

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE
WITH CONCENTRATION IN JUSTICE POLICY
AND ADMINISTRATION
ONLINE PROGRAM
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS**



**GRADUATE STUDENT POLICIES &
PROCEDURES MANUAL
UPDATED FALL 2024**



DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The online Master of Science in Criminal Justice (MSCJ) with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration requires satisfactory completion of 36 hours beyond the bachelor's degree. For graduate programs, 9 hours (3 courses) is considered full-time enrollment.

Part I: Core Curriculum

CJUS 5000 – Criminal Justice Policy	3 hours
CJUS 5500 – Seminar in Criminal Justice Administration	3 hours
CJUS 5600 – Advanced Criminological Theory	3 hours
CJUS 5700 – Evaluation and Research Methodologies	<u>3 hours</u>
	12 core hours

Part II: Electives

24 elective hours

Part III: Cumulative Essays

Total hours: 36 hours

Required Course Offerings – (12 hours) Courses comprising the core curriculum are scheduled in the fall and spring semesters. The schedule for required course offerings is as follows:

Fall of each academic year:

CJUS 5000 – Criminal Justice Policy
CJUS 5700 – Evaluation and Research Methodologies

Spring of each academic year:

CJUS 5500 – Seminar in Criminal Justice Administration
CJUS 5600 – Advanced Criminological Theory

Required courses should be completed in the following sequence as to not delay the completion of cumulative essays and graduation:

Fall Cohort:

Fall I: CJUS 5000, Elective, Elective
Spring I: CJUS 5500, CJUS 5600, Elective
Fall II: CJUS 5700, Elective, Elective
Spring II: Elective, Elective, Elective

Spring Cohort:

Spring I: CJUS 5500, Elective, Elective
Fall I: CJUS 5700, Elective, Elective
Spring II: CJUS 5600, Elective, Elective
Fall II: CJUS 5000, Elective, Elective

Sample Elective Offerings – (24 hours) Offered on a rotating basis; this list is not comprehensive:

- CJUS 5100 – Information Warfare, Security, & Risk
- CJUS 5350 – Seminar in Contemporary Policing
- CJUS 5460 – Correctional Practices & Programs
- CJUS 5470 – Seminar in Juvenile Delinquency
- CJUS 5550 – World Criminal Justice Systems
- CJUS 5620 – Seminar in Victimology
- CJUS 5650 – Organized Crime
- CJUS 5800 – Special Topics¹

POLICIES

Two “C” Rule

The graduate committee in the Department of Criminal Justice will recommend dismissal of a student from the online MSCJ with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration program if the student receives two course grades of C or below (for purposes of this rule, the first grade received in a course is used). The departmental graduate committee is comprised of the Director of Graduate Programs and three departmental faculty members who are currently serving as graduate faculty for the University. If the departmental graduate committee recommends the dismissal of a student under this policy, the student may provide a written appeal to the departmental graduate committee for consideration. The decision to reinstate a student after dismissal is recommended is solely at the discretion of the departmental graduate committee. If a student who is reinstated receives a third grade of C or below, the student will be dismissed from the program without further recourse within the department.

For the purposes of this policy, a grade of “C” can count toward the MSCJ with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration degree but a grade of “D” or “F” cannot.

Interdisciplinary Studies, MA/MS

The Department of Criminal Justice does not participate in the MA or MS in Interdisciplinary Studies degree. Therefore, Criminal Justice cannot be an Academic Area within the MA or MS in Interdisciplinary Studies degree.

Degree Plan

During the first or second semester in the online MSCJ with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration program, a degree plan will be submitted for each student to the graduate school through the departmental Director of Graduate Programs. The degree plan must be approved by the departmental Director of Graduate Programs and the graduate school. Once filed, any changes to the degree plan must be approved by the Director of Graduate Programs. Therefore, if a student plans on taking a course that is not on their degree plan, they must notify

¹ Can be repeated for course credit as topics vary.

the Director of Graduate Programs for approval prior to enrollment in the course so that necessary changes to their degree plan can be made.

