

CRIMINAL JUSTICE, BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.S.)

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The major objective of this degree program is to prepare students for effective professional careers in criminal justice, forensic crime scene investigation, public service and other helping professions, and/or prepare them to pursue studies in law and other related graduate programs. Career opportunities are available in federal, state, local and private justice-related endeavors. These careers include law enforcement, crime scene investigation, juvenile justice, corrections and the courts.

This program also prepares students to enter law school or to pursue graduate studies in criminal justice or in several of the human services fields, usually related to justice. This program offers and encourages in-service justice employees and others to enhance their professional career development through higher education.

Students majoring in criminal justice receive a broad educational background, professionally oriented courses in their special area of interest and various skill courses designed to enhance their career opportunities. Through core courses and electives in the major, students have the opportunity to orient their course work to fit their educational objectives and career plans.

It is essential that students seek and follow the advice of an adviser in the progression of the core courses, the selection of criminal justice electives and in the identification of complementary courses in other disciplines that can benefit the student and assist in the accomplishment of career goals. Whether the student is interested in general criminal justice, policing, crime scene investigation, legal studies, juvenile justice or corrections, faculty and advisers can assist in identifying the appropriate curriculum.

The justice concentration is offered for those students who are interested in a broad theoretical and practical education in the field of criminal justice.

Student learning outcomes

Upon completing this program, students will know and know how to do the following:

1. Students will be able to identify and understand the structure and job functions within police organizations, models of policing, constitutional rights associated with policing, police corruption and ethics, procedural justice and its impacts on police legitimacy, and use of force. Students will develop the ability to apply these principles to actual cases and solve problems.
2. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the types and sources of law, jurisdiction, structure and functions of state and federal courts, the impact of discretion, the dynamics of courthouse justice, the role of courtroom workgroup dynamics, and steps in criminal cases, including sentencing issues and post-conviction relief. Students will develop the ability to apply knowledge to actual cases and solve problems.
3. Students will develop knowledge of the history and philosophies of punishment and the influence of the Enlightenment period on the development of the Positivist School, and identify the structure of jails and prisons, including the role of correctional officers and

management, community corrections programs, probation and parole, preventive detention and bail systems, and basic inmates rights. Students will develop the ability to apply these principles to actual cases and solve problems.

Special requirements

The Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice requires a minimum of 120 credits, including 39 credits in criminal justice courses a minimum of 60 credits in courses outside of VCU-offered criminal justice, and a minimum cumulative and major area GPA of a 2.0. No more than half of the criminal justice courses applied to the major can be transferred from another college. Students must earn a total of 45 credits in classes at the 300-level and above, including upper-level criminal justice course work. The criminal justice curriculum includes the core and concentration requirements.

Degree requirements for Criminal Justice, Bachelor of Science (B.S.)

Course	Title	Hours
General education (https://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/general-education-curriculum/)		
Select 30 credits of general education courses in consultation with an adviser.		30
Major requirements		
• Major core requirements		
CRJS 181	Introduction to Criminal Justice	3
CRJS 253	Introduction to Corrections	3
CRJS 254	Introduction to Policing	3
CRJS 324	Courts and Sentencing	3
CRJS 335	Ethics and Decision-making in Criminal Justice	3
CRJS 355	Criminological Theory	3
CRJS 380	Research Methods in Criminal Justice	3
CRJS 480	Senior Seminar	3
• Major electives		
Select from upper-level CRJS courses, including HSEP 301, HSEP 302, HSEP 320 and/or HSEP 330.		15
Ancillary requirements		
GVPA 100	Making Policy Real: Social Problems and Policy Solutions	3
STAT 208	Statistical Thinking (satisfies general education quantitative foundations)	3
Open electives		
Select any courses		48
Total Hours		120

The minimum number of credit hours required for this degree is 120.

Students who complete the requirements for this degree will receive a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice.

What follows is a sample plan that meets the prescribed requirements within a four-year course of study at VCU. Please contact your adviser before beginning course work toward a degree.

