

Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

Program: Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Criminal Justice (250)

School of Social Sciences and Applied Programs

College of Arts and Sciences

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Northwestern State University Mission. Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to acquiring, creating, and disseminating knowledge through innovative teaching, research, and service. With its certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs, Northwestern State University prepares its increasingly diverse student population to contribute to an inclusive global community with a steadfast dedication to improving our region, state, and nation.

College of Arts and Sciences' Mission. College of Arts and Sciences' Mission. The College of Arts & Sciences, the largest college at Northwestern State University, is a diverse community of scholars, teachers, and students, working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. The college strives to produce graduates who are productive members of society equipped with the capability to promote economic and social development and improve the overall quality of life in the region. The college provides an unequaled undergraduate education in the social and behavioral sciences, English, communication, journalism, media arts, biological and physical sciences, and the creative and performing arts, and at the graduate level in the creative and performing arts, English, TESOL, and Homeland Security. Uniquely, the college houses the Louisiana Scholars' College (the state's designated Honors College), the Louisiana Folklife Center, and the Creole Center, demonstrating its commitment to community service, research, and preservation of Louisiana's precious resources.

School of Social Sciences and Applied Programs. The School of Social Sciences and Applied Programs at Northwestern State University is dedicated to the development of students for roles in academic, leadership, professional, and research careers in the challenging fields of criminal justice, history, public safety, law, and public service. Utilizing transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service, the school produces graduates equipped to be productive members of society and a driving force in the economic development and improvement of the overall quality of life in the region. The school delivers Bachelor of Arts degrees in Criminal Justice and History and Bachelor of Science degrees in Unified Public Safety Administration with concentrations in Law Enforcement Administration, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services Administration, Emergency Management Administration, and Public Facilities Management. Certificate programs in Pre-Law and Paralegal Studies and Public Policy and Administration are also available in addition to a Pre-law and Paralegal Studies concentration and minor. The department also delivers a Master of Science degree in Homeland Security and a Post-Master's certificate in Global Security and Intelligence.

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Criminal Justice Program Mission Statement: The mission of the Criminal Justice Program is to provide the perfect environment for the development of comprehensive knowledge and skills for students with a focus on our local, state, and national systems of justice. Our purpose is to challenge students to integrate critical thinking, decision-making skills, and acceptance of different cultures and peoples while seeking appropriate answers for criminal justice system issues within local, state, national, and global venues. This will be accomplished within an atmosphere that encourages a commitment to the highest standards of integrity, ethics, and values, both in the educational setting and the professional world. Within this foundation, the goal of the program is to educate criminal justice professionals to fit well into entry-level positions with the requisite skills and knowledge to move smoothly for advancement within their chosen professions.

Purpose: The bachelor program will teach the requisite knowledge and skills for committed students to succeed in criminal justice careers. This program prepares students for entry positions in law enforcement, corrections, probation and parole, and other legal concentrations. The program will focus on a comprehensive understanding of the field of criminal justice and the role of each graduate's position of authority, persuasion, and influence within it. It will also prepare interested students for the pursuit of further advanced degrees in Homeland Security, Political Science, Strategic Leadership, International Relations, and Law at other institutions.

Methodology: The assessment process for the BA in criminal justice program is as follows:

- (1) Data from assessment tools (both direct – indirect, quantitative, and qualitative) are collected and returned to the program coordinator.
- (2) The program coordinator will analyze the data to determine whether students have met measurable outcomes.
- (3) Results from the assessment will be discussed with the program faculty.
- (4) Individual meetings will be held with faculty teaching core graduate courses if required.
- (5) The Program Coordinator, in consultation with the Criminal Justice Advisory Council, will propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period, and, where needed, curricula and program changes.

Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO 1. First, second, and third-semester students will be able to describe the historical evolution and context of early American criminal justice (CJ), policing and court process developments and challenges, and the status of these systems within local, state, and federal government, including 21st-century challenges within the international and global communities.

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Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

CJ 1100: INTRODUCTION TO CRIMINAL JUSTICE

CJ 2300: POLICE PROCESS

CJ 2400: ADJUDICATION PROCESS

Measure 1.1. (Direct – knowledge): On an annual basis, students enrolled in CJ 1100, CJ 2300, and CJ 2400, all required courses for the CJ bachelor (BA) degree, will be administered course exams containing a module of questions taken from a bank developed by faculty responsible for each course. These question banks are created and revised based on criteria developed by the Criminal Justice Advisory Council (CJA Council) and are designed to evaluate the students' knowledge and understanding of the foundational concepts, theories, strategies, and challenges of criminal justice, policing, and courts from early America through current international and globalization challenges. Seventy-five percent (75%) of enrolled students will be able to demonstrate an understanding and comprehension of the course subject matter by scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on each of the exams.

