJ 290 (Introduction to Internship Experience) is recommended the semester before CRIMJ 495
5. Make sure that you have a current resume and cover letter for interviews; please visit the Career Services Office for help

For information pertaining to Internships, please refer to the following resources:

First, contact the Internship Coordinator:

Mr. Thomas Shaffer
158 LRC
Phone: 814-949-5789
FAX: 814-949-5547
E-mail: tls24@psu.edu

Second, contact the Internship Faculty Sponsor:

FALL/SPRING Internships:

Dr. Michael Arter
101F Cypress
Phone: 814-949-5649
FAX: 814-949-5774
E-mail: mla14@psu.edu

SUMMER Internships:

Mary Ann Probst, Esquire
CJ Program Coordinator
104N Sheetz Building
Phone: 814-949-5352
Email: map141@psu.edu

For information on possible internship sites and resume writing help, contact Career Services in the 126 SLEP Building. Please stop in or call: 814-949-5058 for an appointment.

In addition, the Penn State Altoona’s Internship Web Site: <http://www.aa.psu.edu/Internship> allows students to review the steps in securing an internship. You will need to download and print Student Packet I and Student Packet II. If you do not yet have an internship placement, you should see Mr. Thomas Shaffer immediately.

Advising Policy 32-30:

*The **Academic Adviser's** Role is to:

Help the advisee to understand the academic and administrative processes of the university and the nature of its academic programs. The adviser also seeks to understand each advisee's particular concerns affecting academic progress. The adviser neither grants nor denies administrative approval for particular academic actions. Help the advisee to understand the expected standards of achievement and likelihood of success in certain areas of study. Discuss the educational and career objectives suited to the advisee's demonstrated abilities and expressed interests. The adviser helps the advisee to understand the relationships among the courses, programs, undergraduate research opportunities, internships, study abroad programs, and other academic experiences provided by the university. Help the advisee to plan a course of study and give advice about courses and the adjustment of course loads. The adviser will inform the advisee about the prerequisites for subsequent courses in the advisee's program. Refer advisees to other resources when appropriate. Participate in the adviser training sessions provided by each college or department to keep informed and current.

*The **Advisee's** Role in the Academic Advising Process is to:

*Acquire the information needed to assume final responsibility for course scheduling, program planning, and the successful completion of all graduation requirements. Seek the academic and career information needed to meet educational goals. Become knowledgeable about the relevant policies, procedures, and rules of the university, college, and academic program. Be prepared with accurate information and relevant materials when contacting the adviser. Consult with the adviser at least once a semester to decide on courses, review the accuracy of the audit, check progress towards graduation, and discuss the suitability of other educational opportunities provided by the university.

**This information is credited to the Advising Center at University Park (2003).*

Academic Advising

All Criminal Justice Degree program students are strongly encouraged NOT to engage in "self advising" (this happens when students **do not** meet with their advisors on a regular basis and take it upon themselves to make course and career decisions and end up still having classes to take when they should be graduating and moving on to Graduate School or their careers). **Please visit your academic advisor on a regular basis.** *In addition, please review the "When to Do..." power point presentation, located here (click on the "When to Do..." link) and on my home page.

Advising Appointments

When making an appointment with your academic advisor you should bring a degree audit to the meeting with any questions that you want answered. You should meet with your advisor before the first day that you are able to schedule the next semester courses!

In addition, it is advised that you schedule an appointment when you are having difficulty with your academics or when life circumstances change your active role in your program (e.g. illness prevents you from attending classes on a regular basis, death in the family, etc.).

Academic Integrity Policy

[Academic Integrity Policy: \(http://www.aa.psu.edu/academic/integrity.htm#VII\)](http://www.aa.psu.edu/academic/integrity.htm#VII)

Statement on Academic Integrity – Definitions and Expectations:

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: In 1984, Penn State adopted a formal policy on academic integrity and included it in the manual of Policies and Rules. You should read the policy to become familiar with it (Section 49-20 Academic Integrity).

