



Criminal Justice

University of North Dakota.



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GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

MASTER'S IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE STUDIES

This handbook is designed for prospective and current graduate students as a quick-reference resource guide. It is organized based on how far a student has progressed through the program (prospective, admitted, first year, second year). To keep the document brief and reduce redundancy with existing information, hyperlinks are used frequently. Note, this handbook is *not* designed to be a policy and procedures manual, but rather as a general guide for students progressing through the program. This document is best viewed electronically.

Use **CTRL+F** to quickly search for specific content.



Suggested Readings:

Ahlin, E. M., & Atkin-Plunk, C. (2020). From supporting role to front stage: Shining a spotlight on the programmatic features and experiences of master's degree programs in criminology and criminal justice. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*, 31(4), 563-579.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10511253.2020.1819358>

Cullen, F. T., & Vose, B. (2014). How to be a successful graduate student. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 30(4), 362-377.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1043986214541603>

Mitchell, P., Bradbury, M. D., Marcum, C. D., & Schmalleger, F. (2019). *A guide to graduate school success for criminal justice, public safety, & administration of justice students*. Cognella. <https://titles.cognella.com/a-guide-to-graduate-school-success-for-criminal-justice-public-safety-and-administration-of-justice-students-9781516521319>

***A limited number of free copies of this book (digital or physical) are available, contact me at email below if interested!**

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PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

IS GRADUATE SCHOOL RIGHT FOR YOU?

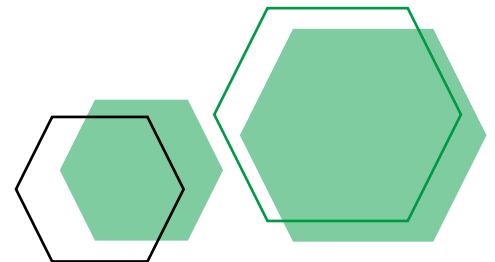
As Patricia Mitchell and colleagues note in their 2018 *Guide to Graduate School Success for Criminal Justice, Public Safety, & Administration of Justice Students*, deciding to pursue a graduate degree is an individual decision and only you know what is best. They suggest considering the following points (as seen on p. 7).

- Are you able to submit a strong application?
- Do you have the time and patience to dedicate to graduate school?
- Will it financially benefit you in the long run?
- Will it help you meet your career goals?

For more on UND's Master of Science in Criminal Justice Studies (MSCJS) degree, visit the [Program Finder webpage](#). UND allows prospective students to [estimate their tuition and fees online](#). Visit the [UND School of Graduate Studies webpage](#) for additional information on financial aid, funding, assistantships, and scholarship opportunities. *Note, currently the Department of Criminal Justice is unable to offer tuition waivers or paid assistantships.*

Important Links:

- [Department of Criminal Justice admission requirements](#)
- [School of Graduate Studies admission requirements](#)
- [Apply Here!](#)
 - Deadline of August 1st for Fall and December 1st for Spring (with priority given to applications completed by April 15th for Fall and October 30th for Spring)
 - Note, UND does not offer waivers for the application fee.
- For questions about the admissions process or application, contact und.gradschooladmissions@UND.edu
- For questions about the MSCJS program, contact the [graduate director](#).



ADMITTED STUDENTS*

JUST ACCEPTED, NOW WHAT?

Congratulations on getting accepted into the program! The UND School of Graduate Studies has provided a convenient [Admitted Student Checklist](#) that will walk you through everything you must do prior to the start of the semester.

1. [Claim Your NDUS Account](#)
2. [Complete the Financial Obligation Agreement](#)
3. [Submit the Mandatory Immunizations TB Screening Form](#)
4. [Complete Orientation](#)
5. [Enroll in Classes](#)
6. [Check your UND Email](#)
7. [Get your student ID card](#)
8. [And more](#)

In addition to the School of Graduate Studies online orientation, new students are encouraged to join the Department of Criminal Justice Faculty for a departmental meet and greet on Thursday, August 22nd at 4:00pm CT before the semester starts. An invitation will be sent out by the graduate director via email. All new and current MSCJS graduate students are free to join in-person or online for this event.

*Looking to defer enrollment to a later semester? Submit a [Move Admission Request](#).



