

**GRADUATE PROGRAM IN CRIMINOLOGY
MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE**

**Program Guide, Course Descriptions & Graduate Student Handbook
School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences
University of Texas at Dallas
2009-2010 Academic Year**

August 2009 revision for 2008-2010 catalog

Faculty

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Master of Science in Criminology (M.S.)

Mission

The Mission of the Master of Science in Criminology program at the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) is threefold:

1. Deliver high-quality education to a diverse body of students regarding the etiology, control, and variation of law-breaking across space and time.
2. Serve local, regional, and national communities through professional development programs, public policy analyses and evaluation research, program and policy design, and as a forum for new ideas and approaches to the study of crime.
3. Advance the understanding of criminology through a multidisciplinary mix of theoretical and applied research.

Objectives

The Master of Science in Criminology provides students with a coherent and intellectually challenging degree that prepares them to conduct interdisciplinary research on various aspects of criminology and/or criminal justice, depending on their specific areas of specialty. Graduates of the M.S. program will be competent to teach in community colleges or take up analytic and administrative posts in international and domestic research and policy institutions, criminal justice organizations, and/or in the private sector.

Admissions

The admissions requirements for the MS program are as follows:

- Minimum undergraduate cumulative GPA of 3.2 as reflected on official transcripts from the undergraduate institution and strong academic performance with 3.5 GPA or higher in graduate-level coursework taken to date AND
- Preferred combined verbal and quantitative Graduate Records Examination (GRE) score of 1200 as shown on official score report AND
- Letter of intent from applicant about reasons they seek admission into the program AND

- Two or three strong letters of recommendation (preferably from professors or academics who can speak to the intellectual and scholastic abilities of the student and their probability of successfully completing the graduate program)

MS Program applications *should be submitted IN FULL by February 15th* of each year to the Graduate Dean's office via their admissions procedures to be considered for Fall admissions and funding opportunities. Students with less than a complete package may be denied admission. Students may apply for admission at other times during the school year and the Criminology Graduate Committee will review completed files two to three times per year if there are pending applications to make admissions decisions. Students who start in a non-traditional semester (Spring or Summer) may not be able to take classes in the suggested course sequence. Orientations are provided for all entering students in an academic calendar year in August prior to the Fall semester beginning and all new students are **REQUIRED** to attend this meeting.

Facilities

Students have access to the computing facilities in the School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences (EPPS) and the University's Computing Center. EPPS has two computing laboratories which have over 30 computers that are network linked and equipped with major social science software packages, including E-Views, R, Rats, PASW and STATA. A computerized geographic information system, the Lexis Nexis Database, and West Law are also available for student use. The University's Computing Center provides personal computers and UNIX Workstations. Many important data and reference materials are also available online via the library's and UTD's memberships in numerous organizations. All Criminology Program communications are done with students via UT Dallas email accounts as per university policy and it is the student's responsibility to check this email account frequently for important correspondence.

Prerequisites

For the Master of Science in Criminology, students with an undergraduate degree in Criminology or a related field will have the necessary academic foundation to begin their graduate coursework. Applicants are not required to have an undergraduate degree in criminology or a related field, but such training facilitates the pursuit of advanced degrees in criminology. Applicants are required to have a passing grade in an upper division, undergraduate statistics course. If this requirement is not met, the applicant may be admitted conditionally for one semester during which time the student must fulfill this prerequisite. After the conditional semester, an updated application is reviewed for a final determination of admission by the Graduate Committee. If students receive a conditional acceptance to the Program upon their application, they will be directed to enroll as a non-degree seeking student. Upon their meeting all conditions and approval by the Graduate Director, these students will become fully admitted graduate students within the Criminology Program. At that time, students are required to submit another application to change their status officially with the Graduate Dean's Office. Students should consult with the Graduate Dean's Office for current information on this reapplication process. In addition, students who lack any criminology background are strongly encouraged to complete an undergraduate Criminology theory and methods course at UT Dallas or their

equivalents at an approved accredited institution prior to admission into the graduate program. Fast Track Students should review admissions requirements set forth below.

Graduate Transfer Credit Policies

Students who have previous graduate course work that is comparable to the curriculum of the UT Dallas Graduate Criminology Program may be awarded up to 15 hours of transfer credit toward their Master of Science degree upon consultation with the Graduate Program Director. It is solely up to the discretion of the Criminology Graduate Program Director and Graduate Dean's Office as to how these transfer credits are applied (i.e., whether credit will be given for core classes or whether hours may be awarded toward electives). Final transfer credit determinations will be awarded in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined in the University's General Academic Regulations after a review of official transcripts. A degree-seeking student may petition to have graduate coursework taken at another institution be counted towards satisfying the master's or doctoral degree requirements. All petitions for transfer of credit are subject to the limitation that less than 50% of the total requirement of any graduate degree may be transfer credits.