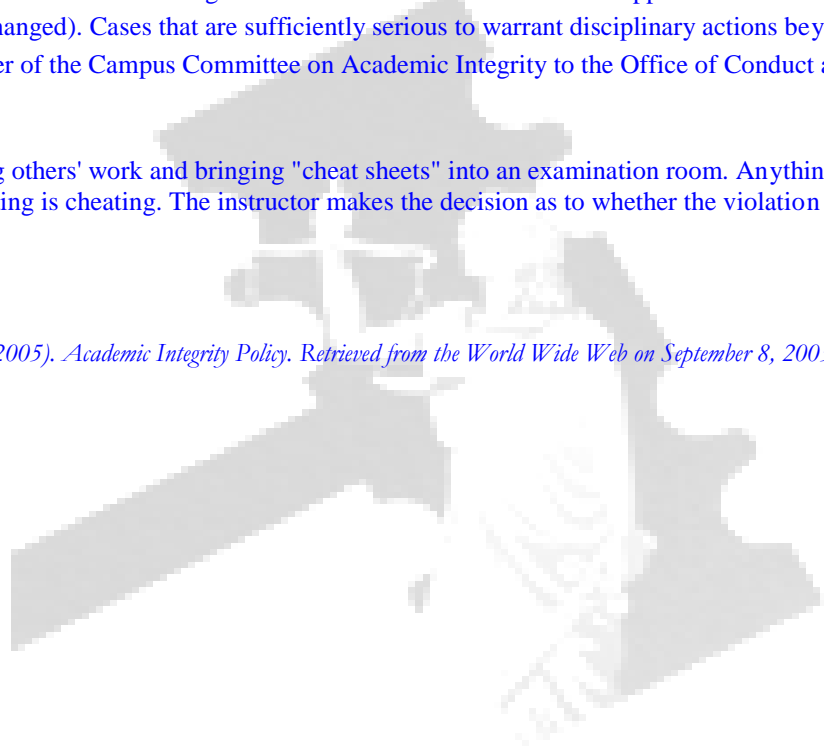
Definition of Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity free from fraud and deception and is an educational objective of this institution. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication of information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, unauthorized prior possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, and tampering with the academic work of other students.

Course Statement on Academic Dishonesty: Students, who are academically dishonest, may be punished with a minor penalty, typically a zero on a quiz or test, or with a major penalty such as a grade of "F" in a course. Students who are punished with major penalties may appeal the decision. (Note that final decisions about grades still rest with the instructor. No appeals board has the right to change a grade, only to recommend that it be changed). Cases that are sufficiently serious to warrant disciplinary actions beyond academic sanctions may be referred by the faculty member of the Campus Committee on Academic Integrity to the Office of Conduct and Standards for further review.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, copying others' work and bringing "cheat sheets" into an examination room. Anything that the instructor or exam proctor construes to be cheating is cheating. The instructor makes the decision as to whether the violation of academic integrity is minor or major in nature.

Source:

*<http://www.aa.psu.edu/academic/integrity.htm#VII>. (2005). *Academic Integrity Policy*. Retrieved from the World Wide Web on September 8, 2005.*



Academic Resources

Here you will find useful resources/topics that are found within the Penn State Altoona homepage. The resources/topics listed below are only a few of the most popularly used by students and they pertain to academics, Penn State Altoona community, and links to activities and places outside of the Penn State Altoona community.

Useful academic resources at Penn State Altoona:

Penn State Altoona homepage - This link will enable you to find the following resources for Penn State Altoona: for an updated list of academic and other resources, please visit <http://www.personal.psu.edu/sak229>.

Academic Integrity

Advising

Angel

Career Services

Career Services - Resume Info

e-Portfolio

Faculty Office Hours

First Year Seminar (FYS)

How to get a Tutor

How to Survive College (Dr. Carey Reed's Home Page)

Learning Resources Center

PASS

Penn State Altoona - Athletics

Penn State Altoona - Minors

Penn State Altoona - On-line Writing Lab (OWL)

Plagiarism

Registrar's Office

Robert E. Eiche Library

Schedule of Courses (Leave Campus Location blank and use the drop down window under Continuing Edu for Downtown courses)

Student Aid Office

Student Life (Activities, Clubs, Events, Organizations, etc.)

The First-Year Testing, Counseling, and Advising Program (FTCAP)

Information that pertains to activities outside of Penn State Altoona: The following links can be found at: <http://personal.psu.edu/sak229> under "Academic Links" on the left side of the webpage.

