

A GUIDE TO THE MASTER'S PROGRAM

DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE



****Note:** Application for Financial Aid (copy attached) must be completed and returned to the Department office no later than December 1st (new students) and January 1st (continuing students) to be eligible for consideration.

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ADMISSION TO GRADUATE STUDY

ADMISSION TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

For admission to graduate study at the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice the applicant must first be admitted to the Graduate School. An application to the Graduate School may be obtained from:

Dean for Graduate Studies
2nd Floor Lee Building
University of Maryland
College Park, Maryland 20742

This application is also available online at: <http://www.vprgs.umd.edu>

The applicant must submit two copies of the following to the Graduate School:¹

- (a) application for admission to the Graduate School
- (b) official transcripts of **all** previous academic work at institutions of higher learning
- (c) a nonrefundable application fee,

At the same time the applicant must submit to the Department certain materials required by the Department, as specified in the application packet. The Department requires that the applicant arrange for submission of official Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores from the Educational Testing Service, three letters of recommendation from professors, if possible, or employers who are acquainted with the applicant's qualifications, a statement of goals, and the Department financial aid application (attached)².

Decisions on admission for the fall semester will first be made for those whose completed applications and supporting material have been received by the Graduate School and the Department on or before December 1st. Qualified applicants whose completed applications and supporting material are received after December 1st, but on or before May 1st, will be granted admission on a first-come, first-served basis, up to the limits of available space in the program. Applicants for the spring semester must have their completed applications and supporting material received by September 1st. Applications for the Traditional MA program are accepted for Fall entry only.

If the application is favorably recommended by the Department, this decision is sent to the Graduate School. The Graduate School in turn notifies the applicant of admission and asks for acknowledgement of acceptance. If the applicant is not favorably recommended for graduate study by the Department, then the Graduate School notifies the applicant of the decision.

1 See the application packet for other requirements. Grad application information: www.vprgs.umd.edu

2 Online form may be completed and printed using Adobe Acrobat at:
www.ccjs.umd.edu/Department/Forms/fin_aid.pdg

ACADEMIC COMMON MARKET

The Academic Common Market allows out-of-state students to be admitted at in-state tuition fee levels if no college or university within the students' home states offers programs equivalent to the programs pursued by those students. The following states currently participate in this exchange: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. If you feel you are entitled to the Academic Common Market in-state tuition rate, please contact the address below for further information:

Southern Regional Education Board
592 Tenth Street, NW
Atlanta, Georgia 30318-5790
(404) 875-9211

FINANCIAL AID

The Department's policy is to make financial aid decisions separate from admission decisions. That is, a decision to admit a student to the program is not affected by whether or not the student requests financial aid. The financial aid most regularly available in the Department is in the form of graduate teaching and research assistantships. Other regularly available forms of financial aid are listed in the Graduate Catalogue and the appropriate application procedures are discussed. A small number of Fellowships are also available to the most outstanding new applicants. Applications for graduate teaching and research assistantships should be submitted directly to the Department's Graduate Office. For new applicants (e.g., students not already enrolled in one of our programs) these applications are due on December 1st. For continuing students, applications for financial aid are due on January 1st.

A graduate teaching or research assistantship provides a stipend and remission of tuition for up to ten credit hours per semester. The appointment to an assistantship is for one academic year (10 months) and may be renewed for a second academic year. Renewal is dependent upon the student's performance as an assistant as well as upon his or her maintaining a satisfactory academic record (GPA 3.2).

The duties of a teaching assistant require no more than 20 hours of work per week as assigned. The assignment usually consists of assisting one or more professors in their teaching, and/or research responsibilities. In addition, some assistants are expected to assist in some general departmental administrative duties.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADMISSION

Due to additional time needed for processing the applications, the complete application and official academic credentials - beginning with secondary school records - should be received by the Graduate Admissions Office at least seven months prior to the semester he or she plans to enter. International applicants must also include scores on Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) if English is not the native language. Proper immigration documents and evidence of financial resources are also required. The GRE requirement is not waived for foreign students. Applications

will **not** be processed without the application fee.

DELAY OF ADMISSION

A written offer of admission is made to an applicant who meets all admission requirements. The offer specifies the date of entrance which will normally coincide with the date requested in the application. The offer of admission must be accepted or declined by the date specified in the offer. If the Graduate School is not notified by the date specified, the offer of admission lapses and the space is assigned to another applicant. An individual whose offer of admission has lapsed must submit a new application and fee if he or she wants to be reconsidered for admission at a later date.