Findings: The target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met with ninety-four percent (94%) of the students scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on their exams. Some of the 2023-2024 changes contributing to this success were as follows: 1) Coordinator hosted summer 2023 meetings with faculty to discuss course specific changes. 2) Faculty implemented experiential learning videos, covering contemporary issues in criminal justice. 3) CJ 1100 piloted OER in the spring of 2024.

Based on the analysis of AC 2023-2024 results, the faculty made the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. Discussions with faculty led to the target being raised for the current year. The target was raised from seventy-five percent (75%) of enrolled students to eighty (80%) of enrolled students, demonstrating an understanding and comprehension of the course subject matter by scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on each of the exams. The Criminal Justice Coordinator met with the faculty separately during the summer of 2024, discussing course improvements to help students understand key course concepts.

As a result of these changes in AC 2024-2025, the target was met with 87.25% of students scoring 70% or higher on their exams.

Decision: In AC 2024-2025, the target was met. This target has been met for the last several cycles. Based on the analysis of AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. The target will remain at 80% for AC 2025-2026. Given the success of the coordinator and faculty meetings, we will enhance this practice in the upcoming cycle. During the meeting with the coordinator, the faculty will discuss implementation of specific experiential-learning assignments that can be used in this measure as well as in measure 1.2 (see below), building upon the already successful numbers and allowing for a more granular analysis

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of learning objectives covered under this SLO. These changes will improve the department's ability to assess the students' knowledge of the history, process, and evolution of the criminal justice system. The integration of experiential learning assignments will improve the students' foundational knowledge and efficacy in their future career path.

Measure 1.2. (Direct – Skill / Ability): Students will demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving skills through a course project/writing requirement in which they are required to research and submit a written research project for each course. This research project is responsive to the research project requirements developed by the faculty responsible for the course and will evaluate the students' knowledge and understanding of the foundational concepts, theories, strategies, and challenges of criminal justice, policing, or courts, and meet the requirements set for the research project. Seventy-five percent (75%) of enrolled students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the subject matter of the project by scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on that semester project.

Findings: The target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met with eighty-nine percent (89%) of the students scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on the semester projects in the various classes. In AC 2022-2023, the target was met, with eighty percent (80%) of students scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on the semester project. Some of the 2023-2024 changes contributing to this success were as follows: 1) Faculty in the classes used scaffolding assignments, ensuring students' awareness of expectations and progress toward the semester project. 2) Several classes used short writing assignments as prep to help students better communicate their understanding of the key concepts.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results, as well as those of AC 2022-2023, the faculty made the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. The Criminal Justice Coordinator met with the faculty separately during the summer of 2024 to discuss how each class can improve student understanding and performance in this SLO. The faculty enhanced and implemented more scaffolding assignments and detailed assignment guidelines and expectations earlier in the course.

As a result of the changes in AC 2024-2025, the target was met with 82.5% of enrolled students demonstrating an understanding of the subject matter by scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on that semester project.

Decision: In AC 2024-2025, the target was met. This target has been met for the last several cycles. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 assessment results, the faculty will implement the following changes to drive the cycle of improvement in AC 2025-2026. The Criminal Justice Coordinator will meet with the faculty separately during the summer of 2025 to discuss how each class can improve student understanding and performance of this SLO. Given the success of the coordinator and faculty meetings, we will enhance this practice in the upcoming cycle. During the meeting with the coordinator, the faculty will discuss implementation of specific experiential learning assignments that can be used in this measurement and measure 1.1 (see above), building upon the already

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successful numbers and allowing for a more granular analysis of learning objectives covered under this SLO. These changes will improve the department's ability to assess the students' ability to synthesize complex research topics. The integration of experiential learning assignments will improve the student's foundational knowledge, preparing them to apply the knowledge in the final project and beyond.

SLO 2. Fourth, fifth, and sixth-semester students will know and understand the philosophies and sciences of the CJ system as well as the structures, roles, and functions of the various organizations and agencies comprising the criminal justice system. This includes law enforcement, corrections, and courts, the processes and challenges involved in each, and the inter-component relationships, checks and balances, constitutional issues, and problems and ethical challenges associated with navigating the agencies within this system.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

CJ 2500: CORRECTIONS PROCESS

CJ 2600: INTRODUCTION TO CRIMINALISTICS AND FORENICS

CJ 3040: CRIMINOLOGY, FOUNDATIONS, AND PUNISHMENTS

CJ 3090: JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND JUSTICE

CJ 3355: CULTURAL COMPETENCE FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROFESSIONALS

CJ 3360: CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION

CJ 3380: CRIMINAL JUSTICE ETHICS

Measure 2.1. (Direct – knowledge): On an annual basis, students enrolled in CJ 2500, CJ 3040, CJ 3090, CJ 3355, CJ 3360, and CJ 3380, all required courses for the CJ BA degree, will be administered course exams containing a module of questions taken from a bank developed by the faculty responsible for each course. These question banks are created using criteria developed by the CJA Council and are designed to evaluate the students' knowledge and understanding of the scientific study of criminal behavior and crime theories, strategies, foundations and punishment, the ethics and moral philosophy of criminal justice, and the processes of criminal investigations. Seventy-five percent (75%) of enrolled students will be able to demonstrate an understanding and comprehension of the course subject matter by scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on each of the exams.