Freshman year

Fall semester		Hours
CRJS 181	Introduction to Criminal Justice	3
GVPA 100	Making Policy Real: Social Problems and Policy Solutions	3
MATH 131	Introduction to Contemporary Mathematics (prerequisite for STAT 208; counts toward open electives)	3
UNIV 101	Introduction to the University	1
UNIV 111	Introduction to Focused Inquiry: Investigation and Communication (satisfies general education UNIV foundations)	3
General education course (select BOK for social and behavioral sciences)		3
Term Hours:		16

Spring semester

CRJS 253	Introduction to Corrections	3
CRJS 254	Introduction to Policing	3
STAT 208	Statistical Thinking (satisfies general education quantitative foundations)	3
UNIV 112	Focused Inquiry II (satisfies general education UNIV foundations)	3
General education course (select BOK for humanities/fine arts)		3
Term Hours:		15

Sophomore year

Fall semester		
CRJS 324	Courts and Sentencing	3
UNIV 200	Advanced Focused Inquiry: Literacies, Research and Communication (satisfies general education UNIV foundations)	3
General education courses		6
Open elective		3
Term Hours:		15
Spring semester		
General education course (select BOK for natural sciences)		3
General education course		3
Major elective (must be upper-level)		3
Open electives		6
Term Hours:		15

Junior year

Fall semester		
Major elective (must be upper-level)		3
Open electives		12
Term Hours:		15

Spring semester

CRJS 355	Criminological Theory	3
CRJS 380	Research Methods in Criminal Justice	3
Major electives (must be upper-level)		6
Open elective		3
Term Hours:		15

Senior year

Fall semester		
CRJS 335	Ethics and Decision-making in Criminal Justice	3
Major elective (must be upper-level)		3
Open electives		9
Term Hours:		15
Spring semester		
CRJS 480	Senior Seminar	3
Open electives		11
Term Hours:		14
Total Hours:		120

The minimum number of credit hours required for this degree is 120.

Accelerated B.S. Criminal Justice and M.A. Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness

The accelerated B.S. CRJ and M.A. HSP program allows qualified students to earn both the Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice and the Master of Arts in Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness in a minimum of five years by completing approved graduate courses during the senior year of their undergraduate program. Students in the program may count up to 12 hours of graduate courses toward both the B.S. and M.A. degrees. Thus, the two degrees may be earned with a minimum of 144 credits rather than the 156 credits necessary if the two degrees are pursued separately.

Students holding these degrees will be well prepared for a career in public or private service. They will learn about criminal justice as well as learn about the dual nature of homeland security and emergency preparedness as an adaptation of traditional policy responses to natural and man-made disasters to include those types of disasters caused by domestic or international terrorism. Students will learn theoretical and practical knowledge that will prepare them for private or public sector employment in the expanding area of homeland security and emergency preparedness and/or further study in numerous areas of public policy. This online graduate degree takes a broad interdisciplinary approach to preparedness that gives students the ability to see the larger organizational, social, political, ethical and economic aspects of disaster studies, in addition to the policy-making and implementation aspects. The scholarly study of homeland security and emergency preparedness rests at the intersection of national defense, emergency management, law enforcement and policy management.

Entrance to the accelerated program

Interested undergraduate students should consult with their adviser as early as possible to receive specific information about the accelerated program, determine academic eligibility and submit (no later than two semesters prior to graduating with a baccalaureate degree) an Accelerated Program Declaration Form to be approved by the graduate

program director. Limited spaces may be available in the accelerated program. Academically qualified students may not receive approval if capacity has been reached.

Minimum qualifications for admittance to the program include completion of 90 undergraduate credit hours (including transfer credits); an overall GPA of **3.5** and a GPA of **3.5** in **criminal justice** course work. Successful applicants would enter the program in the semester following the completion of their 90th credit hour.

Candidates should submit applications for admission during the semester they would be completing their 90th credit. **One of the required** reference letters must be from a **VCU** faculty member. Students who are interested in the accelerated program should consult with the Wilder School Academic Advising and Student Services office.

Once admitted into the accelerated program, students must meet the standards of performance applicable to graduate students as described in the “**Satisfactory academic progress**” section of the Graduate Bulletin, including maintaining a 3.0 GPA. Students who do not maintain a 3.0 GPA in the graduate level classes will no longer be eligible for the accelerated program and may not take any additional graduate level classes while pursuing the bachelor’s degree. Students will not begin their first semester of only graduate courses until the bachelor’s degree has been conferred. Guidance to students admitted to the accelerated program is provided by the Wilder School AA&SS office.