Amtran Schedule

City of Altoona

DelGrosso's Amusement Park

Graduate Record Examinations (GREs)

Graduate School Locator

Horseshoe Curve

Lakemont Park

Lake Raystown (just 45 minutes from Penn State Altoona Campus)

LSAT/Law School Finder

Pre-Law School Resources

Approaching your professors

The following information should be used to help you, the student, communicate effectively and comfortably with your professors during in-class and outside of class communication. In addition, you should review the Penn State Altoona's Division of Undergraduate Power Point Presentation: "Making Connections" located at (<http://www.personal.psu.edu/sak229>).

When should you meet with your professors?

- a. Before class
- b. After class
- c. During office hours
- d. By appointments

Professors not only teach courses, they also work on research in their respective field, prepare for class lecture, grade assignments. Most are involved with professional associations/organizations, write books and articles, work on committees and projects on campus, and last but not least, advise students.

To do your part in class, you should complete the homework assignments, read your text, show up for class, ask questions, take notes, seek help when needed, follow the syllabus, take responsibility for learning the information, and participate in meaningful and scholarly conversations.

There are different ranks that professors hold: (lowest to highest)

- a. Instructors/Lecturers/Adjunct
- b. Assistant Professors
- c. Associate Professors (can be tenured)
- d. Full Professors (Tenured)

Tenured professors are those who have proven themselves in terms of teaching skills, research, advising, service to the University and community and are rewarded with the security of lifetime employments. However, they still have post-tenure reviews.

They enjoy academic freedom to voice opinions

Professors that you like may not have tenure or may be working towards gaining tenure, in either case; they are professional in their discipline.

**Please refer to Attachment 1

Class Cancellations

Any class cancellations will be posted to the "Class Cancellation Web Site at <http://aa.psu.edu/now/cancel.asp>.

Student Organizations

Information pertaining to student organizations can be found at <http://www.aa.psu.edu/page2/stulife.htm>. Student organizations help to integrate students into the Penn State Altoona community by sharing student's interests with the Penn State Altoona community.

Alpha Phi Sigma/Criminal Justice Organization

Alpha Phi Sigma is the National Criminal Justice Honor Society. At Penn State Altoona we have the Gamma Eta Chapter. Alpha Phi Sigma represents those students who have obtained a cumulative grade point average of 3.2 for their entire academic career and have obtained a 3.2 cumulative grade point average in four or more Criminal Justice courses at Penn State Altoona. For more information, please review Mr. Scott Kelly's web page (<http://www.personal.psu.edu/sak229>).

2010-2011 elected Alpha Phi Sigma Executive Members:

President - Kaylona Wolfe
Vice President - Ty Miller
Treasurer - Linda Coe
Secretary - Jason Himes
Standards and Evaluations Coordinator - Tom Clarke
Faculty Advisor: Dr. L. Edward Day, Associate Professor (led7@psu.edu)

The Criminal Justice Organization (CJO) at Penn State Altoona was created by and designed for students with common interest in criminal justice. The organization was designed with four elements in mind:

- a. Social Element
- b. Educational Element
- c. Service Element
- d. Support Element

2010-2011 elected Criminal Justice Organization Executive Committee Members

Co-Presidents: Stephanie A. Sanford (sas5605) & Jason Himes (jsh5167)
Vice-President: Kaylona R. Wolfe (krw5141)
Treasurer: Gerald Hoffman (gph5015)
Secretary: Derek Young (dgy5021)
Faculty/Staff Advisor: Dr. Vidisha Barua (vub1)

*Anyone interested in joining can contact the above individuals.

Mock Trial

Mock Trial is a competition between prosecution (or plaintiff) and defense teams, consisting of undergraduate students taking on the roles of attorneys and witnesses in a criminal or civil legal issue. The American Mock Trial Association sanctions the competition and annually provides case material on a hypothetical issue. Mock Trial:

- * furthers understanding of both the content and processes of our legal system
- * increases basic skills, analytical ability, and self-confidence
- * promotes cooperation among students of differing cultures and interests as well as cogeneration between the legal educational communities
- * provides a source of new classroom materials to support learning about important controversial issues

Students typically do not get involved with Mock Trial until their sophomore year.