Transfer Hours

A maximum of 9 hours of transfer credit previously earned at an outside institution or academic unit may be applied to the online MSCJ with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration degree. Only transfer credit with a grade of “B” or higher from an outside institution or academic unit may be applied toward the MSCJ degree. The acceptance of transfer work is at the discretion of the Director of Graduate Programs. If a student would like to transfer hours from another University or academic unit into the online MSCJ with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration program, please contact the Director of Graduate Programs as other restrictions beyond those stated may apply.

Courses Taken Outside of Criminal Justice

A maximum of 6 graduate hours taken at UNT outside of the online MSCJ courses may be applied to the online MSCJ with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration degree. Any courses taken outside of Criminal Justice must be approved by the Director of Graduate Programs prior to enrollment in the course. It is an expectation of the department that students will choose regular course offerings to satisfy degree requirements; therefore, enrolling in courses outside of criminal justice are only approved in rare circumstances. Students should also avoid choosing outside topics that are already covered by regular curriculum.

Campus-Based MSCJ with Concentration in Theory and Research Courses

While the online MSCJ with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration is designed as a fully online program, there may be exceptional circumstances where students may be considered for enrollment in select campus-based courses. These rare exceptions require approval prior to enrollment. Students with compelling reasons to enroll in a campus-based course may submit a request to the Director of Graduate Programs. To do so, email the coordinator directly with the course name and your student ID. Please note that these requests undergo a rigorous evaluation process, and approvals are granted sparingly based on individual circumstances and program capacity.

If enrollment is approved, students will be notified and provided instructions for registration. Approved campus-based courses will count towards the 6-hour limit for non-online courses within the program. However, CJUS study abroad courses are exempt from this limit and are treated as online elective courses.

It's important to understand that submitting a request does not guarantee approval. The program strives to maintain the integrity of its online format while accommodating extraordinary situations when possible. We encourage students to fully engage with the rich online curriculum, which is specifically designed to provide a comprehensive and flexible learning experience.

Online to On-Campus MSCJ Program Transfer Policy

Students are allowed to transfer their enrollment between the online MSCJ program and the on-campus MSCJ program only once during their academic career. This transfer option is available to students in good academic standing within the online MSCJ program. Interested students must contact the Director of Graduate Programs to initiate the transfer process. Students may be required to re-apply to the on-campus MSCJ program, depending on individual circumstances and at the discretion of the Director of Graduate Programs. The Director of Graduate Programs will review each transfer request on a case-by-case basis, considering factors such as academic performance, available space in the on-campus program, and the student's rationale for transfer. Students will not be able to transfer back to the online MSCJ program.

All credits earned in the online MSCJ program will be fully transferable to the on-campus MSCJ program, provided that (1) the courses taken in the online program are equivalent to those offered in the on-campus program; and (2) the credits were earned within the university's established time limit for degree completion. The effective date of transfer, if approved, will typically be at the start of the next academic term. Upon transfer, students will be subject to all policies, procedures, and requirements of the on-campus MSCJ program.

Incomplete Grades

The grade of "I" is assigned when extraordinary circumstances prevent the completion of coursework within the time frame of a given semester. What constitutes extraordinary circumstances meriting the grade of "I" is solely at the discretion of the course instructor. To remove the grade of "I", the student must complete the coursework remaining in a time frame determined by the course instructor. However, a student must remove a grade of "I" within one year of receiving the initial grade by completing the stipulated work. If a student does not complete the stipulated work within one year, the instructor may change the grade of I to a grade of F.

Admission Provisions

Students that are required to complete undergraduate course hours in Criminal Justice per the terms of their conditional admission into the online MSCJ with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration program must complete these hours prior to enrollment in graduate Criminal Justice coursework. All undergraduate coursework must be taken through the Department of Criminal Justice at UNT, but students may enroll in either online or campus-based courses.