For a student to get credit for any specific core class, an official transcript and an official explanation of the course numbering system at the school where the credit was earned should accompany the transfer request that must be prepared by the student's Graduate Director and submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies for approval. In order to receive transfer credits for specific courses, students must provide the following upon request of the Graduate Director and/or the Graduate Dean's office:

- Official course description from the graduate catalog of the other university;
- Course Syllabus and examples of coursework completed

To qualify for transfer of credit of any class, the grade earned in the course must be a B or better from an accredited college or university, and the course must not be a correspondence or extension course. Transfer of master's level credit into a doctoral program is limited to a maximum of 36 hours. Also, the University does not award transfer credit for experiential learning, performance, or experience that occurs prior to enrollment. Courses delivered in a distance learning format will be considered by the Graduate Dean on a case-by-case basis.

All petitions for transfer of credit for coursework taken prior to enrolling at U.T. Dallas should be submitted to Graduate Director by the student prior to filing a Program of Studies; however, acceptance of transfer of credit hours will not occur until after the student has completed 9 semester credit hours at U.T. Dallas with a grade point average of at least 3.0. All petitions must be processed and approved no later than the semester prior to anticipated graduation. Accordingly, requests to take courses at another institution during the semester a student plans to graduate cannot be approved because the grades may not be received in time to certify the student for graduation. No more than 15 semester credit hours taken as a non-degree student at U.T. Dallas can be subsequently applied to a degree program at U.T. Dallas. Exceptions to these transfer policies may be granted only on petition to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

These policies are subject to change by the Graduate Dean's Office and it is the student's responsibility to verify they are in compliance with current policy at the time of their transfer into the Program. See <http://www.utdallas.edu/provost/documents/PM-48.pdf> for more information on the graduate transfer credit policy.

Students wishing to transfer into the Criminology Graduate Program from another graduate program at UT Dallas must get prior written approval from the Graduate Director and be reviewed by the Graduate Program Committee to determine if the student meets the minimum admission requirements prior to formal admission in the program. A student wishing to change programs within their same UTD School must see their advisor prior to registration and no later than the first day of classes of a semester/term. If the change of program is approved, the student will then be responsible for meeting all program requirements and course prerequisites of the catalog in effect at the time of the change.

Program of Studies Policy

Each student admitted to a graduate program will have a specific program of studies agreed upon in consultation with the Graduate Studies Committee or graduate advisor for Criminology per the degree plan for the program. A complete Program of Studies Form will be filed in and approved by the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies prior to the student's registration for his/ her 19th semester credit hour to be counted toward a master's degree.

Fast Track Program for UT Dallas Undergraduate Students

A number of programs at UT Dallas, including Criminology, offer an accelerated Fast Track option that allows undergraduate students to take graduate-level classes prior to graduation with a bachelor's degree. Specific admission requirements for Fast Track programs can be found within the descriptions of majors. Undergraduate students at UT Dallas who have been admitted to Fast Track programs leading to baccalaureate/master's degrees may, with the permission of the student's EPPS Undergraduate Associate Dean and Graduate Director of Criminology take a maximum of 15 specified semester credit hours of graduate work. Students in the Fast Track Program are NOT required to take the Graduate Record Examination to be considered for this program. When accepted to this program, qualified seniors may take graduate courses that will simultaneously apply toward the Bachelor of Science degree while satisfying requirements that will be applied toward the Master of Science degree. These graduate courses will be selected from a list determined by the School. In Criminology, Fast Track students are encouraged to follow the suggested graduate course sequence provided in this handbook (and to complete as many core classes within Criminology (e.g., theory, methods, statistics, and senior seminar) as possible prior to entrance to ensure success in these graduate classes. See the degree plan for Criminology MS for more information at:

http://epps.utdallas.edu/degree_plans/ug/CRIM_08-10.pdf and consult with your Criminology Undergraduate Advisor.

Admission to the Criminology Fast Track Program requires that students:

1. Have completed at least 15 hours at UT Dallas.
2. Have completed at least 90 hours toward BS degree.
3. Of these 90 hours, at least 18 hours must be Criminology classes
4. Are within 30 hours of graduation.
5. Have a minimum overall cumulative GPA of 3.00.
6. Although admission requirements vary across programs, the Criminology Program requires that students submit three letters of recommendation, Graduate Record Exam scores and a statement of purpose. With few exceptions, students who wish to enter the Fast-Track program must have a Criminology GPA of at least 3.5 within the Criminology major.
7. Have completed all lower-level required general education courses.
8. Have completed SOCS 3405 (UG STATS) or its equivalent.
9. File paperwork with the Undergraduate Advisor for Criminology and get written approval from the Graduate Director to apply as a Fast Track student.

