



DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

A GUIDE TO GRADUATE PROGRAMS:
FOR STUDENTS ADMITTED IN FALL
2025 (Rev. 12/2025)



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
ADMISSION TO GRADUATE STUDY	
Admission to the Graduate School	1
Financial Aid	1
International Student Admission	2
Delay of Admission	2
Minimum Admission Requirements	2
ADVISEMENT AND PROGRAM PLANNING	
Advisement	3
Program Planning	3
THE MASTERS OF ARTS DEGREE	
Introduction	4
Transfer of Credit	5
Time Limit	5
Program Requirements	6
Joint Degree MA/Juris Doctorate Degree Program	7
THE DOCTORAL DEGREE	
Introduction	8
Curriculum Summary	9
Transfer of Credit	10
Time Limit	10
Residence Requirement	11
Registration Requirement	11
PhD Qualifying Examination and Doctoral Assessment	11
Admission to Candidacy	16
Dissertation Requirements	16
Dissertation Proposals	17
Dissertation Committees	17
Oral Defense	18
Dissertation Approval	18
Application for Diploma	18
GRADUATE STUDENT MENTORSHIP	
General Principles	23
Statement of Mutual Expectations	24

ADMISSION TO GRADUATE STUDY

ADMISSION TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Students with a BA/BS degree may choose to apply for entry either into the Master's Program or directly into the Ph.D. program. Such students admitted directly into the Ph.D. program will complete the requirements of the Master's program before beginning Ph.D.-level work.

For admission to graduate study at the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice, the applicant must first be admitted to the University of Maryland Graduate School. Please visit <http://gradschool.umd.edu/admissions/application-process> to apply.

The Department requires that **all** applicants arrange for submission of official Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores from the Educational Testing Service using institutional code **5814**.

Decisions on Fall semester admissions will be made for those whose completed applications and submitted supporting materials have been received by the Graduate School and the Department on or before **December 17th**. Applications for both the MA and Ph.D. programs are accepted for **Fall entry** only.

If the application is favorably recommended by the Department, this decision is sent to the Graduate School. The Graduate School then notifies the applicant of admission and asks for acknowledgement of acceptance. If the applicant is not favorably recommended for graduate study by the Department, then the Graduate School notifies the applicant of the decision.

FINANCIAL AID

The financial aid most regularly available in the Department is in the form of graduate teaching and research assistantships, which are offered to doctoral students (**note that students with a BA or BS degree can apply directly into the PhD program**). Other regularly available forms of financial aid are listed in the Graduate Catalog, and the appropriate application procedures are discussed. A small number of scholarships and fellowships are also available to the most outstanding new PhD applicants. During the application process applicants can indicate their interest in graduate assistantship and financial aid consideration. No separate application is required.

For continuing students, applications for financial aid are due in January each year. The Program Coordinator will provide current students with an application and alert them of the deadline.

A graduate teaching or research assistantship provides a stipend and remission of tuition for up to ten credit hours per semester. The appointment to an assistantship is for one academic year (9.5 months) and may be renewed for up to five years (four years for students entering with an MA in Criminology/Criminal Justice). Renewal is dependent upon the student's performance as an

assistant as well as making satisfactory progress through the program.

The duties of an assistant require up to 20 hours of work per week as assigned. The assignment usually consists of assisting one or more professors in their teaching and/or research responsibilities. There are several positions for teaching assistantships that will entail primarily assistance with pedagogical tasks such as leading discussion groups, holding office hours, and grading. Other assistantships may include a range of research and teaching tasks. In addition, assistants may also be expected to assist in some general departmental administrative duties, such as helping to design surveys of current students or with the CCJS website. Students and their supervisors are required to complete the Statement of Mutual Expectations (SME) form, and students are expected to upload a copy of their SME on Workday, following guidelines by the Graduate School. These forms for research and teaching assistantships are available here: <https://gradschool.umd.edu/forms>.

There is no policy at the University of Maryland prohibiting graduate students from seeking additional off-campus employment. However, “it is expected that the combined responsibilities of graduate studies and assistantship duties will fully occupy a student during the academic year.”¹ In addition, the department has discretionary power to terminate a student’s assistantship, after the conclusion of the current appointment, if they are not fulfilling their responsibilities to the department.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADMISSION

In their application, international applicants must also include scores on Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the International English Language Test (IELTS) or the Pearson Test of English (PTE) if English is not the native language. Proper immigration documents and evidence of financial resources are also required. The GRE is not waived for foreign students. Applications will **not** be processed without the application fee.

DELAY OF ADMISSION

A written offer of admission by the Dean for Graduate Studies is made to an applicant who meets all admission requirements. The offer specifies the date of entrance which will normally coincide with the date requested in the application. The offer of admission must be accepted or declined by the date specified in the offer. If the Graduate School is not notified by the date specified, the offer of admission lapses and the space is reassigned to another applicant. An individual whose offer of admission has lapsed must submit a new application and fee if he or she wants to be reconsidered for admission at a later date.