Findings: The target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met with ninety percent (90%) of students scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on this measure. The faculty stated that students were successful in understanding and demonstrating various topics and ethical frameworks throughout the courses. The short answer questions on tests were essential in showing the faculty how the students were successfully analyzing and applying the foundational knowledge they learned during the course.

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Additionally, the target was met, in AC 2022-2023, with eighty-nine percent (89%) of students scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on this measure. This demonstrates consistent improvement in this measurement.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results, the faculty made the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. The faculty instituted more short answer questions in their chapter quizzes, enhancing the previous success in this area, to help prepare the students for the unit exams. CJ 2600 (Introduction to Criminalistics and Forensics) was added to the mandatory courses and thus became part of this SLO. Criminal Justice Coordinator met with the faculty member teaching CJ 2600 during the summer of 2025, reviewing the alignment of course objectives with SLO measurements. Faculty dedicated more lecture time to the historical perspectives of theory and related criminal justice processes. The faculty also incorporated experiential learning into their classes via mock labs, discussion, and analysis of contemporary criminal cases such as: USA v. McAlpin, No. 24-60181 (5th Cir. 2025), United States v. COMBS, 1:24-cr-00542, (S.D.N.Y.), and other major cases around the United States. These exercises and discussions helped students understand theory in action and apply their foundational knowledge directly to contemporary cases.

As a result of these changes, the target was met with 88% of students scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on this measure.

Decision: In AC 2024-2025, the target was met. This target has been met for the last several cycles. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024- 2025 assessment results, the faculty will implement the following changes, in AC 2025-2026, to drive the cycle of improvement. The Criminal Justice Coordinator will meet with faculty to enhance our success in this area. During the meeting, the faculty will discuss implementation of experiential-learning assignments, based on contemporary cases, that can be used across the courses in this measurement. As an example, students will engage with United States v. COMBS, 1:24-cr-00542, (S.D.N.Y.) in CJ 2500, CJ 3040, CJ 3355, CJ 3360, and CJ 3380. This offers the student to apply their knowledge of criminal justice to this case, gaining experience in sentencing determination, criminogenic variables, investigative procedures, as well as ethical and cultural variables intrinsic to this process.

Measure 2.2. (Direct – Skill / Ability): Students will demonstrate proficient written and oral research, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills through a research project/writing requirement in which they are required to research and submit a written research project and/or presentation for each course. This project is responsive to the course semester project requirements developed by the faculty responsible for each course. It will evaluate the students' knowledge and understanding of the foundational concepts, theories, strategies, and challenges of the corrections process, crime and punishment, juvenile delinquency and criminal justice, criminal investigation processes, or ethics in criminal justice. Seventy-five percent (75%) of enrolled students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the subject matter of the project by scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on that semester project.

Findings: The target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met with ninety-one percent (91%) of the

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students scoring seventy percent or higher on the semester projects in the various classes. The target was not met in AC 2022-2023 with seventy-four percent (74%) of students scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on this measure. Changes in 2023-2024 were related to providing more lectures and class materials related to APA style guidelines and research procedures.

Based on the analysis of AC 2023-2024 results, the faculty made the following changes, in 2024-2025, to drive the cycle of improvement. The faculty increased discourse and lectures related to digital literacy, helping students feel more comfortable with these platforms as compared to the face-to-face courses. Faculty included more media in course shells, finding new and alternative ways to offer students information on how to format, research, and cite information for projects. The faculty offered new links to citation pages as well as sites that help students format APA-style research papers. The faculty also included directives regarding AI usage in their syllabi to discourage usage in their semester projects.

As a result of the changes in AC 2024-2025, the target was met with ninety-one percent (91%) of the students scoring seventy percent or higher on the semester projects.

Decision: In AC 2024-2025, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 assessment results, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2025-2026, to drive the cycle of improvement. Building upon the already successful numbers, faculty will enhance the offerings related to digital literacy, style guides, and research procedures. A new digital literacy module, offered at the beginning of the course, will be tested in CJ 2400, CJ 2500, CJ 3380, and CJ 4250. This implementation across three SLOs will allow the department a more granular analysis of this skillset across multiple research-based SLO measurements. If the digital literacy module produces successful outcomes in these courses, the module will be offered to all courses within the School of Social Sciences and Applied Programs. These changes will improve the department's ability to assess the student's ability to conduct independent research and synthesize complex research topics. The integration of experiential learning assignments will improve the student's foundational knowledge, preparing them to apply the knowledge in the final project and beyond.