Admission to the graduate program

Entrance to the accelerated program enables the student to take the approved shared courses that will apply to the undergraduate and graduate degrees. However, entry into an accelerated program via an approved Accelerated Program Declaration Form does not constitute application or admission into the graduate program. Admission to the graduate program requires a separate step that occurs through a formal application. In order to continue pursuing the master’s degree after the baccalaureate degree is conferred, accelerated students must follow the admission to graduate study requirements outlined in the VCU Bulletin.

Degree requirements

The B.S. in Criminal Justice degree will be awarded upon completion of a minimum of **120** credits and the satisfactory completion of all undergraduate degree requirements as stated in the Undergraduate Bulletin.

A maximum of 12 graduate credits may be taken prior to completion of the baccalaureate degree. These graduate credits substitute for both criminal justice electives and open electives for the undergraduate degree. These courses are shared credits with the graduate program, meaning that they will be applied to both undergraduate and graduate degree requirements.

The graduate homeland security and emergency preparedness courses that may be taken as an undergraduate, once a student is admitted to the program, are a choice of four from the following:

Course	Title	Hours
HSEP 501	Introduction to Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness	3
HSEP 502	Survey of Terrorism	3
HSEP 601	Foundations in Emergency Management	3

Approved 500- or 600-level graduate course in homeland security and emergency preparedness	3
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Recommended course sequence/plan of study

What follows is the recommended plan of study for students interested in the accelerated program beginning in the fall of the junior year prior to admission to the accelerated program in the senior year.

Course	Title	Hours
Junior year		
Fall semester		
CRJS 380	Research Methods in Criminal Justice	3
Criminal justice elective (upper-level)		3
Open electives		9
Term Hours:		15
Spring semester		
CRJS 475	Criminal Procedure	3
Criminal justice electives (upper-level)		3
Open electives		9
Term Hours:		15
Senior year		
Fall semester		
CRJS 480	Senior Seminar	3
HSEP 501	Introduction to Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness	3
HSEP 502	Survey of Terrorism	3
Open electives		6
Term Hours:		15
Spring semester		
HSEP 601	Foundations in Emergency Management	3
Approved 500- or 600-level graduate course in homeland security and emergency preparedness or an approved graduate elective		3
Open electives		9
Term Hours:		15
Fifth year		
Fall semester		
HSEP 623	Research Methods Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness	3
HSEP 628	Survey of Cyber Security	3
HSEP 640	Intelligence and Counterintelligence	3
Approved 600-level graduate course in homeland security and emergency preparedness or an approved graduate elective		3
Term Hours:		12
Spring semester		
HSEP 650	Public Health Preparedness	3
HSEP 690	Capstone Seminar	3
Approved 600-level graduate course in homeland security and emergency preparedness or an approved graduate elective		3
Term Hours:		12

Accelerated B.S. and M.P.A.

The accelerated B.S. and M.P.A. program allows qualified students to earn both the B.S. in Criminal Justice and Master of Public Administration in a minimum of five years by completing approved graduate courses during the senior year of their undergraduate program. Note: Students with a concentration in forensic crime scene investigation are not eligible to participate in the accelerated opportunity. Students in the program may count up to 12 hours of graduate courses toward both the B.S. and M.P.A. degrees. Thus, the two degrees may be earned with a minimum of 144 or 147 credits rather than the 156 or 159 credits necessary if the two degrees are pursued separately.

Students holding these degrees are prepared for effective careers in public service related to criminal justice policy, especially forensic crime scene investigation, by broadening and refining their understanding of criminal justice and organizational and management issues. Students become prepared to apply theory to practice as professional public managers, public officials and citizens who are able to meet the challenges of public service in both government and nonprofit sectors and serve the profession and local, state, federal and international communities.

Entrance to the accelerated program

Interested undergraduate students should consult with their adviser as early as possible to receive specific information about the accelerated program, determine academic eligibility and submit (no later than two semesters prior to graduating with a baccalaureate degree, that is, before the end of the spring semester of their junior year) an Accelerated Program Declaration Form to be approved by the graduate program director. Limited spaces may be available in the accelerated program. Academically qualified students may not receive approval if capacity has been reached.