The offer of admission by the Dean of Graduate Studies is also a permit to register for courses and must be presented by the student at the time of first registration. The informal letter of admission sent to the applicant by the Department is not official and, thus, not a permit to register.

Any student who cannot register in the authorized semester must immediately submit a written request to have the date of admission extended. This request must be sent to the Director of Graduate Records in the Graduate School, University of Maryland and copied to the Department.

MINIMUM ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The Graduate School requires as a minimum standard a "B" average or a 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale, in a program of study resulting in the award of a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university. In addition, the student's undergraduate program should include completion of the prerequisites for graduate study in his chosen field. In individual programs, where resources are available, a few applicants who do not meet this minimum standard for undergraduate work may be provisionally admitted if there is compelling evidence on the basis of other criteria of a reasonable likelihood of success in the program the person desires to enter. If an applicant has studied at the graduate level elsewhere, less weight may be, but is not necessarily, placed on the quality of the undergraduate academic record.

In addition to the general Graduate School requirement, the Department also requires the Graduate Record Examination Aptitude Test. Also, at least one course each in theory, statistics, and research methods are desirable but not required.

PROVISIONAL ADMISSION

Under certain conditions, applicants who are missing some of the prerequisite courses but who are otherwise fully qualified for admission may be given a provisional admission. Students receiving such an admission are notified of the conditions of their admission, the period of time they have to meet the conditions, and the need to receive a grade of "B" or better in any courses taken to meet the conditions.

ADVISEMENT AND PROGRAM PLANNING

ADVISEMENT

After a student is recommended for admission, the student is advised by the Chairperson of the Department until such time as the student selects an advisor. M.A. students are expected to select an advisor from among the Department's Graduate Faculty prior to the end of their first semester. Request for approval of the advisor are available in the Department's Graduate Office. Students are free to change their advisor. They are responsible, however, for completion of the new advisor form which must be signed by the new advisor and Chairperson. The advisor is usually the chairperson of the student's thesis committee, but there is no requirement that this be the case. Graduate students may select any qualified member of the Graduate Faculty to act as their thesis advisor. A list of the Department's Graduate Faculty (Associate and Regular) is available in the Department's Graduate Office.

PROGRAM PLANNING

The student must seek an appointment with the graduate advisor prior to registration for the first semester's course work. The advisor will assist in planning the degree program. Students should bear in mind that neither the advisor, the Department nor the Graduate School is under obligation to accept any courses to be applied to the student's official program as approved by the Graduate School which are not a part of the program developed with the advisor's assistance.

The policies governing degree programs are subject to modification from time to time. The policies in force at the time of enrollment are binding upon the student, and subsequently established program requirements may not be imposed retroactively. With the prior approval of the advisor, however, students may elect to conform to all current program requirements.

THE MASTER'S DEGREE (TRADITIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL)

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice offers two programs of study at the Master's level: the Traditional and Professional Master's programs³. Both result in a Master's degree in criminology and criminal justice. The Traditional program involves a thesis and the Professional program does not involve a thesis.

³ More information about the Professional and Traditional programs can be found on our website at: www.ccsj.umd.edu/Graduate

TRANSFER OF CREDIT

A maximum of twelve semester hours of graduate-level course credits earned at regionally accredited institutions prior to, or after, matriculation in the Graduate School may be applied toward a Master's degree at the University of Maryland.

All graduate study credits offered as transfer credits must meet the following criteria: (1) they must have received graduate credit at the institution where earned; (2) they must not have been used to meet the requirements for any degree previously earned; (3) they must have been taken within the time limits applicable to degrees awarded by the Graduate School; that is, they must have been taken within the five-year time limit for completing the Master's degree; (4) the department or program to which the student has been admitted at Maryland must certify that the courses are appropriate to the degree program the student is pursuing at Maryland; that is, the course must be approved by the student's advisor and the Department's Chairperson; and, (5) the student must have earned a "B" or better in the course offered for transfer credit.