SLO 3. Sixth, seventh, and eighth-semester students will demonstrate that they understand the history, philosophy, theories, and evolution inherent to the study of

- (1) Community-based Corrections**
- (2) Drug Use in Modern Society**
- (3) The Purposes and Functions of Laws**
- (4) The Foundations, Limits, and Constitutional Considerations Affecting Criminal Evidence and Procedure during Criminal Processes**
- (5) The Court Decisions Interpreting Individual Rights in relation to Criminal Process**
- (6) Homeland Security**
- (7) The Imperatives of Race and Cultural Relations in Criminal Justice**

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Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

CJ 4250: COMMUNITY-BASED CORRECTIONS

CJ 4450: CRIMINAL LAW

CJ 4460: CRIMINAL EVIDENCE AND PROCEDURE

CJ 4475: HOMELAND SECURITY

CJ 4500: DRUG USE IN MODERN SOCIETY

PSCI 3090: CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

SOC 4080: RACE AND CULTURAL RELATIONS FOR PURE AND APPLIED SOCIOLOGY

Measure 3.1. (Direct – Knowledge / Attitude): On an annual basis, students enrolled in CJ 4250, CJ 4450, CJ 4460, CJ 4475, CJ 4500, PSCI 3090, and SOC 4080, all required courses for the CJ BA degree, will be administered course exams containing a module of questions taken from a bank developed by the faculty responsible for each course. These question banks are created using criteria developed by the CJA Council and are designed to evaluate the students' knowledge and understanding of the history, foundations, evolution, and purposes of community-based corrections, criminal law, criminal evidence and procedure, Constitutional decisions expanding and limiting criminal process, and drug use in modern society. Seventy-five percent (75%) of enrolled students will be able to demonstrate an understanding and comprehension of the course subject matter by scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on each of the exams.

Findings: The target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met with ninety-two percent (92%) of students scoring seventy percent (70%) or better on the exams in the various classes. This measure was also a success in AC 2022-2023 with ninety-seven percent (97%) of the students scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on this measure. In 2023-2024, faculty instituted multiple course redesigns to improve student outcomes. Discussion-based lectures, based on applied case studies, were added to multiple different courses to keep the students engaged in the material. The decision to raise the current percentage of seventy-five percent (75%) of students scoring seventy percent (70%) or better on the exams was not made for AC 2022-2023 or AC 2023-2024.

Based on the analysis of AC 2023-2024 results, the faculty made the following changes, in 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. The faculty incorporated various media to aid in the comprehension and appreciation of the subject matter in classes. The faculty enhanced video content related to theory and its application to criminal justice. The course stacking was eliminated in 2024-2025, although some faculty members still integrate face-to-face and online courses into real-time communication software such as Microsoft Teams, facilitating discussion between face-to-face and online students taking the same course.

As a result of the changes in AC 2024-2025, the target was met with ninety-five percent (92%) of students scoring seventy percent (70%) or better on the exams in the various classes.

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Decision: In AC 2024-2025, the target was met. This measurement has been met for the last several cycles. Based on the analysis of AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive improvement. There have been previous discussions regarding the decision to raise the current percentage of seventy-five percent (75%) of students scoring seventy percent (70%) or better on the exams. This decision was not made for AC 2022-2023 or AC 2023-2024, despite consistent markers of success. Rather than raising the percentage of this measurement, faculty will seek out a more granular analysis through experiential learning incorporated into courses across this SLO. This change will be like the changes being made in SLO 1.

The Criminal Justice Coordinator will meet with faculty to enhance our success in this area. During the meeting, the faculty will discuss implementation of experiential learning assignments, based on contemporary cases that can be used across the courses in this measurement. As an example, students will engage with *United States v. COMBS*, 1:24-cr-00542, (S.D.N.Y.) in CJ 4250, CJ 4450, CJ 4460, and CJ 4500. Through this engagement, students will improve their ability to apply their knowledge of criminal justice in designing a pre-sentence investigation, analyzing criminal evidence and process, and relating that information to knowledge of criminogenic variables as discussed in CJ 4500.

Measure 3.2. (Direct – Skill / Ability): Students will demonstrate proficient written and oral research, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills through a research project/writing requirement in which they are required to research and submit a written research project and/or presentation for the course. This project is responsive to the course semester project requirements developed by the faculty responsible for the course and will evaluate the students' knowledge and understanding of the foundational concepts, theories, strategies, and challenges of community-based corrections, criminal law, criminal evidence and procedure, race and cultural relations, and the Constitution and court decisions. Seventy-five percent (75%) of enrolled students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the subject matter of the project by scoring seventy-five percent (75%) or higher on the semester project.

