

PROGRAM REVIEW OUTCOME AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ACADEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Review Outcome: The Academic Planning Committee, as a result of this review process, finds the B.S. in Criminal Justice Sciences to be in Good Standing.

The Academic Planning Committee recognizes that many of the efforts and activities that led to the development of the self-study report were accomplished during the time-period coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic. The committee thanks the program for a comprehensive and critical self-study report that included input from multiple stakeholders.

The committee commends faculty efforts to grow the program's enrollment during the period covering the program review cycle (e.g., providing online meeting opportunities and revising marketing materials). This has resulted in a significant enrollment increase over the period of review (from 450 in 2014 to 555 in 2021). We further commend the department faculty for efforts to increase the diversity among its students (e.g., the CJS Leads program and the Breaking Barriers initiative); this has resulted in the percentage of undergraduate students from groups traditionally underrepresented in the discipline with an increase from 29.6 percent in fall 2015 to 42.3 percent in fall 2021, generally above the University average during the period of review.

The committee commends the program faculty for their multi-faceted activities that support the success of their students. We commend the program's collaboration with the Visor Center to provide intrusive advising and the additional advising provided as part of Project Success to support student retention. We commend the program for supporting students with professional practice experiences. We further commend the program for the creative and varied co-curricular options it provides its students which provide multiple opportunities to participate in activities that allow them to learn from experts in the field, network with potential employers, and engage in meaningful civic and community engagement.

The committee commends the faculty for their substantial work during the period of review to revise the curriculum to ensure that the content reflects changes within the discipline (e.g., GIS and cyber offerings). This work included the creation of a new accelerated sequence, eleven new courses, the deletion of one course, and substantial revisions to two courses. We commend the practice of requiring faculty to participate in professional development before delivering their courses online and including assessments to ensure that course learning objectives are met in the alternative format. Furthermore, the program faculty are commended for their work to infuse issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout the program curriculum; into courses as well as co-curricular initiatives like Breaking Barriers and CJS Leads. We commend the program faculty for submitting three courses for consideration to meet the university's IDEAS requirement. The committee commends the department for supporting undergraduate student participation in the Honors program on campus.

The committee commends the program faculty on the development, implementation, and revision of their plan for the assessment of student learning outcomes. During the current review cycle, faculty have used the evidence gathered through the student learning outcomes assessment plan to inform program changes, and this includes curriculum maps and the incorporation of rubrics as tools for assessing student coursework regarding the program's learning outcomes. The committee acknowledges the use of such rubrics as one method to provide consistent reviews of student learning that can provide potential areas for improvement. The information gathered through these measures has been used to make program changes, and several examples of these changes were specified.

The committee commends the department for centering Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion as core values in their faculty recruiting practices. We commend the faculty members of the program for their teaching, scholarly, and service contributions to the B.S. in Criminal Justice Sciences. Faculty members are active researchers who publish peer-reviewed journals articles and present at national and international interdisciplinary professional conferences. The program faculty regularly engage in professional development opportunities, as evidenced by being awarded the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology's Pathways to Excellence award three times during the period of review. Additionally, we recognize that every faculty member in the program has been actively involved in advising and supporting professional student organizations, demonstrating their commitment to facilitate learning and educational experiences of our students outside the classroom.

The committee appreciates the analysis of comparator and aspirational programs. As part of this analysis, the program faculty identified other institutions with similar programs that excel in ways that our program may aspire to. The committee also recognizes that faculty developed specific action plans to implement similar initiatives to improve the program at Illinois State (e.g., renovation plans for the new Illinois Forensic Training Center).

Recommendations.

The Academic Planning Committee thanks faculty members of the Department of Criminal Justice Science for the opportunity to provide input regarding the B.S in Criminal Justice Sciences program at Illinois State University through consideration of the self-study report submitted by faculty. The following committee recommendations to be addressed within the next regularly scheduled review cycle are provided in a spirit of collaboration with Criminal Justice Sciences faculty members. In the next program review self-study report, tentatively due October 1, 2030, the committee asks the program to describe actions taken and results achieved for each recommendation.

Continue to refine your plan for enrollment management. While the committee commends the program for their growth, we recommend that the program continue to work with Enrollment Management and Academic Services and the Office of the Provost to refine and implement their plan for student recruitment. We also recommend that the program continue to explore available scholarship opportunities as part of the recruitment plan.

Continue to focus on diversity, inclusion, and equity. The committee recognizes the efforts that have resulted in increasing the diversity of faculty and students within the program and encourages the program to continue to pursue its goals related to further developing an equitable, diverse, and inclusive environment that effectively supports students, faculty, and staff from diverse backgrounds.

Continue to focus on student success and retention. The committee recommends that the program faculty develop a plan for student success. The plan should be used to increase transparency and communication around “student success” by defining the program’s goals for, assessment of, and actions towards supporting students enrolled in the program. The plan may provide an overarching structure for other plans (e.g., retention, curriculum, alumni engagement). The committee recognizes substantial work by former and current faculty members to review and update the program and its curriculum. The committee recommends that the program continue monitoring student retention and graduation rates, particularly examining the difference in time to degree for FTIC and transfer students.

Continue to review and revise the curriculum. The committee recognizes substantial work by faculty members to review and update the program and its curriculum. The committee recommends continued periodic review of the program structure and content to remain current with changes in the field, including assessing the impact of recent revisions. We recommend that the program develop a plan to identify quality indicators and metrics to monitor and assess student learning in the associated minors program.

Continue implementing and refining the student learning outcomes assessment plan. The committee encourages faculty to continue their implementation of the student learning outcomes assessment plan for the program during the next program review cycle, to continue to utilize information gathered through plan implementation to make program revisions as necessary, and to document how that has been done. The committee encourages faculty to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the plan in assessing student learning and to identify any modifications to the plan faculty may deem necessary.

Continue the collaborative work with Milner Library. The committee recommends that the program work with the subject liaison librarian to examine and evaluate the library's journals and monograph collection to aid in both the selection and deselection process of these sources. Given recent journal cancellations and expected increases in distance and hybrid courses, we encourage the department and library to further collaborate to increase awareness of alternative access to resources, such as Interlibrary Loan and I-Share lending, among faculty and students. We also recommend that the program work with the subject liaison librarian to develop a tiered approach for information fluency learning outcomes for the department, align those outcomes to the curricula, and integrate those outcomes into the student learning outcomes assessment plan for the program.

Continue to refine your plan for alumni tracking and engagement. The committee encourages the faculty to continue to refine their plan for tracking program alumni and use this system to enhance alumni networking and engagement. We support the program's plans to re-establish an advisory board of stakeholders drawn both from alumni and industry partners (both local and national). These activities may become even more important in the years ahead as the program's alumni become more diverse. The program could benefit from increased involvement of its alumni, employers, and other external stakeholders in providing input regarding the program, in mentoring students, and in providing employment opportunities for program graduates.