Minimum qualifications for admittance to the program include completion of 90 undergraduate credit hours including CRJS 181, CRJS 253, CRJS 254, CRJS 320, CRJS 355, CRJS 370, CRJS 373 and CRJS 380; an overall GPA of 3.0 and a GPA of 3.5 in criminal justice course work. Successful applicants would enter the program in the semester following completion of their 90th credit hour.

Once enrolled in the accelerated program, students must meet the standards of performance applicable to graduate students as described in the "Satisfactory academic progress (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/satisfactory-academic-progress/>)" section of the Graduate Bulletin, including maintaining a 3.0 GPA. Guidance to students in an accelerated program is provided by both the undergraduate criminal justice adviser and the faculty adviser to the Master of Public Administration program.

Admission to the graduate program

Entrance to the accelerated program enables the student to take the approved shared courses that will apply to the undergraduate and graduate degrees. However, entry into an accelerated program via an approved Accelerated Program Declaration Form does not constitute application or admission into the graduate program. Admission to the graduate program requires a separate step that occurs through a formal application. In order to continue pursuing the master's degree after the baccalaureate degree is conferred, accelerated students must follow the admission to graduate study requirements outlined in the VCU Bulletin.

One of the required reference letters must be from a criminal justice faculty member.

Degree requirements

The Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice degree will be awarded upon completion of a minimum of 120 credits and the satisfactory completion of all undergraduate degree requirements as stated in the Undergraduate Bulletin.

A maximum of 12 graduate credits may be taken prior to completion of the baccalaureate degree. These graduate credits substitute for upper-level electives for the undergraduate degree. These courses are shared credits with the graduate program, meaning that they will be applied to both undergraduate and graduate degree requirements.

The graduate public administration courses that may be taken as an undergraduate, once a student is admitted to the program, are 12 credits from the following:

Course	Title	Hours
PADM 601	Introduction to Public Service and Administration	3
PADM 602	Critical and Creative Thinking for Public Managers	3
PADM 607	Public Human Resource Management	3
PADM 623	Applied Research Methods	3
PADM 650	Principles of Nonprofit Management	3

Recommended course sequence/plan of study

What follows is the recommended plan of study for students interested in the accelerated program beginning in the fall of the junior year prior to admission to the accelerated program in the senior year.

Course	Title	Hours
Junior year		
Fall semester		
	Criminal justice elective (upper-level)	3
	Open electives	12
	Term Hours:	15
Spring semester		
CRJS 355	Criminological Theory	3
CRJS 380	Research Methods in Criminal Justice	3
	Criminal justice electives (upper-level)	6
	Open elective	3
	Term Hours:	15
Senior year		
Fall semester		
CRJS 335	Ethics and Decision-making in Criminal Justice	3
PADM 601	Introduction to Public Service and Administration	3
PADM 602	Critical and Creative Thinking for Public Managers	3
	Criminal justice elective (upper-level)	3
	Open elective	3
	Term Hours:	15
Spring semester		

CRJS 480	Senior Seminar	3
PADM 607	Public Human Resource Management	3
PADM 623	Applied Research Methods	3
Open electives		5
Term Hours:		14
Fifth year		
Fall semester		
PADM 609	Financial Management in Government	3
PADM 624	Empirical Analysis for Evidence-Based Governance	3
PADM 625	Policy Insights: Assessing Public Policies	3
Graduate elective (select 500- or 600-level from CRJS, GVPA, HSEP, URSP)		3
Term Hours:		12
Spring semester		
PADM 689	Capstone: Bridging Theory and Practice	3
GVPA 693	Internship (if required)	0-3
Graduate electives (select 500- or 600-level from CRJS, GVPA, HSEP, URSP)		9
Term Hours:		12 or 15

Accelerated B.S. and M.S.

The accelerated B.S. and M.S. program allows qualified students to earn both the B.S. and M.S. in Criminal Justice in a minimum of five years by completing approved graduate courses during the senior year of their undergraduate program. Students in the program may count up to six hours of graduate courses toward both the B.S. and M.S. degrees. Thus, the two degrees may be earned with a minimum of 144 credits rather than the 150 credits necessary if the two degrees are pursued separately.

Students holding these degrees are prepared for effective careers in criminal justice, forensic crime scene investigation, public service and other related professions by broadening and refining their understanding of criminal justice and criminological issues. Students learn to critically analyze criminal justice and criminological research, discuss criminal justice issues and policies using evidence from empirical studies, and frame major issues related to the field in diverse sociocultural contexts.