Findings: The target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met with eighty-six percent (86%) of the students scoring seventy-five percent (75%) or higher on this measure. In AC 2022-2023, the target was met, with eighty-seven percent (87%) of the students scoring seventy-five percent (75%) or higher on this measure. This measurement has been consistently met for multiple consecutive cycles.

Based on the analysis of AC 2023-2024 results, the faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2024-2025. The faculty implemented various media into the classes to drive student engagement. The faculty separated the classes, eliminating stacked courses. The faculty spent more time on instruction for scaffolding assignments in class, ensuring comprehension of assignment expectations.

As a result of the changes in AC 2024-2025, the target was met with ninety-five percent (95%) of the students scoring seventy-five percent (75%) or higher on this measure.

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Decision: In AC 2024-2025, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 assessment results, the faculty will implement the following changes to drive the cycle of improvement in AC 2025-2026. The parameters of Measure 3.2 will not be changed. Previously, it was stated that this measurement would change to seventy-five percent (75%) of enrolled students being able to demonstrate an understanding of the subject matter of the project by scoring eighty percent (80%) or higher on the semester project. The measurement changes should drive the quantity of the whole toward success rather than driving the quality of a subset to a higher percentage. Thus, in 2025-2026, this measure will change to eighty percent (80%) of enrolled students being able to demonstrate an understanding of the subject matter of the project by scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on the semester project.

SLO 4. Students will demonstrate appropriate research skills and strategies and appropriate written and verbal communication skills.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

CJ 4200: INTRODUCTION TO CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESEARCH

Measure 4.1. (Direct-Skill/Ability/Knowledge): Students will demonstrate proficient written research, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills through a research project/writing requirement in which they are required to research and submit a written research project and presentation for this course. This project is responsive to the course semester project requirements developed by the faculty responsible for the course and will evaluate the students' knowledge and understanding of some aspects of foundational concepts, theories, strategies, and challenges of the corrections process, crime and punishment, juvenile delinquency and criminal justice, criminal investigation processes, criminal courts and law, criminal process, race and cultural relations, Homeland Security, or ethics in criminal justice. Several components will measure written communication skills on a scale from low proficiency to high proficiency. Seventy-five percent (75%) of enrolled students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the subject matter of the project and will demonstrate proficient research skills and strategies and writing skills. Proficiency will be demonstrated by a combined score of at least seventy-five percent (75%) or higher on the course rubric for the written requirements for the research project.

Findings: The target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2023-2024, the target was not met, with fifty-three percent (53%) of students scoring seventy-five percent (75%) or higher on this measure. Additionally, in AC 2022-2023, the target was not met, with sixty-three percent (63%) of students scoring seventy-five percent (75%) or higher on the semester project. In CJ 4200, the semester project required students to develop a research proposal based on a research question of their choosing. The proposal included four main components: an introduction outlining the topic and its relevance, a literature review summarizing existing research, a methodology section detailing how the study would be conducted, and a conclusion reflecting on the proposed research's significance and potential implications. The faculty provided in-depth lectures and class discussions along with videos explaining various extremely important concepts. The videos, past examples of

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students' research proposals, and other online websites to help with their learning of the content were used and available to the students prior to the authoring of their own proposals. However, there is significant room for improvement in this measurement. The students continued to struggle with the methods sections of the proposals.

Based on the analysis of AC 2023-2024 results, the faculty made the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty created and posted videos explaining various research methods and how to complete literature reviews. The faculty had the students present various research methods in class. Individual conversations with students played a key role in reducing their anxiety around writing the research proposal. After speaking with faculty, many students expressed that they felt more at ease and confident about the assignment. Additionally, the faculty instituted a new "Research Proposal Grading Rubric" that is detailed in the previous year's report.

As a result of the changes in AC 2024-2025 results, the target was met with 86% of the students receiving a score of 75% or higher on the rubric.

Decision: In AC 2024-2025, the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2024-2025, the faculty will implement the following changes to drive improvement in AC 2025-2026. Faculty will implement regular individual check-ins throughout the semester to address questions and provide guidance as they work through the project. The faculty will provide an enhanced and detailed outline of the expected structure and components of the proposal, which will offer clearer direction and reduce confusion. Additionally, the faculty member plans to reintroduce the methodology-focused discussion board so that students can receive both peer-to-peer feedback and guidance from me as they develop their research proposals.