Any student who cannot register in the authorized semester must immediately submit a written request to have the date of admission extended. This request must be sent to the Director of Graduate Records in the Graduate School, University of Maryland and copied to the Department.

¹ <https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/policies-graduate-assistantships/#text>

MINIMUM ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The Graduate School requires that students submit the following materials for admission consideration: a statement of purpose; GRE scores; transcript(s) from the prior educational institution(s); 3 letters of recommendation; CV/Resume; and TOEFL/IELTS/PTE for international students. In addition, the Department requires a Writing Sample. If an applicant has studied at the graduate level elsewhere, less weight may be, but is not necessarily, placed on the quality of the undergraduate academic record. The Department has a preference for students who have a background in social science and/or research.

ADVISEMENT AND PROGRAM PLANNING

ADVISEMENT

After a graduate student is recommended for admission, the student is advised by the Director of Graduate Studies until the student is assigned to an academic advisor. The Graduate Director and Graduate Coordinator, in consultation with the graduate student, will select an academic advisor before the start date of the first semester. Academic advisors will serve as mentors who will encourage, support, and assist in planning the degree program and be available for consultation on matters of professional development. The graduate student and academic advisor will meet at least once per semester to discuss the student's academic progress. Topics of discussion may include thesis or dissertation progress, funding and assistantship status, authorship on papers, professional development, and other topics of interest to the student. In general, questions about which courses to take to meet program requirements should go to the Graduate Coordinator and Director of Graduate Studies.

If students desire to change their advisor, they should consult with the Graduate Coordinator and the Director of Graduate Studies, identify a new academic advisor and ask them to take them on as an advisee, and then complete the CCJS Advisor Change form, available here: <https://ccjs.umd.edu/graduate/other-graduate-student-resources>. This form is designed to make it easy and straightforward to change the department-assigned advisor. In order for the change to be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies, the student and proposed new mentor will need to agree.

PROGRAM PLANNING

The student must consult with the Director of Graduate Studies and Graduate Coordinator prior to registering for the first semester's course work. The Director of Graduate Studies and Graduate Coordinator will assist in planning the degree program. Students should bear in mind that the Department, or the Graduate School is under no obligation to accept any courses to be applied to the student's official program as approved by the Graduate School which are not a part of the program developed with the advisor's assistance. The policies governing degree programs are subject to modification from time to time.

The policies in effect at the time of enrollment are binding upon the students, and subsequently established program requirements may not be imposed retroactively.

THE MASTER'S DEGREE

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice offers a Master of Arts (MA) program¹, which will result in the receipt of a Master's degree in criminology and criminal justice. The Graduate School requires a minimum of 30 semester hours in courses approved for graduate credit that must include six hours of thesis research credits (CCJS 799).

MA students must successfully complete a thesis. The academic advisor and the thesis advisor may be different faculty members. The student also has the option of having co-chairs for their MA committee. Students should not commence formally working on a thesis until they have chosen a thesis advisor and consulted with them concerning the intended research topic and their research plans. The student should also consult with the thesis advisor at the start of their thesis to discuss the other members of the graduate faculty whom they intend to ask to serve on the Master's thesis committee. Once the student has assembled their thesis committee, they must complete and submit their [Nomination of Committee Form](#). If a student wishes to have a committee member who is outside of the department, they must request for this person to be [added to the Graduate Faculty](#). The graduate student and thesis advisor(s) will meet at least once per semester, or more as needed, to provide feedback on the MA thesis in progress and discuss mutually agreed upon timelines for submission and feedback (e.g. two weeks). Students should submit any written work at least two weeks before a meeting with a faculty member and should expect faculty to provide feedback in a timely manner. Students should keep the thesis advisor(s) aware of progress the student is making.

An examining committee appointed by the Dean of Graduate Studies must approve the thesis. When the thesis is completed and ready for oral defense, the advisor files a Nomination of Examining Committee form with the Graduate School, certifying that the thesis is completed and listing the proposed committee members. The Graduate School Dean then sends the Department Coordinator a form approving the committee and listing any incomplete grades. The student's thesis advisor is Chairperson of the committee and the remaining members of the committee are members of the graduate faculty of the University who are familiar with the student's program of study. The examining committee consists of a minimum of three members, at least two of which must be members of the Department's faculty. In most instances the full committee will be selected from the faculty of the Department.

It should be noted that if the research conducted for completion of the thesis requires the use of human subjects, the proposed study must be approved by the Department's and University's Human Subjects Committees, well in advance of any data collection. Each student's advisor is aware of the appropriate procedures involved in obtaining approval of these committees.