To remain in a Fast Track Program a student must:

1. Maintain an overall GPA of at least 3.0.
2. Students are expected to get grades of B or better in all graduate courses. If students earn a grade of C on a graduate course, that course will only count towards an undergraduate degree.
3. For each semester as a Fast Track Student, the student signs up to take graduate courses for undergraduate credit. These credit hours are counted toward the minimum 120 undergraduate hours needed to graduate. When a student registers each semester, they are responsible for filling out a Fast-Track Program Course Application and Registration Form (obtained at your Criminology Advisor's office) so that the Registrar's Office knows that they intend to apply the courses to both your undergraduate and graduate degrees. In addition, the student must get both the EPPS Associate Dean and the Criminology Program Graduate Director to sign off on a Substitution of Graduate Courses for Undergraduate Requirements form that is also available in the EPPS Associate Dean's office.
4. Students must pass at least two graduate courses with grades of B or better before they graduate with a BS degree.
5. During a student's entire undergraduate experience at UTD, including the period of membership in the Fast-Track program, they must not repeat more than three courses, and must not repeat any course more than once.
6. If, at any time, students fail to satisfy these requirements, they will be removed from the Fast Track program. Any graduate credits earned will be applied only to your undergraduate degree, and none of the other benefits of membership of the Fast Track program will apply.

Fast Track courses taken during the undergraduate senior year must be well chosen so that they satisfy the requirements of the BS degree AND those of the intended MS degree. Students in one major may choose to Fast Track into another major. Students can

take the Fast Track courses as substitutes for major required courses, as guided and/or free electives. The graduate course drop policy applies to all graduate courses. Students should consult the academic calendar for those dates.

Please note that in graduate courses students will be evaluated the same way as admitted graduate students: only grades of B or better are considered “acceptable” and transferable. In other words, if you earn a grade of C or below in a graduate course you will not earn credit from the course toward a graduate degree. Students enrolling in a Fast Track Program will be academically evaluated and held to the same grading standards in the same manner as graduate students are in their graduate courses.

At the time the student officially enrolls and transfers into the Criminology Program as a graduate student, the total number of hours needed to earn the masters is reduced by the number of graduate hours (up to 15) the student earned a grade of B or better in as an undergraduate. The specific course hours are not, however, transferred forward on to the graduate transcript. Rather, the graduate program reduces the total number of hours needed to graduate and gives the student program credit for having completed the courses taken as an undergraduate. Note that the Fast Track Program is internal to UTD.

Graduate courses taken for undergraduate credit at UTD will not transfer as graduate hours to any other college or university.

Please note that all students who transfer into the Criminology MS program without a GRE score are required to take this entrance exam prior to application to the Ph.D. program to be considered for admittance. These students are encouraged to take this exam well prior to their application being due, as no special considerations will be provided for Fast Track students who do not need minimum admission requirements for the doctoral program. In addition, students who use their Fast Track course credits to meet both the BS/MS degree requirements will need to take an additional amount of credits equal to this number of Fast Track credit hours if they seek their doctoral degree. For example, if a student took 9 hours of Fast Track credit hours, they would only be taking 27 hours to complete their MS. If they applied and were accepted into the Ph.D. program, 90 total credit hours are required and that student would only have 27 hours toward that degree upon their admission to the doctoral program, leaving 63 outstanding credit hours to achieve their Ph.D.

Degree Requirements (MS in Criminology)

Students seeking a Master of Science in Criminology degree must complete 36 semester credit hours of coursework in the program. This curriculum includes 15 hours of required core classes in Criminology, another 15 hours of electives, and six hours of independent research (CRIM 6V96) to satisfy the analytical paper writing requirement OR six hours of additional electives for students not wishing to continue on to the Ph.D. See the degree plan that follows for specific information on the core requirements, course numbers and descriptions, and electives that satisfy the Criminology Master of Science degree. *Important: Students who enter the Criminology Program as doctoral-track are not automatically awarded a MS degree upon meeting these course requirements. Students are required by the Graduate Dean’s Office to apply for this degree no earlier*

than the semester prior to the anticipated graduate date. Students are strongly encouraged to apply for this degree to show a clear matriculation into the Doctoral Program and to provide documentation for future employment opportunities.

