

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

What can I do with this major?

AREAS

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

EMPLOYERS

Government agencies including Child Protective Services
State and federal correction facilities
County jails
Precinct station houses
Prison camps
Youth correction facilities
Voluntary correction 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

STRATEGIES

Pursue classes or training in topics such as victimology, social problems, diversity issues, or grieving.
Supplement curriculum with courses in psychology, sociology, or social work.
To work with juveniles, gain experience working 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, and rehabilitation, etc.
Learn to work well with people of diverse backgrounds. Consider learning 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
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 social sciences such as psychology, anthropology, sociology, or political science.
Attend a postsecondary vocational or technical college that offers court reporting (CR) or paralegal (CLA) certification programs.
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 grade point average to gain admittance to law school. Research admissions requirements.

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 labs
 Penitentiaries

Federal Government Organizations including:

U.S. Customs and Border Protection
 Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI)
 Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
 Drug Enforcement Agency (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.

Learn a second language.

Become familiar with the government application process.

Some federal law enforcement agencies look to hire candidates with military backgrounds.

For a career in Forensics:

Complete an internship in a crime laboratory to gain experience in the forensic application of science.

Obtain a double major in criminal justice and a hard science such as biology, chemistry, or biochemistry.

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

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

EMPLOYERS

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

STRATEGIES

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

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

- Many criminal justice professions require candidates to possess strong oral and written communication skills and good computer skills. The ability to speak 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.
- Develop good listening skills and the ability to work well with a wide range of diverse populations.
- Most entry-level positions for criminal justice majors reside with law enforcement and social service organizations.
- 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.
- 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.
- Conduct informational interviews with professionals in fields of interest to learn more about opportunities.
- Be prepared to complete physical and psychological testing, fitness evaluations, and other evaluative tools for entry into law enforcement and related careers.
- Stay up to date on advancements in your field by reading professional journals and related literature, as well as by joining professional organizations and networking with others.