A final oral defense of the thesis shall be held when the student has completed his or her thesis to

the satisfaction of the advisor. The Chairperson of the examining committee selects the time and place for the examination and notifies the other members and the candidate. Members of the committee must be given a minimum of ten school days to read the thesis.

The oral defense is normally an hour, but it may be longer. The defense may be attended by Department faculty and graduate students and the committee Chairperson may open the discussion to those present for questions and comments. Upon satisfactory completion of the oral defense, the committee signs the form sent by the Graduate School. It is returned by the Chairperson to the Dean of the Graduate School no later than the appropriate date listed in "Important Dates for Graduate Students" if the student is to graduate in the semester in which the oral examination is given. The "Important Dates" information can be obtained either from the Graduate School or from the Department's Graduate Office.

Any student who wants to graduate in a certain semester should not only consult the deadlines listed in "Important Dates" but should also consult with his or her thesis advisor before the beginning of the registration period of the semester in which the student intends to graduate in order to make sure all the necessary course work has been completed. The student should consult the *Graduate Catalog* for directions on the preparation and submission of the thesis. <https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/>.

TRANSFER OF CREDIT

A maximum of **six** semester hours of graduate-level course credits earned at regionally accredited institutions prior to, or after, matriculation in the Graduate School may be applied toward the requirements of the Master's degree at the University of Maryland. Transfer of credit may not be applied toward the requirements of the PhD.

To count toward the Master's degree, all graduate study transfer credits must meet the following criteria: (1) they must have received graduate credit at the institution where earned; (2) they must not have been used to meet the requirements for any degree previously earned; (3) they must have been taken within the time limits applicable to degrees awarded by the Graduate School; that is, they must have been taken within the five-year time limit for completing the Master's degree; (4) the department or program to which the student has been admitted at Maryland must certify that the courses are appropriate to the degree program the student is pursuing at Maryland; that is, the course must be approved by the graduate affairs committee; and, (5) the student must have earned a "B" or better in the course offered for transfer credit. The request for transfer of credit, the necessary transcripts, and certification of Department approval must be submitted to the Graduate School at the earliest possible date. The Master's degree cannot be awarded until the Graduate School has the official transcript for the credit to be transferred. If the credit is taken after matriculation, the student must receive prior approval of the credit from the graduate affairs committee. The request for transfer is then submitted to the Graduate School.³

² May be found on the University's Graduate School website: www.gradschool.umd.edu

³ Visit https://gradschool.umd.edu/form_s to obtain form.

TIME LIMIT

All requirements for the Master's degree must be completed within five (5) years of the entrance date. One extension of up to one year may be granted at the discretion of the Department.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The Graduate School makes the following requirements regarding all Master's degrees. The entire course of study for any Master's degree must constitute a unified, coherent program which is approved by the student's advisor and by the Graduate School. The student must have a minimum of 30 semester hours in courses acceptable for credit toward a graduate degree. Additional courses may be required if the student is inadequately prepared for the required graduate courses. According to The Graduate School, the student must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or greater to remain enrolled. In addition, a graduate student's funding may be affected if they do not maintain a GPA of a 3.5 or higher, since this is what is considered "good academic standing" by departmental standards, and the retention of assistantships is contingent on being in good academic standing.

The Graduate School states that grades for courses not a part of the program, but taken in graduate status, will be computed in the average. Any "D" or "F" grade on the record may be repeated, with the second grade replacing the first. Students may not repeat a course a third time. If courses with "D" or "F" grades are not repeated, they are computed in the grade point average as an "F" (zero quality points). However, in the latter case, they are not counted as part of the degree requirements and additional course work must be done. Any incomplete grades that are not removed and replaced with acceptable letter grades will be computed in the same manner. In addition, the Department's policy is that any graduate student who received a grade of "D" or "F" in two different courses will be dismissed from the program.

The residence requirement requires that before a request for classification to in-state status will be considered, a student must comply with all of the following requirements for a period of at least twelve (12) consecutive months immediately prior to and including the last date available to register for courses in the semester/term for which the student seeks in-state tuition status. Requirements to be satisfied are located at the Residency Clarification Office website. **The student must be registered for at least one credit in the semester he or she plans to graduate.**

The general plan of study for the Traditional M.A. student is as follows:

- **CCJS 600** (Criminal Justice), **CCJS 610** (Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology) and **CCJS 651** (Seminar in Criminology) are required courses that must be passed with a grade of "B -" or better.
- **CCJS 620** (Fundamentals for Criminological Research) and **CCJS 621** (The General Linear Model) are required courses that must be passed with a grade of "B -" or better.
- Three graduate-level (e.g., 600 or above) elective courses.
- A thesis.

