

**Department of Sociology & Criminal Justice**  
**Master's Internship Guidelines**

Graduate students in the Department of Sociology's Graduate Program in Criminal Justice may select a capstone experience from three options. The options are comprehensive examinations, a master's thesis, or an internship. This document details the requirements and expectations for the internship option. The internship is a 6 credit component in the program that should be completed over two consecutive semesters. The internship experience should be completed during the first semester, with the writing of the research paper completed during the second semester.

A. Timing

The student who intends to pursue an internship should initiate work no later than the middle of the semester immediately prior to the semester when the internship is to begin. Normally, five year combined BA-MA students should schedule the internship for the fall semester of their fifth year. Depending on their progress during their senior year, they may be permitted to complete their internship between their senior semester and their first semester of graduate study (e.g. the summer session). The student should be familiar with potential sites, application procedures and deadlines.

The internship combines field experience in an office or agency associated with the field of criminal justice, with the production of a final paper. The paper is to be an in-

depth examination of the theoretical and empirical literature concerning a topic or issue related to the specific internship experience contemplated by the student. The student is not to register for the internship until s/he has been approved to do so by the Graduate Program Director.

B. The Approval Process

Prior to submitting a formal proposal for an internship, the student must meet with the Internship Coordinator, in order to discuss possible internship opportunities, scheduling, and requirements. The student is required to form a committee of two criminal justice faculty who will review the student's internship performance and evaluate the student's required paper. The student should select a faculty member to serve as chair of their internship committee. The Internship Coordinator will serve as the second member. In the event that the student wishes to select the Internship Coordinator as committee chair, a second faculty member should be selected to serve on the committee as a regular member.

After the formation and approval of the student's internship committee, a formal proposal describing the internship agency, setting, responsibilities and activities, start date, work schedule, supervisor, relevant addresses, telephone numbers, and other necessary information is to be presented to both members of the Internship Committee, as well as to the Graduate Program Director for his or her approval. After approval, the

student should begin to discuss possible topics for the required paper with the committee chair. Under the guidance of the supervising committee students will be directed to read relevant theoretical and empirical literature and select a paper topic. A research statement detailing the development of the paper should be submitted to their supervising committee within one month of commencing the internship.

C. The Experiential Component

The minimum time requirement for the experiential component is 150 clock hours. Regular meetings and brief progress reports should be completed throughout the semester. Guidelines regarding the substance, nature, and frequency of these meetings and progress reports will be determined by the chair of the Internship Committee.

Students are expected to follow university and agency guidelines regarding access to confidential and classified information at the internship site.

It is the student's responsibility to resolve any conflicts with course work, employment, and personal activities, preferably in the initial planning stages of the internship.

D. The Internship Research Paper

Students must complete a final paper integrating their experiences and observations from the internship with larger theoretical and conceptual issues in criminal justice. The paper should be approximately 35-40 pages in length. Students should draw

on their comprehensive knowledge learned through graduate coursework and relevant literature. The paper is to be based upon published material such as books, referred journals and federal reports. Papers based on upon on-line abstracts, summaries, and reviews will not be accepted. The structure and content of the paper is contingent upon approval by each student's Internship Committee chair. After a student's internship is approved, he or she should begin to discuss possible topics for the required paper with their chair.

Students will register for CRJ 8401 in the semester immediately following their registration for CRJ 8400. CRJ 8401 is a 3-credit directed writing experience during which the student will complete their final research paper under the guidance of their Internship Committee Chair.

E. Evaluation and Grading of the Internship

Students will receive normal letter grades for the internship option (both 8400 and 8401) from the Internship Committee Chair. The factors considered by the Internship Committee Chair in arriving at a grade will include:

- 1) a recommendation by the second member of the Internship Committee, based upon the student's periodic meetings with the committee, and his/her evaluation of the student's written required reports and papers;

- 3) a recommendation for a letter grade from the Internship Coordinator, based on the student's meeting of deadlines and progress reports during the experiential component of the internship;
- 3) a recommendation for a letter grade to be submitted to the Internship Coordinator by the intern's site supervisor, which is then given to the Internship Committee Chair. The student is to inform the site supervisor of the need for the letter at the time the student is considering a possible internship, and is responsible for requesting that the letter be submitted at the completion of the experiential component of the internship;

and

- 4) a critical self-evaluation, by the student, of the experiential component of the internship (8400 only).

Any questions concerning scheduling or policies should be directed to the Graduate Program Director.