Entrance to the accelerated program

Interested undergraduate students should consult with their adviser as early as possible to receive specific information about the accelerated program, determine academic eligibility and submit (no later than two semesters prior to graduating with a baccalaureate degree, that is, before the end of the spring semester of their junior year) an Accelerated Program Declaration Form to be approved by the graduate program director. Limited spaces may be available in the accelerated program. Academically qualified students may not receive approval if capacity has been reached.

Minimum qualifications for entrance to this accelerated program include completion of 90 undergraduate credit hours including CRJS 355 and CRJS 380, an overall minimum GPA of 3.5 and a minimum GPA of 3.5 in criminal justice course work. Additionally, one of the required reference letters must be from a criminal justice faculty member. Successful applicants would enter the program in the semester following completion of their 90th credit hour.

Once enrolled in the accelerated program, students must meet the standards of performance applicable to graduate students as described in the "Satisfactory academic progress (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/satisfactory-academic-progress/>)" section of the Graduate Bulletin, including maintaining a 3.0 GPA. Students who do not maintain a 3.0 GPA in the graduate-level classes will no longer be eligible for the accelerated program and may not take any additional graduate-level classes while pursuing the bachelor's degree. Students will not begin their first semester of only graduate courses until the bachelor's degree has been conferred. Guidance to students admitted to the accelerated program is provided by both the Wilder School undergraduate academic advisor and the senior academic adviser from Graduate Student Services and Advising.

Admission to the graduate program

Entrance to the accelerated program enables the student to take the approved shared courses that will apply to the undergraduate and graduate degrees. However, entry into an accelerated program via an approved Accelerated Program Declaration Form does not constitute application or admission into the graduate program. Admission to the graduate program requires a separate step that occurs through a formal application to the master's program, which is submitted through Graduate Admissions no later than a semester prior to graduation with the baccalaureate degree, that is, before the end of the fall semester of the senior year. In order to continue pursuing the master's degree after the baccalaureate degree is conferred, accelerated students must follow the admission to graduate study requirements outlined in the VCU Bulletin. Three reference letters are required with one of the letters coming from a criminal justice faculty member.

Degree requirements

The Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice degree will be awarded upon completion of a minimum of 120 credits and the satisfactory completion of all undergraduate degree requirements as stated in the Undergraduate Bulletin.

A maximum of six graduate credits may be taken prior to completion of the baccalaureate degree. These graduate credits substitute for the upper-level electives for the undergraduate degree. These courses are shared credits with the graduate program, meaning that they will be applied to both undergraduate and graduate degree requirements.

The graduate criminal justice courses that may be taken as an undergraduate, once a student is admitted to the program, are a choice of two of the following:

Course	Title	Hours
CRJS 501	Principles of Criminal Justice	3
CRJS 550	Professional Ethics and Liability	3
CRJS 620	Seminar in Criminology	3

Recommended course sequence/plan of study

What follows is the recommended plan of study for students interested in the accelerated program beginning in the fall of the junior year prior to admission to the accelerated program in the senior year.

Course	Title	Hours
Junior year		
Fall semester		
CRJS 380	Research Methods in Criminal Justice	3

Criminal justice elective (upper-level)	3
Open electives	9
Term Hours:	15
Spring semester	
CRJS 475 Criminal Procedure	3
Criminal justice elective (upper-level)	3
Open electives	9
Term Hours:	15
Senior year	
Fall semester	
CRJS 480 Senior Seminar	3
CRJS 501 Principles of Criminal Justice	3
or CRJS 550 Professional Ethics and Liability	
or CRJS 620 Seminar in Criminology	
Electives	9
Term Hours:	15
Spring semester	
CRJS 501 Principles of Criminal Justice	3
or CRJS 550 Professional Ethics and Liability	
or CRJS 620 Seminar in Criminology	
Electives	12
Term Hours:	15
Fifth year	
Fall semester	
CRJS 617 Law and Criminal Justice Policy	3
CRJS 623 Applied Research Methods	3
Graduate criminal justice electives	6
Term Hours:	12
Spring semester	
CRJS 690 Criminal Justice Policy Analysis	3
Graduate criminal justice electives	9
Term Hours:	12