Measure 4.2. (Direct – knowledge): On an annual basis, students enrolled in CJ 4200, a required course for the CJ degree, will be administered course exams containing a module of questions taken from a bank developed by the faculty responsible for the course. These question banks are created and revised based on criteria developed by the CJA Council. They are designed to evaluate the students' knowledge and understanding of research strategies, data collection techniques, and other analytical tools for research in criminology and criminal justice research. Seventy-five percent (75%) of enrolled students will be able to demonstrate an understanding and comprehension of the course subject matter by scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on each of the exams.

Findings: The target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met with ninety-seven percent (97%) of the students scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on each of the exams. The faculty broke down the larger topics into smaller units, which the students were better able to comprehend. The faculty member welcomed individual students into their office to give support and demonstration of topics individually to students who were struggling with qualitative and quantitative analysis. In AC 2022-2023, the target was also met, with

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ninety-two percent (92%) of students scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on this measure as students did well in grasping key concepts of this class.

Based on the analysis of AC 2023-2024 results, the faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2024-2025. The faculty offered more one-on-one time with the students, assisting students in understanding the key concepts. Faculty introduced various media and offered study guides to help the students focus on specific information discussed in class. The faculty member demonstrated in class how AI can be helpful in clarifying ideas or starting papers. The faculty highlighted the appropriate and inappropriate utilization of AI in this class.

As a result of the changes of AC 2024-2025, the target was met with ninety-six percent (96%) of the students scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on each of the exams.

Decision: In AC 2024-2025, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 assessment results, the faculty will implement the following changes to drive the cycle of improvement in AC 2025-2026. The faculty plan to incorporate recorded lectures to help students better understand key concepts and reinforce the material covered in the textbook. The faculty will also be adopting a more user-friendly textbook, which will make the content more accessible and enhance overall comprehension.

SLO 5. Students will demonstrate proficiency in knowledge and comprehension of criminal justice systems and be able to communicate that proficiency in written and oral form.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

CJ 4480: SENIOR SEMINAR IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE.

Measure 5.1. (Direct – Knowledge/Skill/Ability): In the eighth/final semester of this program, students enrolled in CJ 4480, a required course for the CJ BA degree, will demonstrate a proficient understanding of written research, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills through a research project/written/presentation requirement. The students are required to continue their research, which began in CJ 4200. The students are then required to submit their written research project with a final presentation at the conclusion of the semester. This requirement will evaluate the students' knowledge and understanding of some aspects of foundational concepts, theories, strategies, and challenges of the corrections process, crime and punishment, juvenile delinquency, criminal investigation processes, criminal courts and law, criminal process, race and cultural relations, Homeland Security, or ethics in criminal justice. Several components will measure both written and oral communication skills on a scale from low proficiency to high proficiency. Seventy-five percent (75%) of enrolled students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the subject matter of the project. Students will demonstrate proficient research skills and strategies needed for graduate school and career development. Proficiency will be demonstrated by a combined score of at least

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seventy percent (70%) or higher on the presentation.

Findings: The target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met with eighty-six percent (86%) of students scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on this measure. The faculty provided supplemental materials to the students as necessary so the students could complete their oral presentations in a successful manner. The faculty gave the students options on the methods of oral presentations that were done for credit for this class and worked with steppingstone assignments to ensure that the students were completely prepared once they reached the capstone class. Also, the faculty teaching this course developed a rubric to make the grading of these presentations more consistent. In AC 2022-2023, the target was also met, with eighty-four percent (84%) of students scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on this measure.

Based on the analysis of AC 2023-2024 results, the faculty made the following changes in 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. The faculty worked with students individually as needed, enabling them to make necessary adjustments to their proposals. The faculty ensured that proper time was set aside during class to cover all the instructions for this assignment. The faculty updated the syllabi to provide further information regarding proper attire for the presentations. Also, the faculty made themselves available for students who wanted to practice giving their presentation early as preparation for the final presentation later in the semester.

As a result of the analysis of AC 2024-2025, the target was met with ninety-six percent (96%) of the students scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on each of this measure.

Decision: In AC 2024-2025, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty will implement the following changes, in AC 2025-2026, to drive the cycle of improvement. To prepare students for presenting their research proposals, the faculty will require the students to complete reverse outlines of various sections of their proposals throughout the semester. The goal of this assignment is to help students identify weaknesses in their research design and structure. This reflective approach will not only improve the quality of their final proposals but also enhance their critical thinking and editing skills. Students will be able to effectively articulate the purpose of their research proposals, summarize the existing literature related to their topics, and demonstrate an understanding of appropriate methodological approaches. Faculty will also implement more peer-to-peer learning opportunities to encourage greater engagement with the material.