Note: Undergraduate work, including 4000 level courses, cannot be applied to the campus MSCJ with Concentration in Theory and Research degree.

Directed Studies

Directed studies can be arranged with any graduate faculty member within the Department of Criminal Justice. The directed study will include assignments that require the student to

complete substantive reading/research, with the ultimate objective of producing scholarly work. It is an expectation of the department that students will choose regular course offerings to satisfy degree requirements; therefore, directed studies is only approved in rare circumstances. It is also an expectation of the department that students will have completed two full semesters in the online MSCJ program before requesting to enroll in directed studies. When selecting a topic a student wants to explore more fully, avoid choosing a subject already covered in the regular curriculum. A Directed Studies Contract for CJUS 5850 Form must be completed by the student and faculty member. The contract must then be submitted to the Director of Graduate Programs for additional approval. A Directed Studies Contract for CJUS 5850 Form can be found at the end of this manual.

Progress Toward the Degree

Students are expected to maintain continual progress toward completion of the online MSCJ with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration degree. The following policies ensure our students maintain progress toward the degree:

1. Students must enroll in criminal justice classes within one (1) year of being admitted into the online MSCJ with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration program.
2. Students must also enroll in at least one (1) course each year that will count toward their online MSCJ with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration degree.
3. Students have one (1) week after the conclusion of each semester to submit their cumulative essays for CJUS 5500, CJUS 5600, and CJUS 5700.

Students who fail to meet the above requirements will be dismissed from the online MSCJ with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration program. Students who are dismissed under this policy may provide a written appeal to the departmental graduate committee for consideration. The decision to reinstate a student after dismissal is solely at the discretion of the departmental graduate committee. Students who violate the above policies twice will be dismissed from the online MSCJ with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration program without further recourse within the department.

Time Limitations

All requirements for the online MSCJ with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration degree must be completed within 5-years of the first semester of enrollment in the program. As individual courses, transfer credits as well as those completed in the program, exceed these time limits they lose all value for degree purposes. While it is possible to request a one-year time extension through the Graduate School, the Department of Criminal Justice typically does not grant extension requests. Students who fail to complete all requirements for the online MSCJ with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration within 5-years will be dismissed from the program without recourse within the department.

Graduation

Students should track their progress through the online MSCJ with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration program and are responsible for ensuring that all required components necessary to graduate have been met. During the final semester of enrollment, the student will apply for graduation and should be in direct contact with the Graduate School as well as their advisor to ensure eligibility. Students must be aware of the graduation application deadlines for the semester they plan on graduating. These dates can be found at <http://tgs.unt.edu/new-current-students/graduation-information>.

MSCJ WITH CONCENTRATION IN JUSTICE POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION DEGREE EXIT REQUIREMENTS

To satisfy the degree requirements for the Master of Science in Criminal Justice with Concentration in Justice Policy and Administration must submit three cumulative reflective essays, one for each of the following courses:

CJUS 5500 – Seminar in Criminal Justice Administration

CJUS 5600 – Criminological Theory

CJUS 5700 – Evaluation and Research Methodologies

Students should review the texts and articles assigned for each class as they begin thinking about the essay. Students should also review the cumulative essay guidelines in order to assist with the writing process. The instructions are located below as well as on our webpage.

Following the start of the semester when enrolled in CJUS 5500, CJUS 5600, and/or CJUS 5700, students will receive an email from MSCJ-Advising@unt.edu reminding them the cumulative essay will be due upon completion of the course as well as the writing expectations, and the deadline for submission.

Essays are due one week after the final day of the semester. However, to provide some flexibility, students may submit their essays starting from two weeks before the last day of the semester up until the final due date. For example, if the semester ends on May 15, students can submit their essays anytime between May 1 and May 22. Students are encouraged to submit their essays when they feel the work is complete and ready for evaluation, keeping in mind the final due date. Cumulative essay submissions must be sent from students' UNT email address to MSCJ-Advising@unt.edu.