THE FIRST YEAR

STARTING YOUR GRADUATE JOURNEY!

Recommended Course Enrollment: The following courses, as displayed in Tables 1 and 2, are recommended for primarily for Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 for first-year graduate students, with exception to CJ 995 (for past cohorts refer to the prior version of this handbook that matches your starting semester). Students may enroll in other graduate-level courses for electives outside the department with consultation of the [graduate director](#) (see list of suggestions in Table 3 at the bottom of p. 6). Note, Figure 1 shows a complete two-year plan. *Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 to remain in good academic standing.*

Table 1: Fall 2024 Criminal Justice Department Scheduled Course Offerings

| Course | Title | Sections | Instructor | Days/Times |
|------------------------|--|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| CJ 501 | <i>Foundations in Crime and Criminal Justice</i> | 22312 (in-person)* | Rachel | Thursdays |
| | | 22320 (online) | Jordan | (6:00-8:30pm CT) |
| CJ 503 | <i>Research Methods in Criminal Justice</i> | 28191 (in-person)* | Adam | Wednesdays |
| | | 28192 (online) | Matz | (6:00-8:30pm CT) |
| CJ 540 | [Elective] <i>Seminar in Criminal Justice Policy (Gender and Crime)</i> | 28193 (in-person)* | Ashley | Tuesdays |
| | | 28194 (online) | Fansher | (6:00-8:30pm CT) |

Table 2: Spring 2025 Criminal Justice Department Scheduled Course Offerings

| Course | Title | Sections | Instructor | Days/Times |
|------------------------|--|------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| CJ 504 | <i>Visualization and Interpretation of Criminal Justice Data</i> | TBA (in-person)* | Jon | TBA |
| | | TBA (online) | Maskály | (6:00-8:30pm CT) |
| CJ 565 | [Elective] <i>Victimology</i> | TBA (in-person)* | Wendelin | TBA |
| | | TBA (online) | Hume | (6:00-8:30pm CT) |
| CJ 995 | [2 nd year students] <i>Scholarly Project</i> | TBA (in-person)* | Meghan | TBA |
| | | TBA (online) | Mitchell | (6:00-8:30pm CT) |

Note. For a complete list of course offerings and descriptions for this program, see the [Academic Catalog](#). Course scheduling subject to change, check [Campus Connection](#) for latest information.

*Classes are held in O’Kelly Conference Rm 231 unless otherwise specified by a given course instructor.

