Criminal Justice

The purpose of a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice is to prepare students to deal with the challenges of a career as a criminal justice professional in a changing society. The criminal justice program will instill in students a comprehensive knowledge of the criminal justice system while educating them to be critical thinkers who can communicate their thoughts effectively in oral and written form. The curriculum will familiarize students with facts and concepts while also teaching them to engage in ethical behavior when applying this knowledge to related problems and changing situations. Graduates from this program will be members of professional organizations dedicated to selfless public service and will be vital in maintaining peace and curtailing lawlessness in our society. Criminal justice graduates find gainful employment in law enforcement, security, the courts, and correctional facilities. Graduates with a degree in criminal justice may find employment in juvenile and adult probation, municipal and county law enforcement, private security, hospital security, investigations, and warrant offices. Many graduates continue their education in law school or other graduate school. Minimum employment requirements in law enforcement generally include the following:

- Be at least 21 years old
- Have no convictions for Class A misdemeanor or felony offense
- Have no convictions for Class B misdemeanor offense in the past 10 years
- Possess good mental and physical health
- Meet varying eyesight standards
- Have good moral character
- Possess a valid Texas driver’s license with minimum violations

The criminal justice degree is designed to meet the standards established by the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS). ACJS encourages baccalaureate programs to reflect a balanced presentation of a broad scope of criminal justice studies. The criminal justice degree focuses specifically on the five core areas identified by ACJS:

- Criminal justice and juvenile justice processes—law, crime, and administration of justice
- Criminology—causes of crime, typologies, offenders, and victims
- Law enforcement—police organization, discretion, subculture, and legal constraints
- Law adjudication—criminal law, prosecution, defense, and court procedures and decision-making
- Corrections—incarceration, community-based corrections, and treatment of offenders

Criminal Justice Transfer Credit

To be considered for criminal justice transfer credit, courses must be completed with a grade of C or higher and must be of similar content and level. Courses taken at other institutions are evaluated by the Director of Criminal Justice to determine if and where they will be applied to the criminal justice degree plan. Courses taken five or more years prior to transfer may not be approved for major or supporting course. Transfer credit for CRJ4333 (Professionalism and Ethics in Criminal Justice) and CRJ4140 (Senior Assessment Seminar) is not accepted and must be completed in residence.

Admission to the Criminal Justice Program

Students interested in the criminal justice major must see the criminal justice faculty for academic and career advising. Any student may enroll in CRJ2301 (Introduction to Criminal Justice). However, only students admitted to the criminal justice program are permitted to graduate with a degree in criminal justice. Once CRJ2301 is complete, criminal justice majors must apply for admission to the criminal justice program. To be considered for admission, students must have:

- Minimum overall GPA of 2.00;
- Completed of ENG1301 and 1302 earning grade of C or higher in each;
- Completed of CRJ2301 earning grade of C or higher;
- Submitted written application for admission to the criminal justice program;
- Provided a reference from LCU faculty member who is not a criminal justice faculty member; and
- Provided a personal reference.

When requirements are met, the criminal justice faculty will consider the application and grant or deny admission to the program. Students are informed of the decision by email. Applicants refused admission may appeal in writing to the criminal justice faculty.