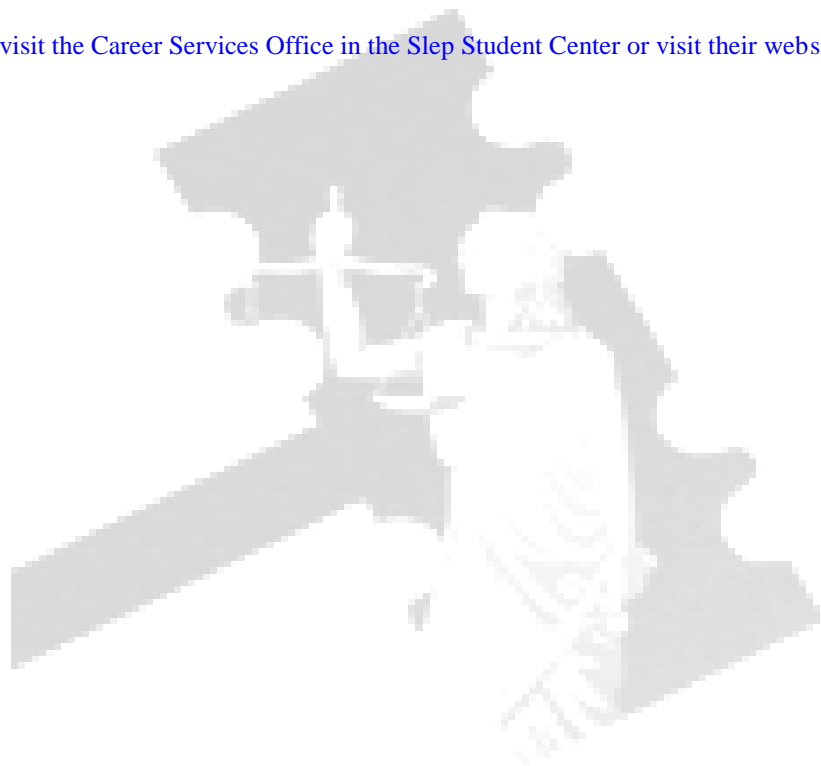
Career/Internship Services

During the beginning of the junior year, you should begin to focus on a career path (e.g. law enforcement, corrections, private security, attorney, etc.). The objective of your degree program (e.g. CJBA or CJBS) is to give you a liberal arts and criminal justice foundation that will allow you to understand substantive theories of your degree program, as well as, prepare you for a well rounded education that will give you academic experience in other areas of interests. Internships provide students with field experience in criminal justice, enhance their classroom experience by allowing students to apply classroom theory to a professional criminal justice career setting, and helps to further the student's networking objectives. Ultimately, the criminal justice internship is designed to help the student strategize for professional employment in a professional criminal justice career.

Each student that is enrolled in a criminal justice baccalaureate degree program must complete an internship (CRIMJ 495) for 3 to 10 credits. Students usually complete their internship in their junior or senior year. For in-depth information pertaining to internships please visit the website (<http://www.aa.psu.edu/internship>) or contact Dr. Michael Arter, CJ Internship Coordinator, in 101F Cypress, 814-949-5649, or E-mail: mla14@psu.edu.

Through the use of networking (e.g., participation in Alpha Phi Sigma and/or the Criminal Justice Organization) students have the advantage of participating in direct communication with criminal justice professionals.

For career planning and resume writing, please visit the Career Services Office in the Slep Student Center or visit their website (<http://www.aa.psu.edu/career/>).



Majors Career Manual: Books and Other Resources

Texts on careers in the field of criminal justice are plentiful and continue to grow at an astronomical rate. In addition, there are texts geared toward general career opportunities, employment strategies, interviewing techniques and resume preparation. All of these are to assist you in beginning your career. We have prepared a list of some helpful books and professional organizations you may find helpful as a criminal justice major; located in Mr. Kelly's office (C123 Raymond Smith Building) and available for sign-out.

Work in Criminal Justice: An A-Z Guide to Careers in Criminal Justice

AUTHOR: Debbie J. Goodman & Ron Grimming

ISBN-10: 0131959816

ISBN-13: 9780131959811

Publisher: Prentice Hall

Pub. Date: 2007

Jumpstarting your Career: An Internship Guide (2 ed.)