Analytical Paper Writing Requirement (MS in Criminology)

In order to track into the Doctoral Program, all students must complete a writing requirement while enrolled in the M.S. Program or satisfy the requirement by transferring research or writing credits from another accredited academic institution. For current M.S. students on the doctoral track, a minimum of six hours of enrollment in CRIM 6V96 and the completion of an analytical research paper are required to complete the M.S. and matriculate into the doctoral program. If a student was originally admitted into the program as a MS student and wishes to be considered for admission to the Doctoral Program upon completion of the MS, s/he must competitively re-apply to the program by the deadline and await an admissions decision from the Graduate Program Committee upon completion of all Tier I requirements including the analytical paper writing requirement.

To meet the analytical paper requirement, students are required to write an original research paper, present their findings in a colloquium setting, and ideally submit the paper for peer review at an academic journal. Students must adhere to the policies of the UTD Institutional Review Board (IRB) and get all necessary approval/s from the IRB prior to starting a project (see Section D regarding IRB conditions for the dissertation or consult the Office of Research homepage for more information).

Per the policies of Graduate Studies, the appointment of the Supervising Committee for this requirement must consist of at least three members is a function of the degree program expected to confer the student's degree. Additional members may be appointed. All committee appointments must be approved by Criminology Graduate Director and the Dean of Graduate Studies. This committee must be composed of at least two voting Criminology faculty members, one of which will serve as Committee Chair or Co-Chair. Voting faculty hold the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, or Assistant Professor. Adjunct Faculty, Clinical Faculty, Distinguished Scholars in Residence, Emeritus Faculty, Research Professors, Research Scientists, Senior Lecturers, or Visiting Faculty who hold the highest earned degree or exhibit an equivalent record of accomplishment in the field or fields of the research or aesthetics may be appointed as Chair if he/she receives a 2/3 majority recommendation of the Professors of the degree program and approval of the Academic Dean of the School offering the degree.

Students are encouraged to begin considering this writing requirement at the beginning of their MS degree plan and to start approaching professors about research ideas and building relationships that moves them toward choosing a major professor to direct their project. Two additional professors are required to serve on the committee; one of these professors may be employed in another UT Dallas program or at another institution of higher learning. While a faculty member outside the UT Dallas Criminology Program, but not outside of UTD, may serve as a Co-Chair, students must have the approval of

their Criminology faculty Chair regarding their committee structure. Per the Criminology Program, students wishing to work actively with any UT Dallas Criminology faculty on an analytical paper during any given semester must be registered for a minimum of one credit hour in CRIM 6V96 Analytical Writing Research with that faculty member. Once students have an approved analytical paper draft from their committee, an oral defense date will be scheduled and announced by the Criminology Program Assistant. This paper presentation will be similar to a colloquium setting and open to the university community. Upon the completion of final edits to their paper from their committee, students are responsible for meeting all guidelines, minimum credit hours, (thesis) formatting, and deadlines outlined by the office of the Dean of Graduate Studies at UT Dallas. Please access their website at:

<http://www.utdallas.edu/dept/graddean/dgFront.htm>.

The analytical research paper for the MS degree is not the same as a dissertation. It is analogous to a thesis and therefore faculty mentoring, supervision, and advisement are common as students move toward meeting this requirement. For doctoral students, the analytical paper must be successfully defended before admittance into candidacy and registering for dissertation hours. Doctoral students who come into the Ph.D. program without the writing (analytical paper) requirement met should consult the Ph.D. handbook/catalog that corresponds to their degree plan for specific requirements for these students. While components of the analytical paper may be used in the student's dissertation project, the dissertation must extend and significantly expand upon this work considerably. Any extensions of the analytical paper toward meeting the dissertation should be agreed upon in advance with the student's doctoral dissertation advisor.

Non-Writing Requirement for the MS in Criminology

MS students on a terminal track who do not wish to be considered for admission into the doctoral program have the option of taking 6 hours of any EPPS graduate classes as electives in lieu of the writing requirement. All students must achieve at least a 3.0 grade point average in both the Criminology core courses and as an overall grade point average to graduate to complete Tier I requirements and achieve the MS in Criminology degree. Students should be aware that most PhD program require that students have completed a thesis, or equivalent, for admission. Students wishing to earn a PhD at UT Dallas or elsewhere should complete the writing requirement.

The doctoral dissertation or three-paper option is a separate requirement and is described in detail in the Doctoral Program Handbook under Section D.