The request for transfer of credit, the necessary transcripts, and certification of Department approval must be submitted to the Graduate School at the earliest possible date. The Master's degree cannot be awarded until the Graduate School has the official transcript for the credit to be transferred. If the credit is taken after matriculation, the student must receive prior approval of the credit from the advisor and the Department's Chairperson. The request for transfer is then submitted to the Graduate School⁴.

TIME LIMIT

All requirements for the Master's degree must be completed within five (5) years of the entrance date. One extension of up to one year may be granted at the discretion of the Department.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The Graduate School makes the following requirements regarding all Master's degrees. The entire course of study for any Master's degree must constitute a unified, coherent program which is approved by the student's advisor and by the Graduate School. The student must have a minimum of 30 semester hours in courses acceptable for credit toward a graduate degree. Additional courses may be required if the student is inadequately prepared for the required graduate courses. To graduate the student must have an average grade of "B".

The Graduate School states that grades for courses not a part of the program, but taken in graduate status will be computed in the average. Any "D" or "F" grade on the record may be repeated, with the second grade replacing the first. If courses with "D" or "F" grades are not repeated, they are

⁴ Contact the Graduate Secretary for this form.

computed in the grade point average as an "F" (zero quality points). However, in the latter case, they are not counted as part of the degree requirements and additional course work must be done. Any incomplete grades that are not removed and replaced with acceptable letter grades will be computed in the same manner. In addition, the Department's policy is that any graduate student who received a grade of "D" or "F" in two different courses will be dismissed from the program.

The residence requirement is one year full-time study (or its equivalent) at the University of Maryland. **The student must be registered for at least one credit in the semester he or she plans to graduate.**

The general plan of study for the Traditional M.A. student is as follows:

- **CCJS 600** (Criminal Justice), **CCJS 610** (Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology) and **CCJS 651** (Seminar in Criminology) are required courses that must be passed with a grade of "B" or better.
- **CCJS 498D** (Fundamentals for Criminological Research) and **CCJS 498F** (The General Linear Model) are required courses that must be passed with a grade of "B" or better.
- Three graduate-level (e.g., 600 or above) elective courses.
- A thesis.

The general plan of study for the Professional M.A. student is as follows:

- **CCJS 600** (Criminal Justice), **CCJS 604** (Policy Analysis Project), **CCJS 605** (Program Evaluation), **CCJS 611** (Statistical Tools for Criminal Justice), **CCJS 651** (Criminology), and **CCJS 720** (Criminal Justice System Planning) are required courses that must be passed with a grade of "B" or better.
- Four graduate level (level 600 or above) Elective courses which may include **CCJS 601** (Policing), **CCJS 602** (Courts and Sentencing), **CCJS 603** (Corrections), **CCJS 612** (Applied Data Analysis), **CCJS 660** (Gender and Crime), **CCJS 670** (Race and Crime), and **CCJS 680** (Drugs and Crime) or other courses as deemed relevant by the student's advisor.
- A scholarly paper in lieu of a thesis.
- The student has a choice of specializing in one of these three areas: policing, courts or corrections.

THE TRADITIONAL MASTER'S PROGRAM

The Graduate School requires a minimum of 30 semester hours in courses approved for graduate credit which must, if the student chooses the traditional program, include six hours of thesis research credits (CCJS 799).

The student must successfully complete a thesis. Students planning on writing a thesis should not choose a topic or commence working on a thesis until they have chosen a thesis advisor, consulted

with the advisor concerning the intended research topic and plan, consulted also with other members of the graduate faculty whom he or she intends to have serve on the Master's Thesis Committee, and have obtained their preliminary approval and permission to proceed.

The thesis must be approved by an examining committee appointed by the Dean of Graduate Studies. When the thesis is completed and ready for oral defense, the advisor files a Certification of Completion of Master's Thesis form with the Graduate School, certifying that the thesis is completed and listing the proposed committee members. The Graduate School Dean then sends the advisor a form approving the committee and listing any incomplete grades. The student's thesis advisor is Chairperson of the committee and the remaining members of the committee are members of the graduate faculty of the University who are familiar with the student's program of study. The examining committee consists of a minimum of three members; at least two of which must be members of the Department's faculty. In most instances the full committee will be selected from the faculty of the Department.

It should be noted that if the research conducted for completion of the thesis requires the use of human subjects, the proposed study must be approved by the Department's and University's Human Subjects Committees, well in advance of any data collection. Each student's advisor is aware of the appropriate procedures involved in obtaining approval of these committees.