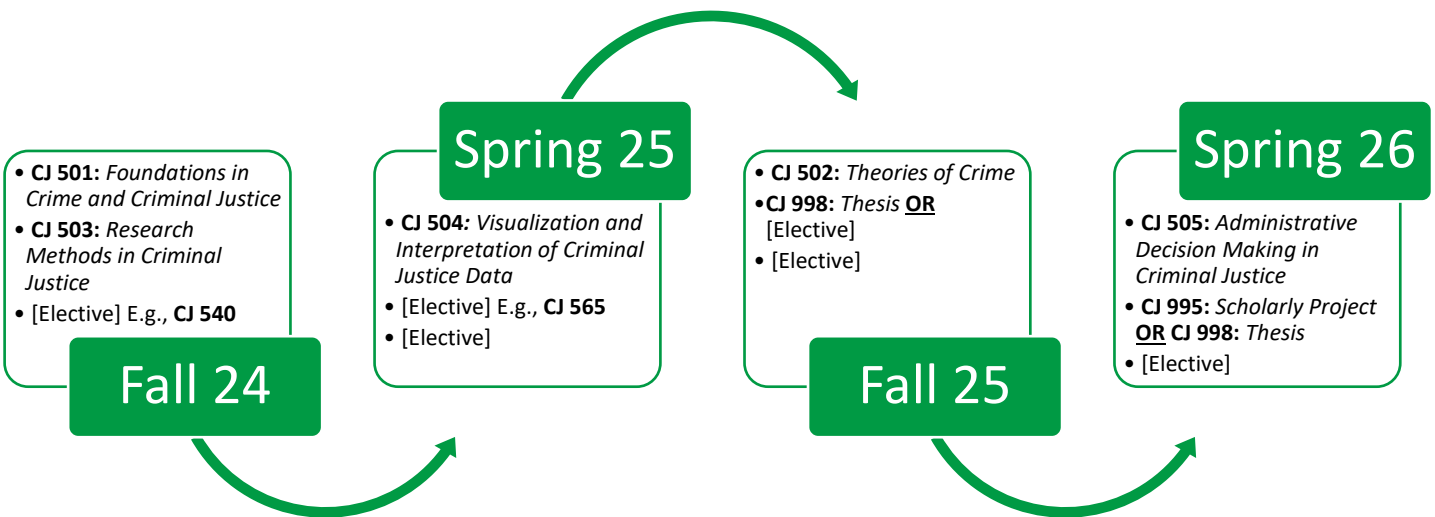


Figure 1. Sample program timeline.

THE FIRST YEAR

STARTING YOUR GRADUATE JOURNEY!

(Continued)

Program of Study: In consultation with the [graduate director](#), complete the [Program of Study](#) form by the conclusion of your 2nd semester ([see additional directions](#)). The following considerations pertain to the completion of this form.

- a. **Transfer Credits:** Up to nine credits of transfer may be accepted toward the degree. For more information see [Transfer of Graduate Credits](#) under [Academic Policies and Procedures](#). Transfer credits must be identified on the [Program of Study](#).
- b. **Cognate/Minor Requirements:** There are no Cognate or Minor requirements for this program.
- c. **Determine Thesis or Non-Thesis (Scholarly Project).**
 - **If Non-Thesis/Scholarly Project:** Must enroll in [CJ 995](#) (3 credits) during your second Spring semester, as well as complete one additional elective (3 credits). On the [Program of Study](#), the graduate director will also serve as the advisor.
 - **If Thesis:** Student must identify an advisor from the Department of Criminal Justice graduate faculty and two additional committee members (see also Figure 2 below).
 - **Thesis Advisor:** Identify a thesis advisor from among the Department of Criminal Justice graduate faculty, as listed below. It is recommended that students consider what focal area of criminal justice most matches their research interests, as well as potential research questions, and then match those interests with a compatible faculty member (consider reviewing past theses through the [UND Chester Fritz Library](#)). Review faculty expertise using the UND directory (as linked below). Once a suitable advisor is located, contact them to schedule a meeting to discuss your prospective thesis.
 - [Dr. Ashley Fansher](#)
 - [Dr. Wendelin Hume](#)
 - [Dr. Lavinia Iancu](#)
 - [Dr. Roni Mayzer](#)
 - [Dr. Jon Maskály](#)
 - [Dr. Adam K. Matz](#)
 - [Dr. Meghan Mitchell](#)
 - **Committee Members:** Select two additional thesis committee members. The two committee members may be from among the criminal justice graduate faculty (listed above) but may also include graduate faculty outside of the department. A member-at-large is not a requirement for a thesis committee (per Academic Policies and Procedures on Faculty Advisor and Committee Appointments located in the [Academic Catalog](#)). It is recommended students select their committee members in consultation with their thesis advisor.
- d. Important dates and deadlines for each semester are available on the [Academic Calendar](#).
- e. For UND undergraduate students admitted to the 4+1 accelerated track, an [Accelerated/Combined Program of Study](#) form must be completed.
- f. Any changes to the [Program of Study](#) should be completed using the [Change Form](#).

THE FIRST YEAR

STARTING YOUR GRADUATE JOURNEY!

(Continued)