Example of Curriculum Plan for Students who enter the Master's program

	Fall	Spring
Year 1 Total Credits: 18	<u>CCJS 600</u> : Seminar in Criminal Justice <u>CCJS 620</u> : Fundamentals for Criminological Research Elective	<u>CCJS 610</u> : Research Methods <u>CCJS 621</u> : General Linear Models <u>CCJS 651</u> : Seminar in Criminology
Year 2 Total Credits: 12	<u>CCJS 799</u> : Master's Thesis Research (3 credit hours) Elective	<u>CCJS 799</u> : Master's Thesis Research (3 credit hours) Elective (See Note below)

STUDENTS TRANSFERRING FROM UMD MA TO PHD PROGRAM

Students who apply for and enter the PhD program directly from the University of Maryland Criminology and Criminal Justice MA program will be treated the same as students who directly entered into the doctoral program with a BA/BS. This means that they will be expected to complete the doctoral program in three academic years and they will be expected to take the Qualifying Exam during January of the first year of their doctoral studies. These students will also be assessed for doctoral candidacy in April of that same year. MA students who are unfunded during part of their MA program can petition for an additional year of doctoral program funding, which is decided upon by the Awards and Admissions Committee. Academic assessments will be performed for all students in the MA and PhD programs and will be used for MA students only in the case that they decide to apply for the PhD program.*

*Faculty should be careful to advise incoming MA students of this policy if they may be interested in eventually applying to the PhD program.

MA/JD JOINT DEGREE PROGRAM

The Graduate program in Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Maryland, College Park, and the University of Maryland, School of Law (located in Baltimore) offers a joint program of studies leading to a MA/JD degree.

Under the terms of this program, a student may earn both degrees in four academic years. Up to nine

(9) credit hours received from the Law School are transferable and will be considered as electives towards your MA degree. Full applications are **REQUIRED** for both schools.

Candidates must be admitted to both programs separately. Admission to one program does not automatically guarantee admissions in the other. Grade point averages in each program will be computed separately and students must maintain minimum standards in each school to continue in the program and receive both degrees. If a student's enrollment is terminated in either program, the student may elect to complete work for the degree in which he/she remains enrolled, but such completion must be upon the same conditions as required of regular (non-joint program) degree candidates. Students must submit an approved course of study by the Graduate Director of UMCP and the Dean of the Law School. For more information regarding the joint MA/JD program, please contact:

University of Maryland, Baltimore
Francis King Carey School of Law
Justice 520 West Lombard Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-706-3492
admissions@law.umaryland.edu

University of Maryland, College Park
Department of Criminology & Criminal
2220 LeFrak Hall
College Park, MD 20742
301-405-6838
criminologydept@umd.edu

THE DOCTORAL DEGREE

INTRODUCTION

For completion of the Ph.D. degree, competence in theory, research methodology and quantitative techniques is expected, as well as competence in the general field of criminology and criminal justice and in some specialization area within criminology or criminal justice selected by the student with Department approval.

If students admitted to the doctoral program have not completed the equivalent of **CCJS 600** (Criminal Justice), **CCJS 610** (Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology), and **CCJS 651** (Seminar in Criminology), they will be required to complete these courses. Also, any student who enters the Ph.D. program with an MA/MS and did not complete a Master's thesis must complete one in our program.

All doctoral students must complete (1) **CCJS 710** (Advanced Statistical Methods - Limited Dependent Variables), (2) **CCJS 654** (Advanced Theory), (3) **CCJS 720** (Policy Analysis), (4) **CCJS 700** (Doctoral Research Methods), (5) **five elective courses, one of which must be taken outside the department**, and (6) an advanced course in statistics. CCJS 710 and the advanced statistics course must be completed with a grade of "B - " or better. In addition, students entering the program with an M.A. in Criminology and Criminal Justice will be required to take **CCJS 650** (Research Practicum).

Regarding the advanced statistics course, the Department offers a variety of courses that satisfy the requirements for the elective advanced statistics course (e.g., CCJS 699T Longitudinal Data Analysis, CCJS 699L Seminar on Causal Inference).

In addition, students have the option of requesting that a course be added to the approved list of advanced statistics electives that count towards this requirement. A doctoral student seeking approval for an advanced statistics elective not on the approved list should:

- a. Consult with the academic advisor about a reasonable course
- b. Determine whether the preferred course is already on the approved list
- c. If the preferred course is not on the approved list, the student should work with the advisor to develop a proposal for the course to be added to the list. The proposal should include a point by point explanation of how the course meets the inclusion criteria (1-2 sentences per criterion) along with supporting documentation (e.g. syllabus, catalog description, example assessments, etc.).
- d. The decision to add a course to the approved list will be determined by a majority vote of the CCJS Statistics Advisory Committee
- e. The criteria for determining whether a course can be added to the approved list are set forth here:
 - a. Inclusion criteria:

1. The course should require prior statistics or quantitative coursework at the graduate level as a pre-requisite (based on the syllabus, the course catalog, or the requirements implied by the program through which the course is offered).
 2. The course should cover material that does not repeat the CCJS MA quantitative core (CCJS 620 and 621) -- except for the purpose of introductory review.
 3. The course has demonstrable applications for criminological or criminal justice research. The committee may ask follow-up questions about this.
 4. The course grade is based on student performance on exams, papers, or problem sets that demonstrate mastery of the methods or concepts covered in the course
- b. Exclusion criteria
1. The course largely focuses on content that is already covered by the CCJS statistics sequence, even if it is a different treatment or approach.
 2. The course emphasizes coding languages, software, or visualization techniques without significant emphasis on statistical or quantitative methods.
 3. The course is graded as pass/fail or the rigor of graded assignments cannot be assessed based on available materials (i.e., syllabi, textbook).

The CCJS graduate program coordinator will maintain a list of courses that have been approved by this process within the last 5 years.

Please note that an approved out of department course cannot also fulfill the “one elective outside of department” requirement stated above. Examples of proposals to add a course to the approved list of advanced statistical electives can be found on the PhD program website.

Please also note that many of the courses that will meet the criteria for this requirement are upper level courses in the home department and therefore have prerequisites that may include permission of the instructor.

CURRICULUM SUMMARY

Example of Curriculum Plan for Students who enter the doctoral program with B.A/B.S.

	Fall	Spring
1st Year Total Credits: 18	CCJS 600 Intro to CJ (3) CCJS 620 Fundamentals of CJ Research (3) Elective (3)	CCJS 651 Theory (3) CCJS621 GLM (3) CCJS 610 Research Methods (3)
2 nd Year Total Credits: 12	CCJS 720 Policy Analysis (3) OR CCJS 654 Advanced Theory (3) Thesis Credit (3) Master's thesis proposal completed by end of semester	CCJS 700: Advanced Methods (3) OR Elective (3) Thesis Credit (3) Master's thesis completed by end of semester
3 rd Year Total Credits: 15	CCJS 720 Policy Analysis (3) OR CCJS 654 Advanced Theory (3) CCJS 710 Advanced Statistics (3)	CCJS 700: Advanced Methods OR Elective (3) Advanced Statistics Course OR Elective (3) Elective (3) Qualifying exam in January
4 th Year Total Credits: 12	Dissertation credits (6) Second Required Statistics Course OR Elective (3)	Dissertation credits (6) Elective (3)
5 th Year (if needed)	Dissertation credits (6)	Dissertation credits (6)

Example of Curriculum Plan for Students who enter doctoral program with M.A.

	Fall	Spring
Year 1 Total Credits: 18	CCJS 720 Policy Analysis (3) OR CCJS 654 Advanced Theory (3) CCJS 650: Research Practicum (3) OR CCJS 710: Advanced Statistics (3) Elective (3)	CCJS 700 Advanced Methods (3) Elective (3) Elective (3)
Year 2 Total Credits: 15	CCJS 720 Policy Analysis (3) OR CCJS 654 Advanced Theory (3) CCJS 650: Research Practicum (3) OR CCJS 710: Advanced Statistics(3)	Second required statistics course (3) OR Elective (3) Elective (3) Elective (3) Qualifying exam in January
Year 3 Total Credits: 12	Dissertation credits (6)	Dissertation Credits (6)
Year 4 (if needed)	Dissertation Credits (6)	Dissertation credits (6)

TRANSFER OF CREDIT - PhD PROGRAM

Transfer of credit only applies to students in the MA program, whether admitted as MA or PhD students (see “Transfer of Credit” in the section describing the MA program).

COURSE WAIVER

Once enrolled, students cannot waive program of study requirements outlined in the Program Guide and letter of admission. Any deviation from the standard program of study must be approved prior to accepting the offer of admission. Accepted students should contact the director of graduate studies to request a waiver.

TIME LIMIT

The University requires that a student must be admitted to candidacy within five years after admission to the doctoral program. In addition, the student must be admitted to candidacy at least one academic year before the date on which the degree is to be conferred.

The student must complete the entire program for the degree, including the dissertation and final examination, within a four-year period after admission to candidacy. One extension of time, either for admission to candidacy or for completion of requirements for the doctoral degree, may be granted at the discretion of the Department. Beyond that one extension, admission to the program terminates, at which point a student may apply for readmission to the program. For further details, please consult the graduate school policy manual.

RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT

Before a request for classification to in-state status will be considered, a student must comply with all of the following requirements for a period of at least twelve (12) consecutive months immediately prior to and including the last date available to register for courses in the semester/term for which the student seeks in-state tuition status. Requirements to be satisfied are located at <https://www.registrar.umd.edu/residency-reclassification> - Residency Classification Office website.