A final oral defense of the thesis shall be held when the student has complete his or her thesis to the satisfaction of the advisor, when all other requirements for the degree have been completed, and the student has attained at least a "B" average (GPA 3.0) in the course work. The Chairperson of the examining committee selects the time and place for the examination and notifies the other members and the candidate. Members of the committee must be given a minimum of seven school days to read the thesis.

The oral defense is normally an hour but it may be longer. The defense may be attended by Department faculty and graduate students and the committee Chairperson may open the discussion to those present for questions and comments. Upon satisfactory completion of the oral defense, the committee signs the form sent by the Graduate School. It is returned by the Chairperson to the Dean of the Graduate School no later than the appropriate date listed in "Important Dates for Graduate Students"⁵ if the student is to graduate in the semester in which the oral examination is given. The "Important Dates" information can be obtained either from the Graduate School or from the Department's Graduate Office.

Any student who has selected the thesis option and wants to complete the thesis and graduate in a certain semester should not only consult the deadlines listed in "Important Dates" but should also consult with his or her thesis advisor before the beginning of the registration period of the semester in which the student intends to graduate in order to make sure all the necessary course work has been completed.

5 May be found on the University's Graduate School website: www.gradschool.umd.edu

The student should consult the *Graduate Student Academic Handbook and Thesis Manual* for directions on the preparation and submission of the thesis. This can be purchased at the student book store.

THE PROFESSIONAL MASTER'S PROGRAM

The general requirements for those in the professional program are a minimum of 30 semester hours in courses approved for graduate credit, not including any thesis research hours (CCJS 799) which may have been taken.

The candidate must present one paper as evidence of scholarly writing ability in the area of criminology or criminal justice. Scholarly writing ability is defined by the Graduate School as "the ability to present in a clearly organized paper with proper scholarly documentation, evidence of original research, and/or critical analysis, and/or evaluation." The paper may be an extension of papers prepared for a 600-level or higher-level course or seminar. However, it must be written independently of requirements for these courses. The student may take independent study (CCJS 699) courses to complete the paper. Please note that no more than six (6) hours of independent study are allowed toward the Master's Program. The paper should be submitted for evaluation in the final semester of the student's program, and must be read and evaluated by two faculty members appointed by the Chairperson. When all degree requirements are met, the student's advisor submits the Certification of Completion of Master's Degree without Thesis by the date listed in "Important Dates."

MA/JD JOINT DEGREE PROGRAM

The Graduate program in Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Maryland, College Park, and the University of Maryland, School of Law (located in Baltimore) offers a joint program of studies leading to a MA/JD degree.

Under the terms of this program, a student may earn both degrees in four academic years. Up to nine (9) credit hours received from the Law School are transferable and will be considered as electives towards your MA degree. Supporting documentation, such as letters of recommendations, official transcripts, personal statements and test scores are **REQUIRED** for both schools.

Candidates must be admitted to both programs separately. Admissions to one program, does not automatically guarantee admissions in the other. Grade point averages in each program will be computed separately and students must maintain minimum standards in each school to continue in the program and receive both degrees. If a student's enrollment is terminated in either program, the student may elect to complete work for the degree in which he/she remains enrolled, but such completion must be upon the same conditions as required of regular (non-joint program) degree candidates. Students must submit an approved course of study by the Graduate Director of UMCP

and the Dean of the Law School. For more information regarding the joint MA/JD program, please contact:

University of Maryland, Baltimore
520 West Lombard Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-706-3492
admissions@law.umaryland.edu

University of Maryland, College Park
Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice
LeFrak Hall, Room 2220
College Park, MD 20742
301-405-6838
crimgrad@deans.umd.edu

APPLICATION FOR DIPLOMA

The candidate must submit the application for diploma to the Registrar's Office. The student must meet the deadline date specified in "Important Dates." The Graduate School will notify the Graduate Office of the Department of those Master's students who have made an application for diploma. The advisor and Chairperson of the Department must sign a form certifying to the Graduate School that the student has completed all program course requirements. The student is responsible for preparing this form, in sufficient time to meet the Graduate School's deadline. **The student must be registered for at least one credit in the semester he or she plans to graduate.**

NOTE: PLEASE E-MAIL CRIMGRAD@DEANS.UMD.EDU WITH ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE CONCERNING THE GRADUATE PROGRAM.