

# Institutional Effectiveness Report

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## Assessment Summary

**Department or Division:** Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice

**Degree Program:** Criminal Justice

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**Assessment Cycle** (academic or calendar year):

**Mission** (related to VSU mission): The mission of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice includes:

1. Helping students gain an understanding of the structures and processes through which individuals participate in society;
2. Supporting students in developing an understanding of human behavior;
3. Preparing students for a wide range of careers in sociology, anthropology, human resources, human services, and criminal justice systems;
4. Working with students who wish to pursue graduate work in the social sciences.

**Assessment History** (discuss here how and when the program developed its current assessment program, what it used prior to starting that program to assess its effectiveness, etc.):

The Criminal Justice Program transitioned from the quarter system to the semester system in 1998. At this time, the entire undergraduate curriculum was evaluated and revised to meet the needs of the semester system.

In 2004, the Criminal Justice Program completed a program review, evaluating the effectiveness of the current curriculum as well as effectiveness of faculty and evaluation processes. Data were analyzed in terms of number of majors, faculty-student ratio, enrollment, number of degrees conferred, as well as the relevance of the current curriculum to program learning outcomes.

**Expected Student Learning Outcomes:** Graduates will be able to -

1. Understand and appreciate the structure and function of the criminal justice system as it applies to adults and juveniles, federal, state, and local criminal laws and procedures, and the relationship of these to the Constitution of the United States;
2. Analyze the criminal justice systems of other countries of the world;
3. Apply scientific research techniques and related statistical techniques in the study of crime;

4. Identify various theories in criminology, their strengths and weaknesses, and their role in gaining an understanding of crime.

**Assessments** (include when and to whom these are administered, and align goals with specific assessments):

- Ongoing evaluation of student examinations, research projects, the Senior Seminar project, and reports of other scholarly and internship work.
- Exit questionnaires administered to students completing work for the major.
- Surveys of graduates of the program to assess the relevancy of the program to their current work and their suggestions for refinements.
- Use of university or external data to assess the quality of the program and the performance of its graduates.

## **2005-2006**

Assessment Results (submit an electronic file of the data collected):

- Exit questionnaires given to students completing work for the major and focus groups with the Criminal Justice Honor Society.

Discussion/Dissemination of Results:

- The Criminal Justice faculty evaluated the results of the questionnaires and focus groups, identifying the effectiveness of the current curriculum in terms of the program learning outcomes. It was determined that many of the students were interested in the juvenile justice field, several of them already working in the field. Both the exit questionnaire and the focus groups identified that a juvenile justice course needed to be a part of the core curriculum, not just an upper-division elective that is taught once every two years.

Modifications Made:

- The Criminal Justice faculty reviewed the Area F curriculum and decided that this was a good area in which to place a juvenile justice course as part of the core curriculum. The CRJU 2400 Survey of Juvenile Justice course was created to take the place of CRJU 2300 Judicial Process. As the other Area F Criminal Justice courses, as well as several of the upper-division courses already incorporated the material found in 2300, it was logical and effective to place the new 2400 course in Area F, thus giving the students a core juvenile justice course at the introductory level. The CRJU 4720 Seminar in Juvenile Justice course is still an elective, but focuses more on current and controversial issues in juvenile justice, going beyond that found in 2400.

## **2006-2007**

Assessment Results (submit an electronic file of the data collected):

- The Criminal Justice faculty met various times throughout the academic year to discuss the Area F curriculum and the part the current 9-credit-hour Foreign Language requirement plays in the major. The Criminal Justice faculty also met to identify ways to better both the lower-division and upper-division Criminal Justice major. Discussions included the possibility of applying for certification from the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS), as a way to increase both visibility and viability of the program on a national level. The foreign language requirement was discussed in terms of decreasing from 9 to 6 the number of required credit hours.

Discussion/Dissemination of Results:

- The Criminal Justice faculty evaluated the results and met with the department head to determine the best course of action in terms of seeking certification from ACJS and how to proceed with this endeavor.

Modifications Made:

- The Criminal Justice faculty reviewed all of the available information to make a determination that our undergraduate program, as currently run with Kings Bay, would not meet the criteria for certification from ACJS. In addition, it was decided that more work with the Department of Modern Foreign Language to discuss options available to Criminal Justice students would be a positive step, rather than the decreasing of the credit hour language requirement.

**2007-2008**

Assessment Results (submit an electronic file of the data collected):

- Exit questionnaires given to students completing work for the major and focus groups with the Criminal Justice Honor Society were conducted to evaluate the viability of creating a Minor within the Criminal Justice program.

Discussion/Dissemination of Results:

- The Criminal Justice faculty evaluated the results and determined that in fact, many students would benefit both academically and professionally with the opportunity to complete a Criminal Justice Minor.

Modifications Made:

- The Criminal Justice faculty reviewed the other Minor programs currently existing within the College of Arts and Sciences. In addition, Criminal Justice Minors currently existing at other colleges/universities within the BOR System of Georgia were reviewed. As a result of these reviews, the Criminal Justice faculty developed an 18-credit-hour Minor for the Criminal Justice program, which mirrors others found in the College and at similar programs within the System of Georgia. The paperwork for the Minor is currently in process, with the start date of January 2009.

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<b>Dept. Head/ Director</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Dean</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>VPAA</b>	<b>Date</b>
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Adapted from: University of Alabama SACS site (<http://sacs.ua.edu/degreeInfo2.cfm?college=2&dept=50>);

University of Western Kentucky SACS Accreditation Review Process (<http://www.wku.edu/sacs/assessmentmanual.htm>) ; and

Mrs. Marila D. Palmer, VP-Executive Affairs & Planning, LeTourneau University, Presentation to 2008 SACS-COC Institute