

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

What can I do with this major?

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

SOCIAL SERVICES

Corrections
Probation
Parole
Juvenile Justice
Program Development
Outreach
Mentoring
Victim's Assistance
Counseling
Casework
Prevention Services
Advocacy
Administration
Supervision
Assessment
Reporting
Grant Writing
Consulting

Government agencies
State and federal correction facilities
County jails
Precinct station houses
Prison camps
Youth correction facilities
Voluntary correction facilities
Residential treatment facilities
Halfway houses and pre-release programs
Reintegration programs
Alternative schools
Juvenile detention centers
Juvenile group homes
Women's and family shelters
Domestic violence agencies
Immigration and naturalization services
Medical centers
Other nonprofit organizations
Adult education providers
Public and private high schools

Pursue classes or training in topics such as victimology, social problems, diversity issues, or grieving.
Supplement curriculum with courses in psychology, sociology, social work, or child and family studies.
To work with juveniles, gain experience with youth through sports teams, as a summer camp counselor, in parks and recreation programs, or community/religious youth groups.
Seek volunteer or internship positions in areas such as employment interviewing, social casework, substance abuse, rehabilitation, or juvenile justice.
Learn to work well with people of diverse backgrounds. Study a second language for increased marketability.
Maintain a blemish-free driving and criminal record.
Gain firearms and self-defense training for some areas.
Earn a master's degree in social work or counseling for therapy positions.
Obtain a master's degree in criminal justice or business for upper-level positions in facilities.

JUDICIARY AND LAW

Court Reporting/Transcription Services
Court Clerkship
Court Security
Legal Assistance
Legal Research
Administration
Legal Representation

Local, state, and federal courts
Government agencies including Departments of:
 Social Services
 Justice
 Treasury
 Defense
Law firms
Corporate legal departments
Public interest law organizations
Self-employed

Develop strong research, computer, and writing skills.
Consider a double major or minor in the humanities such as English, philosophy, or history as these build good writing skills.
Attend a postsecondary vocational or technical college that offers court reporting (CR) or paralegal (CLA) certification programs.
Join research groups and learn to use software packages for research positions.
Seek opportunities to observe courtroom proceedings and become familiar with the legal system.
Participate in mock trial groups.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

JUDICIARY AND LAW CONTINUED

Maintain a high GPA and secure strong faculty recommendations for law school admittance. Research admissions requirements at individual institutions. Obtain a law degree from a law school accredited by the American Bar Association (ABA).

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Patrolling
Investigating
Probation
Parole
Security
Surveillance
Loss Prevention
Forensics

City/County Government Organizations including:
Police departments
Correction facilities
County sheriff departments
Liquor Control Commission
Animal control offices
State Government Organizations including:
State troopers
Crime laboratories
Penitentiaries
Federal Government Organizations including:
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI)
Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)
Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)
Department of Homeland Security
Postal Service
Federal Marshals
Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks
United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
National Parks Service
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, Explosives
Armed services
Prisons
Detention centers
Youth correction facilities
Airports and other transportation facilities
Crime laboratories
Colleges and universities
Banks and retail organizations

Obtain related training or certifications such as CPR, first aid, or EMT. Seek training in firearms and self-defense.
Volunteer to work in a police department or campus safety department.
Complete a formal police academy program upon graduation.
Develop strong interviewing, researching, writing, and computer skills.
Maintain a healthy and physically fit lifestyle.
Learn to work well with people of diverse backgrounds and develop multicultural competency.
Study a "mission critical" language as those are in high demand by the federal government.
Become familiar with the government application process. Seek assistance from your campus career center.
Many federal law enforcement agencies primarily hire candidates with experience, e.g., military, law enforcement, or other areas. Research entry requirements for the agencies that interest you.
For a career in Forensics:
Obtain a double major in criminal justice and a hard science such as biology, chemistry, or biochemistry.
Complete an internship in a crime laboratory to gain experience in the forensic application of science.
Consider earning a master's degree in Forensic Science or related discipline for increased opportunities.

*See also "What Can I Do With A Major in Forensics"

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

BUSINESS

Private Security
Consulting
Installation
Investigating
Systems Integration
Global Intelligence
Private Investigation
Internet Security
Surveillance
Loss Prevention
Property Loss Management
Program Development
Staffing and Training

Insurance companies
Banks
Private security companies
Software companies
Retail organizations
Hotels and resorts
Health care facilities
Transportation services
Nuclear power plants
Manufacturers
Online companies
Other large corporations
Local, state, and federal agencies
Private individuals
Self-employed

Minor in business or computer science, and/or take related courses in computer science or computer systems.
Gain experience in an area of interest through internships, jobs, or volunteer positions.
Seek opportunities that include training in the hardware and software of security systems.
Develop exceptional written and oral communication skills, along with the ability to present information to others.
Pursue leadership opportunities in campus organizations to hone interpersonal skills.
Attend firearm safety courses. Obtain first aid and CPR certification.
Consider gaining military experience and training.
Maintain current knowledge of computer languages and technology.
Obtain a high GPA to ensure a greater number of graduate school opportunities.
Earn a graduate degree in business or law for upper-level positions.

EDUCATION

Teaching
Research
Supervision and Consultation

Colleges and universities

Earn a graduate degree for post-secondary teaching opportunities.
Serve as a tutor to other students.
Develop strong written and oral communication skills and the ability to present materials well to others.
Assist a professor with research.
Take additional coursework related to research and statistics.
Maintain a high GPA and secure strong recommendations from faculty.
Network with others in your field through membership in professional associations and organizations.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Most entry-level positions for criminal justice majors reside with law enforcement and social service organizations.
- Depending upon one's career goals, earn a master's degree in disciplines such as criminal justice, forensic science, social work, counseling, or business to obtain positions involving therapy, higher levels of administration, forensics, or research. Earn a doctoral degree for university teaching positions.
- Many criminal justice professions require candidates to possess strong oral and written communication skills, good listening skills, and the ability to work with a wide range of diverse populations. Fluency in a second language is also desirable.
- Obtain experience through volunteer, practicum, or internship opportunities.
- Supplement program of study with courses in business, psychology, anthropology, or sociology. Course work related to the hard sciences (biology, chemistry, or biochemistry) is necessary for career opportunities in forensics.
- Internet security is a rapidly growing area with a wide variety of career opportunities. Supplement course work with computer science and technology courses to gain entry into this field.
- Conduct informational interviews and job shadow with professionals in fields of interest to learn more about opportunities.
- Stay up to date on advancements in your field by reading professional journals and related literature, joining professional organizations, attending conferences, and networking with others.
- Be prepared to complete physical and psychological testing, fitness evaluations, and other evaluative tools for entry into law enforcement and related careers.