

Criminology, Law, and Justice, BA

The criminology, law, and justice major examines issues related to race and ethnic diversity, gender, and poverty, heightening awareness of these important topics. Students learn about sociological explanations for crime and criminal justice; the operation of law and the criminal justice system, including their complex interplay with other institutions, such as the economy and politics; and important data sources on crime in the United States and internationally.

The department has an active undergraduate organization, the Sociology and Criminology Club, which is open to all interested students. The student-run group sponsors speakers, films, and career days; conducts study groups; and facilitates group volunteerism.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- recognize the causes and consequences of crime at the micro and macro levels and match these with prominent criminological perspectives;
- describe the interrelated institutions and processes of the criminal justice system and legal systems;
- apply theories of crime, legal systems, and criminal justice systems to explain actual and hypothetical scenarios, behaviors, and trends;
- understand the role of formal law in advanced democracies;
- explain the various social science methods of inquiry and use these to test specific criminological research questions;
- recognize and explain social inequities in crime and criminal justice processes by race, social class, gender, region, and age; and
- evaluate the effectiveness of policy interventions for altering social behavior, including those deemed illegal or harmful.