



Online Criminal Justice Degrees



PennState
World Campus

**A world of possibilities.
Online.**

Table of Contents

Online Criminal Justice Programs at Penn State	3	Master of Professional Studies in Criminal Justice Policy and Administration	7–8
Associate in Science in Criminal Justice	4	Stackable Graduate Certificates.....	9
Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice	5–6	Frequently Asked Questions	10
		Begin Your Application	11

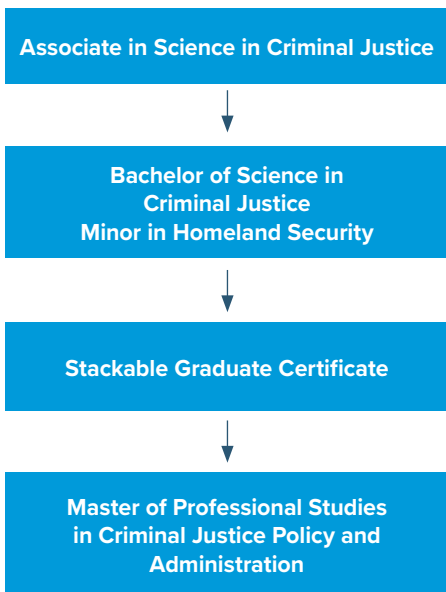
An Exceptional University for Exceptional Learners

Since Penn State World Campus launched in 1998, it has grown to include exceptional learners from all 50 states, more than 62 countries, and all 7 continents. These students are part of our global learning community, interacting with faculty and exchanging ideas and expertise with one another as they strive to meet their educational and career goals.



Online Criminal Justice Programs at Penn State

Organizations in the criminal justice system, particularly police, courts, corrections, community supervision, and offender and victim services, are becoming increasingly evidence-based in their practices and administration. Thus, there is a growing need for people with sound, in-depth knowledge of the criminal justice system and criminal behavior. Earning a highly respected degree from Penn State could not only provide you with the skills and knowledge you need but also help you stand out among your peers. Our online portfolio consists of undergraduate and graduate programs:



Apply Your Learning in Your Current Position

As you gain new skills and confidence through your experiences in the program, you can begin to constructively influence your current work environment or pursue new career opportunities.

While you interact with experienced faculty and peers from public and nonprofit organizations in the field, you can develop your ability to understand and evaluate policies and practices in your own career experience.



Associate in Science in Criminal Justice

The 64-credit Associate in Science in Criminal Justice degree emphasizes social science perspectives within the study of criminal justice. This degree can prepare you for entry-level positions in criminal justice, or it can be used as a step toward the Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice (also offered online) or another social science bachelor's degree, if you choose to apply and are accepted into the program.

The courses in the program are taught by leading Penn State Harrisburg School of Public Affairs faculty, and your diploma will look no different than one earned by a student studying on campus.

Course topics include:

- › Criminology
- › Policing in America
- › Courts and Prosecution
- › Corrections

To learn more about this program, courses, and how to apply, visit:

worldcampus.psu.edu/crimj



Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice

Whether you are new to criminal justice or already a professional in the field, Penn State's online Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice program can help give you the tools you need to be an effective administrator of the law.

Our online courses give you the flexibility to study around your schedule — without sacrificing meaningful interactions with expert faculty and fellow students. Our bachelor's degree in criminal justice is the first online program to receive the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Certification, so you can feel confident that the program is respected throughout the industry.

**This program can provide you with:
a theoretical and practical
understanding of crime —**

you can be better prepared to succeed in the field of criminal justice or in your graduate-level study

**faculty who are committed to creating
a first-class learning environment —**

seasoned in the demands of delivering academic content electronically, our professors and instructors are fully involved in the teaching process and dedicated to providing high-quality interactions and instructional experiences

potential career opportunities —

the exceptionally relevant course content can prepare you to work in policing, courts, law, and corrections, as well as with crime-related populations

**You can start or advance your
career in:
protective services —**

Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Secret Service, Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Marshal's Office, sheriff departments, municipal and state police departments, and security and loss prevention

law and corrections —

court administration, delinquency prevention programs, juvenile residential institutions, jails and prisons, and probation and parole offices

crime-related prevention and

support — shelters for abused women and children, rape crisis centers, drug and alcohol programs, halfway houses, and a wide variety of crime prevention and diversion programs

Bachelor's Program Curriculum

The curriculum for the bachelor's degree in criminal justice offers a solid foundation in the field. The courses focus on the history, practice, and science of both adult and juvenile criminal justice. Many course options are available to complete the program, allowing you to customize the degree to meet your specific interests and career goals.