AUTHOR: Dorothy L. Taylor

ISBN: 10: 0131175777

Publisher: Prentice Hall

Pub. Date: 2004

From College to Career: A Guide for Criminal Justice Majors

AUTHOR: Barbara Peat

ISBN: 0-205-33838-0

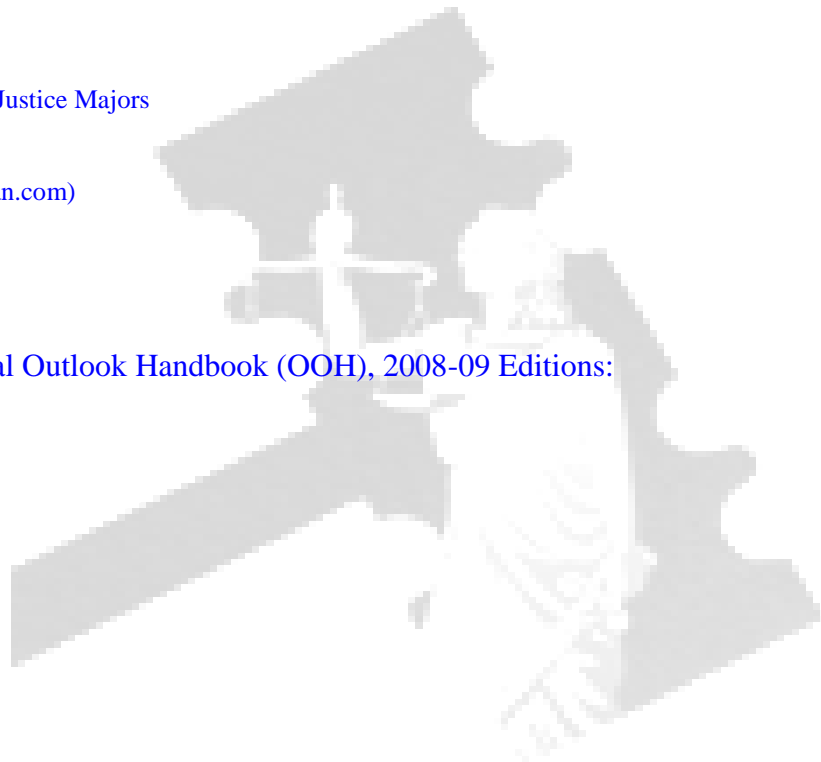
Publisher: Pearson Education (www.ablongman.com)

Pub. Date: 2004

Web Resource:

Bureau of Labor Statistics: Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH), 2008-09 Editions:

URL: <http://www.bls.gov/oco/>



What Should You Do In Case of an Emergency (Personal or Family Related):

1. Contact the Student Aid and Bursar Offices, in the Smith Building, if you are planning to "withdraw" or take a "leave of absence" so that they can inform you what percentage of your student aid will be charged.
2. Send an E-mail or go directly to Ms. Jane Hyde (jeh4@psu.edu) in the Registrar's Office (814-949-5038) that explains your current situation and what you are planning to do (e.g., withdraw for semester or take a leave of absence). She will send a notice to your academic advisor and all course instructors.
3. If you withdraw, you will have to complete a simple re-enrollment process for the next academic semester (e.g., if you withdraw for SP 06 semester and you will be returning FA 06 semester). In addition, you will have to pay a fee of \$20.00 for the re-enrollment.

Remember, if you withdraw or take a leave of absence, we will support your decision and we, along with your courses, will be here when you return.

Note: If you need to talk to someone about these personal and private matters, please do not hesitate to contact The Health and Wellness Center located within the Sheetz Family Health Center. Please call 814-949-5540, E-mail: healthandwellness@psu.edu, or visit their website: <http://www.aa.psu.edu/healthwellness/info.htm>.



Learning Resources Center

Information pertaining to the Learning Resources Center can be found at the designated web site (<http://www.personal.psu.edu/dept/altoonarc/altlrc.html>). Please visit their web site for all forms and important materials. “The Learning Resources Center offers peer and professional tutoring and other academic assistance for students at Penn State Altoona. If you are having trouble in a course, they can help. Even if you are not in danger of failing, you may want some help just to brush up on the basics or to review important material. Their goal is to help you become an independent learner. In addition, Ms. Paula Ford publishes monthly newsletters, “Best of Blabby” (Penn State Altoona’s guru of study skills) and study skill links on her web site (<http://www.psu.edu/dept/altoonarc/urls.htm>).

You may contact Ms. Ford at pxf3@psu.edu.

Penn State Altoona Writing Center

Penn State Altoona has an on campus and on-line writing center. They offer “assistance with the organization of essays, an objective opinion of your communication skills, and professional help to identify grammar problems so that you may learn how to self-edit” (<http://www.psu.edu/dept/altoonarc/owl.htm>).