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENT

All graduate students making any demand upon the academic or support services of the University, whether taking courses, using University libraries, laboratories, computer facilities, office space, housing, or consulting with faculty advisors, taking qualifying examinations and assessments, must register for the number of graduate units which will, in the judgment of the faculty advisor, accurately reflect the student's involvement in graduate study and use of University resources. In no case will registration be for less than one credit.

Doctoral students who have been advanced to candidacy will be automatically registered for 6 credits of CCJS899 Doctoral Dissertation Research each semester, excluding summer sessions, until the degree is awarded. The 899 course will carry 6 credit hours and will be covered by flat candidacy tuition.

Failure to comply with the requirement for maintaining continuous registration may be taken as evidence that the student has terminated the doctoral program. A new application for admission, with the consequent reevaluation of the student's performance, will be required of a student wishing to resume a graduate program, whose admission has been terminated under this regulation.

PHD QUALIFYING EXAMINATION AND ASSESSMENT OF DOCTORAL CANDIDACY

Full tenured and tenure-track faculty complete a clinical assessment of each doctoral student to determine if they should advance to candidacy. For students who enter the program with an M.A., this assessment will be during the spring semester of their second year; for students who enter with a B.A. /B.S., this assessment will be during the spring semester of their third year. **A student is expected to have passed their final thesis defense before the assessment meeting takes place in order to be reviewed for doctoral candidacy. The assessment is typically scheduled for mid- April.**

This clinical assessment will include review and evaluation of:

- Research competency (based on thesis or practicum research products, performance in research assistantships, and any research collaborations);
- Content knowledge (based on course performance and performance on a qualifying exam); and
- Professional development (based on supervisor and other faculty evaluation)

Please note that students receive interim feedback by way of completing a self-assessment each year. This self-assessment will include information pertaining to the three areas on which students will be assessed. The advisor will meet with the student to discuss the assessments each year, providing feedback to help the student prepare for the doctoral candidacy assessment.

Area 1: Research Competency

Department expectation:

- Student has demonstrated skill at conducting a semi-independent research project. Skills to be demonstrated include embedding a research question within the relevant literature, making a case for the contribution of the research, selecting appropriate data and measures, demonstrating competence with the appropriate analytic strategy, and drawing appropriate conclusions from results.

A faculty committee rates each student project on the dimensions included in the rubric below. This committee consists of the thesis committee for students who enter with a B.S. /B.A. or the research practicum advisor and the student’s academic advisor for students who enter with an M.A. Note that students may submit as supplemental material one or more published works. These works will be considered along with the ratings of UMD faculty who have worked directly with the student.

Research Product Rubric				
Criteria	Does not meet expectation (1)	Meets expectation (2)	Exceeds expectation (3)	Not Applicable
The written product shows evidence of student’s skill at:				
Establishing the importance/relevance of the research				
Embedding the research question in the relevant literature				
Formulating testable hypotheses				

Collecting or locating appropriate data to address the research question				
Analyzing the data using appropriate techniques				
Interpreting results correctly				
Reporting results appropriately				
Recognizing limitations in the applicability of the results				
Stating implications of the research for future research, theory, practice, or policy				
Work on the project was completed semi-independently*				
<i>Overall Assessment</i>				

*Semi-independent work is work with the following characteristics: The student developed the idea for the project, located the data, conducted the analysis, and wrote the document. The advisor is expected to provide guidance and feedback at all stages, but should not have written substantial parts of the report.

Please note that raters will be asked to provide a detailed written explanation for any rating that does not meet expectations.

Area 2: Content Knowledge

Department expectation:

- Grade Point Average in all course work to date is 3.5 or higher. Instructor ratings on aspects of course performance not captured in grades show acceptable performance; **and**
- At least 75% of all grades on the qualifying exam are passing grades.

Instructors will be expected to complete the rubric below for students enrolled in any of their courses prior to their clinical assessment. For this rubric, raters will be asked to provide a detailed written explanation for any rating that does not meet expectation.

Course Performance Rubric			
Criteria	Does not meet expectation (1)	Meets expectation (2)	Exceeds expectation (3)
Actively participates (e.g., is engaged, prepared, asks good questions)			
Exerts effort/perseveres			
Demonstrates diligence and care in written assignments			
Performs consistently well across course assignments/obligations			

Students will take a *qualifying exam* in January of their second year if they enter the doctoral program with an MA/MS and in January of their third year if they enter the doctoral program with a BA/BS. This exam will assess students' knowledge across core issues related to theory, the justice system, and research methods, demonstrating an ability to tie these areas together in a cohesive manner. Faculty members will rate each question using the following rubric:

	Excellent	Competent	Needs Improvement	Unacceptable	Missing
	Answer is particularly incisive, abundant, or "exceeds expectations"	Answer "meets expectations" with only minor errors or omissions	Answer falls short of meeting expectations with notable flaws or omissions	Answer is unsatisfactory or contains fatal flaws, errors or omissions	Answer does not contain sufficient information to evaluate
Total Weight	100	86	72	50	0
Thoroughly addresses all components of the question	15	13	11	8	0
Demonstrates a strong understanding of prior literature using appropriate citations to support	15	13	11	8	0
Makes clear, logical, and persuasive arguments	10	8	6	4	0
Demonstrates appropriate knowledge of Theory/Policy	20	18	16	10	0
Demonstrates appropriate knowledge of Policy/Data, Methods, and/or Research Design	20	18	16	10	0
Effectively integrates and applies Theory & Methods/Theory & Policy/Policy & Methods directly	10	8	6	5	0
Overall quality of writing and level of organization in the essay	10	8	6	5	0

Scores for each exam will be averaged across raters. Students need a 75% average score across raters to pass.

EXAM ACCOMMODATIONS [Policy Effective for Cohorts Admitted Fall 2026 and after]

In order to implement exam accommodations for the qualifying examination, students must be registered with the Accessibility & Disability Service (ADS) Office and provide their academic advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) with a University of Maryland ADS Accommodation letter that covers the academic year during which the student is scheduled to take the qualifying exam. The letter must be provided no later than the end of the semester prior to when the qualifying exam will be taken. No individual accommodations (other than rescheduling due to a documented hospitalization) will be given for reasons that fall outside the scope of ADS or to students who have not registered with ADS and do not have an ADS accommodation letter covering the exam period. Students with ADS accommodations are expected to take the exam at the same time as the rest of the cohort unless otherwise specified in their accommodations.

In all cases, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that arrangements have been made to implement approved accommodations in advance of the qualifying examination. The Department does not offer retroactive accommodations.

An accommodation to reschedule the exam cannot be made except in the case of documented hospitalization or upon the recommendation from ADS due to a documented disability. A new exam will be made up by the appropriate committee and the rescheduled exam must be completed within 30 days of the original exam date.

Area 3: Professional Development

Department expectation:

- All students will participate in professional activities, both in the department and in the discipline.
- Students will carry out assigned duties in a responsible and professional fashion.

All faculty advisors (formal and informal) will rate each student's professional development activities using the following rubric. The advisor should reference completed student self-assessments and should interview the student to ensure accurate ratings.

Professional Development Rubric			
Criteria	Does not meet expectation (1)	Meets expectation (2)	Exceeds expectation (3)
Student performs assigned RA/TA duties in a responsible and professional manner			
Student is engaged in			

departmental activities such as brown-bags, graduate student meetings, etc.			
Student has provided meaningful service to the department, college, campus, or discipline that is reasonable given his/her year in the program			
Student has participated in disciplinary activities such as professional conferences			

Faculty advisors will provide a written explanation for any rating that does not meet expectations.

Process for reviewing student assessments

A dossier including the student's transcript, the completed rubrics, and any supplemental materials will be reviewed and discussed by the entire graduate faculty. After discussion, each faculty will vote "yes" or "no" as to whether the student should be invited to continue in the doctoral program. Students receiving at least 75% of faculty votes at the meets or exceeds expectations level will be invited to continue in the program. Students will be provided with a detailed account specifying each area in which the student did not meet departmental expectations. All rubrics completed by faculty should be sent directly to the CCJS graduate program coordinator. The rubrics should not be sent to the students.

Appeal Process

Students may appeal a negative outcome by writing a letter indicating their decision to appeal. This letter should be sent to the Chair and Director of Graduate Studies. The tenure-track faculty will then vote on whether they will consider the student's appeal. This vote can be cast in-person or virtually. In order to proceed, at least 50% of the faculty must vote in favor. In that event, a student must write a letter which presents new information that the faculty may not have been privy to at the assessment. The faculty will hold an in-person meeting (although virtual attendance is an option) to discuss the letter and new information presented. In order for an appeal to be successful, 75% of faculty votes must be in favor of advancing the student to candidacy.

ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY

After satisfactory completion of the doctoral assessment and fulfillment of required courses, the student should apply for admission to candidacy. A student must be admitted to candidacy for the doctorate within five years.

It is the responsibility of the student to submit an application for admission to candidacy. Applications are available online and should be submitted to the Department's Graduate Program Coordinator for further action and transmission to the Graduate School.

<https://gradschool.umd.edu/forms>

The student has four years from the date of admission to candidacy to complete the degree requirements.

DISSERTATION REQUIREMENTS

The Graduate School discusses the requirements regarding the dissertation in the following areas:

- A Department committee must approve the dissertation.
- Directions for the preparation and submission of the dissertation are available at *Graduate School Catalog* <https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/>.