Take 120 credits in such topic areas as:

- › Border Security
- › Courts and the Prosecution Process
- › Criminological Theory
- › Ethics
- › Incarceration Alternatives
- › Juvenile Justice System
- › Police Administration
- › Policing and Corrections in America
- › Victimology

Homeland Security Minor

If you are interested in gaining an understanding of homeland security issues to better set yourself apart on the career ladder, consider Penn State's online Minor in Homeland Security (HLS). The program covers homeland security and defense issues — including emergency management, homeland security policy, and the structure of homeland security operations. You can fulfill most of the requirements of the minor while completing your bachelor's degree in criminal justice (CRIMJ). The required courses for the HLS minor can fit into the major in the supporting courses section or as electives. Several HLS courses are cross-listed with CRIMJ, so they count toward both CRIMJ electives and the HLS minor. You can obtain a minor or a double-major without having to take additional credits.

Serving Our Military Students

Penn State has the experience you need to help you meet your goals during and after your service to your country. Through our commitment to increasing access to education for military personnel, veterans, and military family members, we have aligned our online programs, student support services, policies, and procedures to address your unique needs. We pledge our best service to you, so that wherever you are in the world, you can be connected to Penn State through Penn State World Campus.



Master of Professional Studies in Criminal Justice Policy and Administration

The online MPS in CJPA capitalizes on Penn State's strengths as a premier research institution to provide an advanced professional degree, offered by the Penn State College of the Liberal Arts' Department of Sociology and Criminology and the Penn State Harrisburg School of Public Affairs. Combining theory and applied research, this degree allows professionals and students entering the workforce to gain graduate-level expertise in this growing applied field of study. The program could be an excellent credential for professionals in criminal justice (policing, courts, corrections, probation/parole, and treatment), government, administration, and offender/victim services.

Career Opportunities for Graduates

As a graduate of this program, you can use your newfound skills, knowledge, and experience to bring about change in any number of criminal justice or legal organizations in the public sector.

Organizations and agencies in need of professionals with these skills include:

- › state departments of corrections, sentencing commissions, and parole boards
- › local, county, and state law enforcement, especially in administration and planning sectors
- › local court administration, especially drug, DUI, and restorative justice courts
- › local, probation, parole, and community corrections agencies
- › public and private offender treatment agencies
- › state policy agencies focused on criminal justice (e.g., the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, and similar agencies in other states)
- › U.S. Federal Bureau of Prisons
- › U.S. Sentencing Commission, and the Federal Judicial Center (which houses the Administrative Office of U.S. Courts and Federal Probation)
- › U.S. Department of Justice and its various subdivisions (e.g., National Institute of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys)

Master's Program Curriculum

The 30-credit program of study emphasizes social science perspectives in the study of criminal justice.

Take core courses (18 credits) in such topic areas as:

- › Advanced Statistics in Criminal Justice
- › Applied Research Methods for Criminal Justice
- › Criminal Justice Ethics in a Diverse Society
- › Criminal Justice Institutions
- › Criminal Procedure
- › Theories of Crime

Choose from elective courses (9 credits) in such topic areas as:

- › American Constitutional Law
- › American Court and Correctional Systems
- › The Death Penalty
- › Incarceration Alternatives
- › Police Administration
- › Policy Analysis and Planning
- › Psychological Foundations of Leadership
- › Public Policy and the Criminal Justice Systems
- › Sentencing
- › Victimology
- › Global Policing
- › Transnational Crime
- › Policing Terrorism

Complete your learning with a capstone experience (3 credits)

Your culminating experience can provide you with the opportunity to apply your knowledge from your courses to a project mutually selected by you and faculty mentors. For example, the capstone experience could be an academic research project, an evidence-based policy evaluation, or the development of a new program.

Upon completion of the MPS in CJPA, you should be able to:

- › describe and summarize crime rates, trends, and patterns, and apply foundational knowledge of criminological theories devoted to explaining crime
- › discuss organizational structure, processes, and challenges of criminal justice institutions, and analyze past and current criminal justice policies and evidence-based practices
- › apply the foundations of contemporary ethical practices and effective leadership in the criminal justice profession
- › employ advanced knowledge in social science research and applied statistical methods, specifically focused on criminal justice issues
- › demonstrate advanced knowledge of criminal procedure

Stackable Graduate Certificates

Show mastery of specific subjects before your degree is complete by earning criminal justice policy and administration–related graduate certificates. While these skills-based certificates can serve as excellent stand-alone credentials, many graduate students earn them while pursuing their master’s degree. Speak with an adviser or faculty member to help you decide which stackable certificates can help you accomplish your goals.