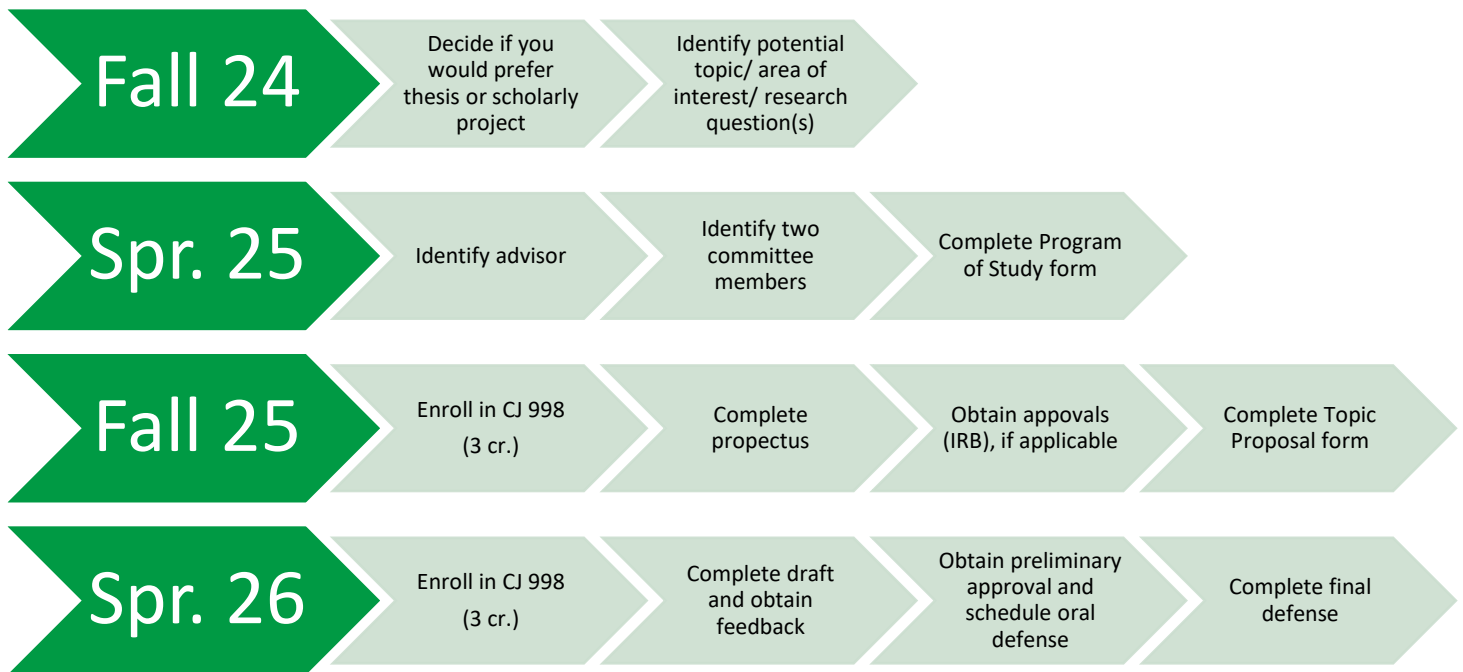


Figure 2. Suggested timeline and milestones for thesis completion.

Table 3: Examples of Suitable Electives from Outside of the Department of Criminal Justice

| Counseling Psychology | Political Science | Psychology | Public Health | Social Work | Sociology |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| COUN 504 <i>Foundations of Counseling</i> | POLS 532 <i>Public Policy</i> | PSYC 521 <i>Diversity Psychology</i> | PH 504 <i>Public Health Management...</i> | SWK 560 <i>Topics of Social Work Practice</i> | SOC 538 <i>Seminar in Social Problems</i> |
| COUN 529 <i>Dynamics of Addiction</i> | POLS 551 <i>Health Administration...</i> | PSCY 524 <i>Psychology and Law</i> | PH 551 <i>Epidemiology</i> | | SOC 539 <i>Seminar in Sociology</i> |
| COUN 532 <i>Multicultural Counseling</i> | POLS 552 <i>Health Policy</i> | | PH 582 <i>Social & Ecological Determinants of Indigenous Health</i> | | SOC 540 <i>Seminar in Social Policy</i> |
| COUN 537 <i>Trauma and Crisis Counseling</i> | | | PH 583 <i>American Indian Health Policy</i> | | |

THE SECOND YEAR

FINISHING YOUR DEGREE!

Recommended Course Enrollment: Must also enroll in [CJ 998](#) or [CJ 995](#) (Spring) during second year, along with any remaining required course or electives needed. **Must complete minimum of 30 credits to graduate.** Any remaining credits may consist of CJ electives or relevant graduate-level electives from another college/department (should be approved by [graduate director](#) and appear on [Program of Study](#); use [Change Form](#) to update if needed).

If Non-Thesis/Scholarly Project: Must enroll in [CJ 995](#) during second spring semester (Spring 2026).

If Thesis: Enroll in [CJ 998](#) (3 credits) during the Fall of 2025 and Spring of 2026 semesters for a total of 6 credits.

