

Master of Art in Criminology and Criminal Justice

About the Program

The Master of Arts in Criminology and Criminal Justice offers a comprehensive examination of the criminal justice system, an exploration of criminal and delinquent behaviors, a foundation in research and statistics, and an opportunity to explore other relevant topics of interest to the student.

It is designed for:

1. Pre-professional students who wish to pursue a career in some aspect of criminal justice, or in a related field, and to develop the perspectives and knowledge appropriate to doing so;
2. In-service professionals who wish to enhance and broaden their knowledge in this and related areas of study;
3. Students pre-professional or in-service who wish to pursue further relevant post-graduate studies, whether academic or professional.

To meet the needs of students, the program offers a thesis and non-thesis tracks. When applying, students must select which track they intend to complete. Both options require the student to complete 36 credit hours and an exit project.

Competencies

1. Upon graduation, students will have a thorough understanding of criminological theory.
2. Upon graduation, students will be able to understand, critique, and design a research analysis and interpret statistical data.
3. Upon graduation, students will be able to analyze criminal justice policies at the local, state, and national levels and develop evidence-based policy recommendations.
4. Upon graduation, students will be able to critically assess ethical dilemmas in justice systems.

Admissions Criteria

UNCONDITIONAL ADMISSION

In addition to having satisfied the basic [graduate admission requirements](https://catalog.uta.edu/archives/2025-2026/academicregulations/admissions/graduate/) (<https://catalog.uta.edu/archives/2025-2026/academicregulations/admissions/graduate/>) of UT Arlington, applicants seeking unconditional admission to the Criminology and Criminal Justice MA must meet the following four criteria:

1. A completed baccalaureate degree in criminology/criminal justice or related discipline.
2. An undergraduate GPA of 3.0 (as calculated by Graduate Admissions) when bachelor's degree is conferred (verified by official transcripts from each college or university previously attended sent directly from the registrar of that institution to Graduate Admissions).
3. Three letters of recommendation addressing the applicant's potential for success in the graduate program (from professors or professional supervisors in the field of Criminology, Criminal Justice, or a related area, preferably).
4. A writing sample submitted with applicant materials. The Department prefers the writing sample be a research paper written in an upper-division course. If not available or unsuitable, applicants will be provided a prompt. The submitted writing sample should demonstrate the applicant's writing, research, and analytical skills where possible. Applicants will need to submit a minimum of one page.

Applicants meeting all four of the criteria will be granted unconditional admission. Applicants who lack one of the above criteria may be considered for probationary admission.

PROBATIONARY ADMISSION

Applicants who fail to meet the four criteria for unconditional admission may be considered for probationary admission. Applicants who fail to meet the GPA requirement for unconditional admission may be granted probationary admission if any of the following three conditions is met:

1. GPA falls between 2.5 and 3.0 and the remainder of the application package is satisfactory;
2. GPA falls between 2.25 and 2.49, the remainder of the application package is satisfactory, and the applicant has five years of professional experience in a criminal justice (or closely related) occupation and a detailed work history documenting this experience; or
3. GPA falls between 2.00 and 2.24, the remainder of the application package is satisfactory, and the applicant has 10 or more years of professional experience in a managerial or administrative position within a criminal justice (or closely related) occupation and a detailed work history documenting that experience.

In addition to providing a work history, applicants using their work history for admission must also provide a writing sample and complete a personal interview. Applicants admitted on probation will remain in that status until completing 12 hours of graduate coursework with no grade lower than a B.

DEFERRED ADMISSION

In the event an applicant does not meet the minimum criteria established for unconditional or probationary admission, yet nonetheless is judged by the graduate advisor, in consultation with the CRCJ Graduate Studies Committee, to show promise, the admission decision may be deferred, with

instructions provided to the student indicating the course of action to be taken prior to subsequent review. Admission decisions may also be deferred if the application package is incomplete.

PROVISIONAL ADMISSION

An applicant unable to supply all required documentation prior to the admission deadline, but who otherwise appears to meet admission requirements may be granted provisional admission.

DENIAL

Applicants who do not satisfy all of the criteria for any of the above categories will be denied admission.

FELLOWSHIPS

Fellowships, when available, will be awarded on a competitive basis. Nominees for the Graduate School Master's Fellowship in the criminology/criminal justice graduate program will be selected based on the following criteria:

- Candidates must be new students entering in the fall semester, with a minimum of 6 hours of enrollment in both long semesters to retain their fellowships.
- The minimum undergraduate GPA requirement is 3.00, as calculated by the Graduate School, plus a GPA of 3.0 for any graduate credit hours.
- Transcript of a completed bachelor's degree in criminology/criminal justice (or appropriate related field) from an accredited institution.
- Three letters of recommendation (may use the same letters submitted for consideration into the criminology/criminal justice graduate program).
- A written statement explaining the applicant's reasons for graduate study in criminology/criminal justice.

Curriculum

Foundations

CRCJ 5301	PROSEMINAR IN CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE	3
CRCJ 5309	PUBLIC AND NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION THEORY	3
CRCJ 5310	STATISTICS & RESEARCH PRACTICES IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE	3
CRCJ 5342	ETHICS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE	3
CRCJ 5381	CRIME & PUBLIC POLICY	3
CRCJ 5350	THEORETICAL CRIMINOLOGY	3

Electives

Thesis students select four electives with the advice and approval of the Graduate Advisor. Non-thesis students select six. 12

Thesis or Non-Thesis Track

Select one of the following:		6
CRCJ 5698	THESIS (Taken in the semester the student plans to defend their theiss.)	
Non-thesis: select two additional electives		

Total Hours 36

DUAL DEGREE OPTION

To facilitate completion of a dual degree up to 9 hours of courses outside of Criminology and Criminal Justice may be counted as electives for the MA with the prior approval of the graduate advisor.

Program Completion

All candidates for the graduate degree must complete all courses included in their degree plan as well as an exit project (i.e., thesis or non-thesis).

Advising Resources

Prospective graduate students should consult with an advisor before applying. We have two graduate programs – a traditional master's program that is in-person and a cohort master's program that is online. Please review the information here regarding the programs. Graduate students should consult with their program advisor each semester prior to registration. Additional advising will be necessary in preparation to meet graduation requirements.

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Advising Information (<https://www.uta.edu/academics/schools-colleges/liberal-arts/departments/criminology/graduate/>)