Graduate Certificate in Criminal Justice Administration and Procedure (9 credits)

Provides you with a broad understanding of criminal justice systems, key legal procedures, and ethical criminal justice system considerations. Whether you are already working in law enforcement, the courts, or corrections — or are transitioning into the field — this program can equip you with skills and knowledge that align with real-world challenges.

Graduate Certificate in Criminological Theory and Research (9 credits)

Enhance your skills in advanced statistical techniques in criminology. You will focus on understanding the latest theories in criminal justice best

practices, analyzing evidence-based data, and researching how to address current criminal justice issues.

Graduate Certificate in Impacts on Victims and Offenders (9 credits)

Explore the effects of crime and the criminal justice system on both victims and offenders. The certificate program introduces you to the field of victimology, explores theories of criminology, and examines research and policies related to sentencing decisions, including the death penalty.

Graduate Certificate in Global Justice and Security (9 credits)

Designed primarily for working professionals, this certificate is ideal for both domestic and international criminal justice practitioners who want to expand their knowledge and skills in global justice and security issues and advance their careers.



Frequently Asked Questions

How much is tuition?

Tuition is based on cost-per-credit and is associated with your program of study. Tuition rates are assessed every semester of enrollment, giving you the flexibility to pay as you move throughout the program. Please visit our website for the most up-to-date tuition rate.

Does Penn State World Campus offer financial aid?

Penn State World Campus makes many options available to help you pay for your education. Full- and part-time degree-seeking students are eligible for federal student aid. We also have different options to help you, such as deferred payment plans, third-party payments for employed professionals, and military payment options.

What does the online classroom look like?

Our philosophy for designing online courses: Use the latest technology to best deliver the content in the most flexible way while keeping the technology transparent to you.

We use one centralized platform where you can log in to your classroom. There you can get assignments, interact with faculty and peers, reply to message boards, and more.

Is this the real Penn State?

Yes. Penn State World Campus was launched in 1998 as Penn State's virtual campus administered online. It has since grown into one of the most highly regarded online campuses in the world — extending our long-standing reputation as a leader in distance education into the twenty-first century. No distinction will be made on your official Penn State diploma that your courses were completed at a distance. The credits you receive are exactly the same as those awarded to on-campus students.

“You are not an anonymous online student. My faculty and my academic adviser were always there for me and helped me reach my ultimate goal... to graduate. I had great support.”

—**Barbara C.**
Graduate, Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice

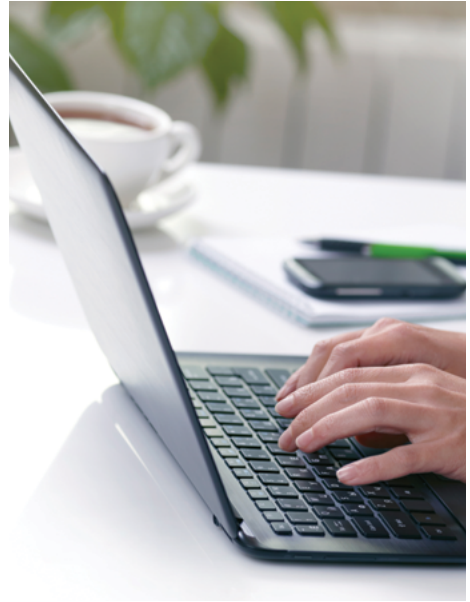


Begin Your Application Today

Beginning your application for any of our criminal justice programs is easy.

Visit worldcampus.psu.edu/crimj

1. Select your program of interest to be directed to that specific program page.
2. Click on the “How to Apply” link to get your specific application instructions.



To apply or for the most up-to-date information about these application materials, visit: worldcampus.psu.edu/admissions

Did You Know?

- › Penn State credits and degrees earned online are identical to those earned on campus. Your diploma will look the same!
- › The faculty in our online programs are the same distinguished professors who teach in our residential programs.
- › Penn State World Campus is consistently ranked as a top provider of online degree programs by *U.S. News & World Report*.



Contact Us

Admissions Questions

worldcampus@psu.edu

Phone: 814-863-5386

worldcampus.psu.edu/admissions



PennState
World Campus

The Pennsylvania State University
128 Outreach Innovation Building
100 Innovation Blvd.
University Park, PA 16803



@psuworldcampus



@pennstateworldcampus



Penn State World Campus



@pennstateworldcampus



@PennStateOnline

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

Penn State is an equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, and is committed to providing employment opportunities to all qualified applicants without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability or protected veteran status. Produced by Outreach and Online Education Marketing UBR 25-WC-1991300/ees/sss
Copyright © 2025 The Pennsylvania State University