The grade reported to students will be pass or fail for each of the three cumulative essays. Students may also be asked to revise and resubmit an essay if it does not meet the standard for a graduate level reflective essay. Students will be required to resubmit any failed essay submissions. If the student fails to submit a cumulative essay by the due date and time, it will be a considered failed attempt.

Should the student be asked to revise and resubmit one or more essay, the student will have one week from the date the grade was received, regardless of whether one or more essays have to be revised. Students must include a cover letter that briefly summarizes the concerns provided and the student's response to the concern, including the changes that were made in the revision. In addition, any changes or new text in the essays themselves should be highlighted.

Students will be informed of the results of the essay by email only. Every attempt will be made to have the results available within four weeks of the submission deadline. Do not contact the Director of Graduate Programs or any faculty member about the cumulative essay results during the evaluation process.

Students who fail a cumulative essay submission will automatically be allowed one revision. If the revision is not submitted by the one-week deadline, or does not meet the passing standard, it will be considered a failed attempt. If a student fails any essay twice, the student is dismissed from the program. A student may appeal the decision to be dismissed from the program and submit the essay for a third time only in cases of extreme hardship. The decision to allow a student a third essay submission will be decided by the departmental graduate committee. The burden of proof for extreme hardship is on the student. Appeals for a third submission must be made in writing to the Director of Graduate Programs. The final decision to allow a student a third submission attempt is solely at the discretion of the departmental graduate committee. If a student submits an essay a third time and fails, the student is dismissed from the program without further recourse within the department.

Students who fail a cumulative essay are strongly encouraged to discuss their questions and answers with the Director of Graduate Programs. If a student feels that the essay evaluation was unfair for some reason, the student should file a written appeal with the Director of Graduate Programs. All grade appeals on cumulative essays will be referred to the departmental graduate committee. The decision concerning the appeal and the disposition thereof will be at the discretion of the departmental graduate committee.

Cumulative Essay Guidelines

This reflective discussion requires students to elaborate on what they learned in each course, making connections between their experiences and theoretical concepts, while also considering how the course content relates to their academic and/or professional goals. Using readings, class discussions, and course work, students are expected to write about the topics that seem most relevant to these experiences and how new knowledge of the criminal justice system and criminology has resulted. The following questions should guide your discussion:

- What are your thoughts on your course experience in general and was it a useful learning experience?
- In what specific ways do you believe the content of this course will impact

- your academic/professional career?
- What specific skills or perspectives did you acquire as a result of taking this course?

Remember:

1. The reflective essay is not a summary or description of course readings or assignments. Instead, the reflective paper involves the identification of the main themes of readings integrated with coursework experiences, and how they affected your thinking and practice.
2. The reflective essay is your opportunity to add your thoughts and analysis to what you have read and experienced.
3. Consider how what you have read and learned changes, or changed, your understanding of the topic or how you would apply course concepts in academic and/or professional settings.
4. While the reflective essay may adopt an informal tone, it should still have an identifiable introduction, body, and conclusion.
5. Your essay should be well organized. Consider the use of subheadings to designate themes and provide structure.
6. Use of the singular person "I" is appropriate in a reflective paper.
7. In order to be considered for credit, your essay must be 2.5-3 full pages (excluding a title page/heading or any references), typed in Times New Roman, 12 pt font, and double-spaced. Include in-text references and a reference page for any materials you cite using APA citation formatting (however, references are not required).

ONLINE MSCJ WITH CONCENTRATION IN JUSTICE POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

Directed Studies Contract for CJUS 5850

Department of Criminal Justice

Part I – To Be Completed by Student

Name: _____

Student ID#: _____

Semester: _____, 20____

Professor: _____

Part II – To Be Completed by Professor

I. Proposed topic and course objectives:

II. Assigned course readings:

III. Assignments/Proposed final written product:

IV. Grading scale/criteria to assess the final written product:

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Professor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Director of Graduate Programs Approval: _____ Date: _____