Measure 5.2. (Direct – Skill / Ability): In the eighth/final semester of this program, CJ 4480, a capstone required course for the CJ BA degree, provides students the opportunity to apply the knowledge they have acquired in this major to work-world situations and integrate all academic criminal justice learning, knowledge, and skills to prepare students for transference to the world of work. Students will demonstrate critical-thinking and problem-solving skills through a course in which they are required to research and submit a written research project on the subject matter directly related to their target career.

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This writing requirement is responsive to the course semester project requirements developed by the faculty responsible for this course and will evaluate the students' knowledge and understanding of criminal justice systems and the role of the matriculating students within them as well as measure written communication skills. Seventy-five percent (75%) of enrolled students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the subject matter of the project by scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on the semester project.

Findings: The target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met, with ninety-four percent (94%) of students scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on this measure. The faculty teaching this course redesigned the first eight weeks of modules to better represent how the students should demonstrate their critical thinking skills in the workforce. These changes produced measured improvement from AC 2022-2023, where the target was met with eighty-four percent (84%) percent of students scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher for this measure.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results, the faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. The faculty updated the instructions on all assignments to ensure a cohesive interpretation and included comprehensive instructional videos where applicable. The faculty spent extra time going over instructions before due dates for major assignments. Faculty posted their student hours in Moodle so students will know when the faculty member is available for one-on-one instruction or to clarify things that the students are confused or uncertain about. The faculty sent out reminder emails and post reminders within the Moodle class to help the students stay motivated to finish their assignments.

As a result of these changes in AC 2024-2025, the target was met with ninety-six percent (96%) of the students scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on this measure.

Decision: In 2024-2025, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty will implement the following change in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. The faculty will redesign this course to be taught by a single faculty member, enabling individualized feedback with a single point of contact. The faculty will also implement more peer-to-peer learning opportunities. The Criminal Justice Coordinator will also discuss potential implementation of a final assignment, built from the experiential learning assignments scattered across the SLO measurements.

Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvement Based on Analysis of Results. The following reflects all the changes implemented to drive the continuous process of seeking improvement in AC 2024-2025. These changes are based on the knowledge gained through the AC 2023-2024 results analysis.

- In Measure 1.1, faculty raised the measurement from seventy-five percent (75%) of enrolled students to eighty (80%) of enrolled students, demonstrating an understanding on each of the exams. The Criminal Justice Coordinator met with

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the faculty separately during the summer of 2025, discussing course improvements to help students understand key course concepts.

- In Measure 1.2, the Criminal Justice Coordinator met with the faculty separately during the summer of 2024 to discuss how each class can improve student understanding and performance in this SLO. The faculty enhanced and implemented more scaffolding assignments and detailed assignment guidelines/expectations earlier in the course.
- In Measure 2.1, the faculty instituted more short answer questions in their chapter quizzes, enhancing the previous success in this area, to help prepare the students for the unit exams. Faculty dedicated more lecture time to the historical perspectives of theory and related criminal justice processes. Because the students expressed a desire to learn more about current practices in criminology, the faculty incorporated experiential learning into their classes via mock labs, discussion, and analysis of contemporary criminal cases such as: *USA v. McAlpin*, No. 24-60181 (5th Cir. 2025), *United States v. COMBS*, 1:24-cr-00542, (S.D.N.Y.), and other major cases around the United States. The faculty also introduced more scaffolding assignments throughout the course.
- In Measure 2.2, the faculty increased discourse and lectures related to digital literacy, helping students feel more comfortable with these platforms as compared to face-to-face courses. Faculty included more media in course shells, finding new and alternative ways to offer students information on how to format, research, and cite information for projects. The faculty offered new links to citation pages as well as sites that help students format APA-style research papers. The faculty also included directives regarding AI usage in their syllabi to discourage usage in their semester projects.
- In Measure 3.1, the faculty incorporated various media to aid in the comprehension and appreciation of the subject matter in classes. The faculty enhanced video content related to theory and its application to criminal justice. The course stacking was eliminated in 2024-2025, although some faculty members still integrated face-to-face and online courses into real-time communication software such as Microsoft Teams, facilitating discussion between face-to-face and online students taking the same course.
- In Measure 3.2, the faculty implemented various media into the classes to drive student engagement. The faculty separated the classes, eliminating stacked courses. The faculty spent more time on instruction for scaffolding assignments, ensuring comprehension of assignment expectations.
- In Measure 4.1, faculty created and posted videos explaining various research methods and how to complete literature reviews. The faculty had the students present various research methods in class. Individual conversations with students played a key role in reducing their anxiety around writing the research proposal. After speaking with faculty, many students expressed that they felt more at ease

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and confidence about the assignment. Additionally, the faculty instituted a new “Research Proposal Grading Rubric” that is detailed in the previous year’s report.