- a. During the third semester (Fall 2025).
 - **Prospectus and Topic Proposal:** In consultation with thesis advisor, develop a draft of the first three chapters of the thesis including introduction/statement of the problem, review of the literature, and project design/methodology/analysis plan (review [Style Guide from the School of Graduate Studies](#)). With advisor's approval, conduct an oral prospectus defense with the committee. With the committee's approval, obtain required approval for human subjects research from the [UND Institutional Review Board](#) (IRB) (see Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee [[IACUC](#)] for animal research or Institutional Biosafety Committee [[IBC](#)] for biohazardous material), if applicable. Once approvals are received, complete the [Topic Proposal](#) form. *This form must be completed the semester prior to the semester in which the student intends to graduate.*
- b. During the fourth/final semester (Spring 2026).
 - See [Thesis and Dissertation Support](#) from the School of Graduate Studies. In addition, consider the following.
 - **Timeline Considerations/Recommendations:** Allow adequate time for your advisor to review a draft of the thesis (2-4 weeks). In addition, expect at least one month for your committee to review your thesis prior to attempting to schedule a date for the final defense. Given faculty schedules often conflict, however, be sure to set the schedule as soon as possible once the committee indicates they are comfortable proceeding. Note, the [Preliminary Approval and Notice of Defense](#) form must be submitted two weeks prior to the scheduled oral defense (typically mid-April/November at the latest). See the [Academic Calendar](#) for specific deadlines.
 - **If Unable to Complete the Thesis on Time:** In addition to Spring, Summer (August) graduation is an option, if progress on the thesis is delayed, contingent on faculty availability. Excluding summers, [CJ 996 Continuing Enrollment](#) credits allow students to stay enrolled in the program while finishing their thesis. According to the School of Graduate Studies, 6-9 credits for two semesters is the maximum allowed for master's students.

Students must Apply for Graduation: The deadline for students to apply for Fall graduation is the end of September. For a Spring graduation it is mid-February (see [Academic Calendar](#) for exact deadlines).

Other Recommendations: Students are encouraged to participate in UND's [Graduate Research Achievement Day](#) (GRAD) and/or [Three Minute Thesis](#) (3MT) opportunities to further showcase their thesis or scholarly project! Presentations at academic conferences such as the annual meetings of the [Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences](#) (ACJS) or [American Society of Criminology](#) (ASC) are also highly encouraged!



APPENDIX

OTHER LINKS, FORMS, AND NOTABLE INFORMATION

Links to UND Resources and Policies

- a. [Academic Catalog](#)
- b. [Code of Student Life](#)
- c. [Equal Opportunity & Title IX](#) (for questions and reporting on safety, violence, discrimination, harassment, disability support)
- d. [Graduate Academic Calendar](#)
- e. [International Student & Scholar Services](#) ([International Student Handbook](#))
- f. [Policies on Misconduct in Scholarship](#)
- g. [Office of the Registrar](#) (for information on course enrollment, grades, and more)
- h. [Office of Community Standards](#)
- i. [Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs](#)
- j. [Scholarship Central](#) (visit here to sign up for scholarship opportunities from UND!)
- k. [State Board of Higher Education Policies](#) (North Dakota University System)
- l. [University Counseling Center](#)

Links to UND School of Graduate Studies Resources and Policies

- a. [Academic Grievance Policies](#)
- b. [Academic Policies and Procedures](#)
- c. [Admission Policies and Procedures](#)
- d. [Degrees and Degree Requirements](#)
- e. [Handbooks, Forms, and Resources](#) (see Arts & Sciences section for forms such as [Leave of Absence](#) and [Program Withdrawal](#))
- f. [School of Graduate Studies Information](#)
- g. [Standards of Professional Conduct](#) (Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0, a [GPA Calculator](#) is available).
- h. [School of Graduate Studies Webpage](#)

Other Links

- a. [Careers Opportunities at UND](#) (see [Student Jobs](#) here for graduate research assistant opportunities from various faculty)
- b. [College of Arts & Sciences Webpage](#)
- c. [Department of Criminal Justice Webpage](#)
- d. [Grand Forks Visitor Website](#) (learn more about the city of Grand Forks here!)
- e. [Laura Bassi Scholarship](#) (funding opportunity outside of UND for editorial assistance on thesis)



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