Dual Master's Degrees

Per the Graduate Dean's office, students are encouraged to pursue additional master's degrees at The University of Texas at Dallas. To the extent that the requirements of some master's degrees overlap, some of the credit hours taken in pursuit of previously earned master's degrees at U.T. Dallas may be counted toward an additional master's degree. The only limitation is that one-half of the credit hours for any master's degree earned at U.T. Dallas must be satisfied by new course work. Thus, any student wishing to gain a

MS in Criminology is required to take a minimum of 18 hours with new course work from this program. A student is required to develop an approved plan of studies through the Criminology MS with the Graduate Director prior to enrolling in a dual degree. Similarly, a student wishing to earn two master's degrees concurrently must develop an approved plan of studies through both relevant departments or programs. All coursework for any degree must meet the academic standards of that degree.

Funding Opportunities

Students who were accepted into the graduate program at the doctoral level automatically matriculate into the Doctoral Program upon completion of their MS requirements, provided they meet all requirements for acceptance. Students who are applying into the graduate program with their Bachelor's degree and who intend to seek funding and continue into the Doctoral Program should apply for admission as a doctoral student to be considered for university funding lines. There are limited funding opportunities for Master's students. Students should note their desire to be considered for graduate student funding as a teaching or research assistant in their letter of intent to the program at the time of application or notify the graduate director if they wish consideration at a later date upon admittance. Funding is extremely competitive, merit-based, and can range from a small stipend to a full assistantship depending upon available funding to the program. Continual funding is not guaranteed and is dependent upon budgets from year to year. Most funding opportunities run on the 9-month academic calendar unless otherwise noted. Student funding may be revoked at the discretion of the program due to poor academic performance, substandard work, not meeting job commitments with professors, or if the student does not maintain good standing at the university. Please contact the Graduate Director for more information on graduate assistantships or funding opportunities through the Criminology Program.

Time Limits

Per the Graduate Dean's Office, all requirements for a graduate degree, including transfer credit, must be completed within the specified time period. Students exceeding the specified time limit will not be eligible for their degrees and will be dismissed from the graduate program. An approved leave of absence will not alter the time limits placed on graduate degrees.

All requirements for the master's degree must be completed within one six-year period. All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within one ten-year period. Students whose master's degrees are accepted for full credit toward a Ph.D. must complete all requirements for the doctoral degree within one eight-year period. Work exceeding these limits, whether done at this university or elsewhere, will not count towards the degree. Exceptions to time limit specifications must be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Catalog Policy

Provided the requisite courses continue to be offered, students are bound by the course work requirements of the catalog in force at the time of their admission, within a six-year limit for the completion of the master's degree and ten years for the doctoral degree. With the approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies students may elect to be bound by the catalog in force at the time the student applies for graduation. This regulation applies to specific course work and the number of semester credit hours for the academic degrees set forth in the catalog. All other requirements will change or be continued with the issuance of new graduate catalogs.

TIER I COURSEWORK AND CREDIT HOURS—MS in Criminology

15 Hours of required Criminology core classes:

CRIM 5310 Research Design I
CRIM 5313 Descriptive and Inferential Statistics
CRIM 6300 Proseminar in Criminology
CRIM 6303 Etiology of Crime and Criminality.
CRIM 6311 Crime and Justice Policy

PLUS 15 hours of Electives:

9 hours in Criminology graduate courses

6 hours open electives in ANY PROGRAM or school outside Criminology

PLUS 6 hours of CRIM 6V96 Analytical Writing Research (for Ph.D. track students)

or 6 hours of graduate-level course electives (for students wishing to terminate at MS)

Total Tier I Hours: 36

Illustrative Curriculum Sequencing for Tier I

(with 9 hours of classes per semester)

YEAR 1 FALL SEMESTER:

3 hrs. CRIM 6300 Proseminar in Criminology
3 hrs. CRIM 5310 Research Design I
3 hrs. Elective

YEAR 1 SPRING SEMESTER:

3 hrs. CRIM 5313 Descriptive and Inferential Statistics
3 hrs. CRIM 6303 Etiology of Crime & Criminality
3 hrs. Elective

YEAR 2 FALL SEMESTER

3 hrs. CRIM 6311 Crime and Justice Policy
3 hrs. Elective
3 hrs. Elective

YEAR 2 SPRING SEMESTER

3 hrs. Elective

EITHER 6 hrs: CRIM 6V96 Analytical Writing for students tracking into Doctoral Program OR 6 hrs: Any 2 EPPS Electives

IMPORTANT: This catalog and handbook is subject to change at any time pending university, graduate dean's office, and program amendments. Students are fully responsible for staying informed of and in compliance with new Graduate Studies policies and should meet with the Graduate Director to ensure that all requirements are met on a regular basis throughout their attendance in the program and prior to graduation applications being processed. The policies set forth in this handbook default to new university policies that may be amended without notice.

Last revised: 8/7/2009