

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Program Description

Criminal Justice practitioners and scholars are highly qualified, multi-skilled public safety professionals who collaborate with other entities in the American criminal justice system as well as the general public to prevent and control crime, ensure due process, rehabilitate convicted offenders, and implement evidence-based practices.

The Criminal Justice Leadership and Policy program is a post-baccalaureate academic program offered in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, leading to a Master of Arts in Criminal Justice Leadership and Policy (MACJLP) degree. The MACJLP program ensures the highest quality of education by offering collective learning experiences that emphasize leadership, policy, and administration, which enable students to pursue numerous career paths and promotional advancement within the criminal justice field.

The Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice is designed to provide students interested in careers in the American justice system with the knowledge, communication and critical thinking skills necessary for success in their field. The degree will also assist students with upward mobility in their area of employment. Graduates secure positions in law enforcement, courts, probation, parole and other aspects of corrections. Many also use this degree as the starting point in their pursuit of a law degree or graduate school.

The Bachelor of Applied Science in Criminal Justice combines the POST requirements of the AAS degree with the academic rigor of the baccalaureate degree.

The Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Criminal Justice is designed for students who have completed or wish to complete the police academy program at Western Colorado Community College (WCCC) and incorporates instruction gained from the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) program. Students in the AAS program must complete the essential learning requirements and choose additional courses in law enforcement related studies either before or after completing the academy. Completion of the AAS in Criminal Justice may provide graduates with additional promotional opportunities in law enforcement areas (such as police and sheriff departments, state enforcement, parole officer, liquor enforcement and wildlife enforcement). Law enforcement agencies in some areas require an AAS degree for entry-level positions.

The criminal justice minor is designed to provide students interested in the American justice system with the knowledge, communication and critical thinking skills necessary for success in their field. The forensic investigation - criminal justice minor combines courses in criminal justice with forensic investigation courses. It provides a student with a solid foundation in forensic investigation, and the recognition and collection of physical evidence. Students are better prepared to apply investigative concepts and techniques in the criminal justice profession.

The criminal justice program sponsors the Criminal Justice Association club, Pre-Law/Moot Court club, and a local chapter of the criminal justice honor society, Alpha Phi Sigma. Through active membership in these organizations, students learn from current practitioners in the field, become involved in community service projects, and to take part in regional and national conferences and competitions.

Special Requirements

The Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree is based on completing the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) program at WCCC. (See the POST entry elsewhere in this section). Students who have completed the POST program must complete the essential learning requirements and five additional specified courses to earn an AAS.

Contact Information

Associate Degree:

Office of Student Services
WCCC, Bishop B102
2508 Blichmann Avenue
970.255.2670

Baccalaureate Degree:

Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Lowell Heiny Hall 413
970.248.1696

Programs of Study Associates

- [Criminal Justice \(AAS\)](#)

Bachelors/Minors

- [Criminal Justice \(BA\)](#)
- [Criminal Justice \(Minor\)](#)
- [Forensic Investigation - Criminal Justice \(Minor\)](#)
- [POST Academy, Criminal Justice \(BAS\)](#)

Graduate

- [Criminal Justice Leadership and Policy \(MA\)](#)