Freshmen Strategies for Success

Studying Preparations:

Your studying environment should enhance your learning experience.

Find a quiet, relaxing, and low-traffic place to study.

Inform family and friends that your objective is to study and that you do not want disturbed.

Study in increments of 20 minutes: numerous books have been published on this topic (O’Keefe, 1999; Evans, 1998; Marton, 1997) and reveal that this is the most effective way to study because it allows for you, the student, to read portions of the material, review what you have read, and allow you to comprehend and form ideas.

Recourses and Suggested Readings:

Evans, E.T. (1998). *The Art of Academic Finesse: How Ordinary Students Achieve Extraordinary Grades*. Nova Press.

Marton, F. (1997). *The Experience of Learning: The Implications of Teaching and Studying in Higher Education*. (2nd ed.). Scottish Academic Press.

O’Keefe, E.J. (1999). *Self Management for College Students: The ABCs Approach*. Partridge Hills Publishers.

Freshmen Strategies for Success (continued)

Studying tips:

As a college student, you should be aware of time wasters that will make effective studying time difficult. Time wasters are those elements that prevent you from effectively reading assigned textbook chapters or peer reviewed articles, thinking about the main point of the author(s), and having time to comprehend the material so that you may formulate ideas and questions that you may want to share in class.

Rossman (2003) suggests that time wasters can consist of the following: excessive noise, ringing telephones, disturbances from family and friends, comfortable learning environment, room temperature, stress, frustration, television, being tired, being ill, work schedules, academic course load, and pets.

**Source:*

Rossman, M. H. (2003). *Negotiating Graduate School: A guide for Graduate Students. (2nd ed.)*. California: Sage Publications, Inc.



Graduate School Information

Planning for graduate school: you should begin studying for your Graduate Record Examinations (GREs) in your junior year of undergraduate studies. This will give you plenty of time to read, complete GRE example exams, and re-take GRE example exams. In other words, you want to complete practice exams as often as possible so you will score high enough to be accepted into most graduate degree programs. For example: University Park's Crime, Law, and Justice Doctorate Program requires a combined score of 1200. Information pertaining to GREs can be found at Penn State Altoona's Career Center in the SLEP Student Center or by visiting the GRE on-line website at <http://www.gre.org>.

In addition, you should start reviewing different graduate programs that meet your interests. You can use <http://www.Google.com> or <http://Graduateschools.com> to review graduate programs (e.g., rankings, tuition, degree offerings, etc.). Once you narrow your choices, it would be a good idea to contact the program coordinator/department chair to set-up an appointment to formally meet and ask questions (e.g., on average, how long does it take to complete your Master's or Doctorate Degree Program? Do you have an outline of your Masters and/or Doctorate Degree Programs? What percentage, of the graduate student body, actually complete each degree program? etc.). Before your meeting, you will want to research each faculty member in a particular degree program that you are interested in because it will show the department chair/program coordinator that you are very interested in their program, you are studious, and you know who to use resources.

Law School Information

To get started on the right foot, please visit the following Web Site: <http://www.psu.edu/dus/prelaw>. This web site will give you a list of valuable web sites that will help you obtain the most important information pertaining to law school (LSAT test dates, LSAT test book, etc.).

Preparing your Academic Portfolio

Your academic portfolio should contain all relevant materials that pertain to your undergraduate degree program and courses because you never know when you may need to review an article from a criminal justice course while you are in a Masters, Doctorate, or Law class. For example: you may be asked to read and critically review an article for your CRIMJ 210 course and then be asked to review it again in graduate school years later. Wouldn't it be helpful, while you are bombarded with tons of reading assignments in graduate school, to have that article handy, with your notes, from CRIMJ 210? I think it would be a big help!

I suggest that you start filing, by subject, your course materials, financial aid award letters/bills, a list of your community service activities, list of student organization(s) in which you have participated, honors and awards, scholarship information/received, etc. Treat your academic career as your own personal business.

Conclusion

It is our hope that you are now well-prepared to start your academic career. We have provided you with the academic and personal interest(s) related resources that you will need in your future endeavors. If at any time you need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the CJ faculty and staff members. For more information please review Mr. Kelly's Web Page at <http://www.personal.psu.edu/sak229>. Again, welcome aboard!