- In Measure 4.2, the faculty offered more one-on-one time with the students, assisting students in understanding the key concepts. Faculty introduced various media and offered study guides to help the students focus on specific information discussed in class. The faculty member demonstrated in class to show how AI can be helpful in clarifying ideas or starting papers. The faculty highlighted the appropriate and inappropriate utilization of AI in this class.
- In Measure 5.1, the faculty worked with students individually as needed, enabling them to make necessary adjustments to their proposals. The faculty ensured that proper time was set aside during class to cover all the instructions for this assignment. The faculty updated the syllabi to provide further information regarding proper attire for the presentations. Also, the faculty made themselves available for students who wanted to practice giving their presentation early as preparation for the final presentation later in the semester.
- In Measure 5.2, the faculty updated the instructions on all assignments to ensure a cohesive interpretation and included comprehensive instructional videos where applicable. The faculty spent extra time going over instructions before due dates for major assignments. Faculty posted their student hours in Moodle so students will know when the faculty is available for one-on-one instruction or to clarify things that the students are confused or uncertain about. The faculty sent out reminder emails and post reminders within the Moodle class to help the students stay motivated to finish their assignments.

Plan of Action Moving Forward:

- In Measure 1.1, the measurement will remain at 80% for AC 2025-2026. We will enhance the coordinator/faculty meetings in the upcoming cycle, discussing the implementation of specific experiential-learning assignments that can be used to allow for a more granular analysis of objectives covered under this SLO.
- In Measure 1.2, the faculty will discuss implementation of experiential-learning assignments to better prepare students for the semester project. These changes will improve the department’s ability to assess the student’s ability to synthesize complex research topics. The integration of experiential-learning assignments will improve the student’s foundational knowledge, preparing them to apply the knowledge in the final project and beyond.
- In Measure 2.1, the Criminal Justice Coordinator will meet with faculty to discuss the implementation of experiential-learning assignments, based on contemporary cases, that can be used across the courses in this measurement. This intra-course engagement with specific case studies will allow the student to hone their skillsets within sentencing determination, criminogenic variables, investigative procedures,

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as well as ethical and cultural variables intrinsic to this process.

- In Measure 2.2, faculty will enhance the offerings related to digital literacy, style guides, and research procedures. A new digital literacy module, offered at the beginning of the course, will be tested in CJ 2400, CJ 2500, CJ 3380, and CJ 4250. This implementation across three SLOs will allow the department a more granular analysis of this skillset across multiple research-based SLO measurements. If successful, the module will be offered to all courses within the School of Social Sciences and Applied Programs, improving the student's ability to conduct independent research and synthesize complex research topics.
- In Measure 3.1, the percentage will not be raised in the upcoming cycle. Faculty will seek out a more granular analysis through experiential learning assignments incorporated into courses across this SLO. This change will be like the changes being made in SLO 1. The Criminal Justice Coordinator will meet with faculty to enhance our success in this area, discussing implementation of experiential-learning assignments, based on contemporary cases, that can be used across the courses in this measurement. Through this engagement, students will improve their ability to apply their knowledge of criminal justice in designing a pre-sentence investigation, analyzing criminal evidence and process, and relating that information to knowledge of criminogenic variables as discussed in CJ 4500.
- In Measure 3.2, this measure will change, in 2025-2026, to eighty percent (80%) of enrolled students being able to demonstrate an understanding of the subject matter of the project by scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on the semester project. The previous goal put more emphasis on quality measurements in a subset of the class. This approach drives more comprehensive improvement. Course improvements discussed in SLO 1 and measures 3.1 will also be integrated to support this measurement.
- In Measure 4.1, faculty will implement regular individual check-ins throughout the semester to address questions and provide guidance as they work through the project. The faculty will provide an enhanced and detailed outline of the expected structure and components of the proposal, which will offer clearer direction and reduce confusion.
- In Measure 4.2, the faculty plans to incorporate recorded lectures to help students better understand key concepts and reinforce the material covered in the textbook. The faculty will also be adopting a more user-friendly textbook, which will make the content more accessible and enhance overall comprehension.
- In Measure 5.1, the faculty will require the student to complete reverse outlines of various sections of their proposals throughout the semester. This reflective approach will not only improve the quality of their final proposals but also enhance their critical thinking and editing skills. Students will be able to effectively articulate the purpose of their research proposals, summarize the existing literature related to their topics, and demonstrate an understanding of appropriate methodological approaches. Faculty will also implement more peer-to-peer learning opportunities

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to encourage greater engagement with the material.

- In Measure 5.2, the faculty will redesign this course to be taught by a single faculty member, enabling individualized feedback with a single point of contact. The faculty will also implement more peer-to-peer learning opportunities. The Criminal Justice Coordinator will also discuss potential implementation of a final assignment, built from the experiential learning assignments scattered across the SLO measurements.