During the preparation of the dissertation, all candidates for the doctoral degree must register for Doctoral Dissertation Research (CCJS 899). At least twelve such credits must be completed before graduation. Ordinarily the student receives the grade of satisfactory until such time as the dissertation is finished.

DISSERTATION PROPOSALS

Dissertation proposals should be approved by the unanimous vote of the student's doctoral dissertation committee. If the student's dissertation involves research with human subjects, approval of the Department's and University's Human Subjects Committees must be obtained. Advisors are aware of the appropriate procedures. Once the dissertation proposal is approved, a copy must be filed in the student's Department file.

DISSERTATION COMMITTEES

Students planning on writing a dissertation cannot formally commence working on a dissertation until they have chosen a dissertation advisor, and consulted with them concerning the intended research topic and their research plans. The dissertation advisor is ordinarily chairperson of the dissertation committee, but does not have to be the sole member of the committee on whom the student relies for advice and guidance. The student has the option of having co-chairs for their PhD committee and may rely on other members of the dissertation committee for guidance. Whomever the student uses as principal mentor, however, she/he would be well advised to keep the dissertation advisor constantly advised on the progress she/he is making. Dissertation advisor(s) should meet with their advisees at least once per semester to discuss the graduate student's progress. Students should submit any written work at least two weeks before meeting with a faculty member and can expect faculty to usually provide feedback within two weeks. The student will be expected to keep the dissertation advisor(s) aware of progress the student is making.

The student should consult with the dissertation advisor at the start of their dissertation to discuss the other members of the graduate faculty whom they intend to serve on the PhD committee. According to Graduate School requirements, the committee shall consist of a minimum of five voting members, all of whom hold the doctoral degree. At least one of the five must hold an appointment in a department or graduate program external to the one in which the student is seeking the degree. A minimum of three members of the committee must be regular (and not associate) members of the graduate faculty of the University of Maryland. If the "outside"

member is a regular member of the graduate faculty, this member is usually designated as the representative of the Dean of the Graduate School. This member sees that the examination is conducted according to established procedures. Any disagreement over the examination procedures is referred to the Dean's representative for a decision. One or more members of the committee may be persons from other institutions who hold the doctorate and are distinguished scholars in the field of the dissertation.

The Department, and the University, requires that at least three members of the dissertation committee, including the dissertation chairperson, be from the Department faculty. The chairperson of a Ph.D. comprehensive committee should be a tenure-track member of the graduate faculty of the University. The minimum size of a dissertation committee is five members but it is possible to have six or more members. If a student wishes to have a committee member who is outside of the department other than the Dean's Representative, they must request for this person to be [added to the Graduate Faculty](#). The student must complete and submit the [Nomination of Committee Form](#) to the Graduate School.

In the semester that the candidate anticipates submitting copies of the dissertation to her/his dissertation committee, the advisor sends to the Graduate School a "Nomination of the Dissertation Examining Committee" form listing the names of the desired committee members, together with an abstract or summary of the dissertation. This form must be submitted to the Graduate School by the date specified in "Important Dates." The candidate is responsible for seeing to it that the advisor has completed the form. The Graduate School Dean then sends to the Department Graduate Program Coordinator a form approving the committee for the oral defense and listing any incomplete grades.

ORAL DEFENSE

Complete copies of the draft dissertation must be distributed to each member of the committee at least 10 working days before the defense. The time and place of the defense are established by the dissertation committee chairperson. All defenses must be announced to the Department at least one week prior to the defense.

All final oral dissertation defenses are open to the faculty and graduate students of the Department. After the examination, the committee deliberates and votes in private. Two or more negative votes constitute a failure. The candidate may only present himself/herself for final oral defense of her/his dissertation twice.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

After the dissertation is approved by the examination committee, the committee members sign the form sent by the Graduate School stating that the dissertation is completed. This form is returned by the chairperson of the committee to the Dean of the Graduate School no later than the appropriate date listed in "Academic Deadlines"⁴ if the student is to graduate in the semester in which the oral defense is conducted.

The candidate must submit to the Graduate School online the original typed manuscript and one bound quality copy of the dissertation to the department library. The advisor must sign both copies to the Graduate School prior to the deadline.

For a further discussion regarding the guidelines governing dissertation examination procedures, contact the Graduate Program Coordinator.

APPLICATION FOR DIPLOMA

The candidate must submit the application for diploma to the Registrar's Office via testudo <http://www.testudo.umd.edu/apps/candapp/>. The student must meet the deadline specified in "Important Dates." **The student must be registered for at least one credit in the semester he/she plans to graduate.**

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE GRADUATE PROGRAM? PLEASE CONTACT:

Nicole Amonett

Graduate Program Coordinator

E-MAIL: CRIMINOLOGYDEPT@UMD.EDU

PHONE: 301-405-6838

4 May be found on the University's Graduate School website: <https://gradschool.umd.edu/calendar/deadlines/academic-deadlines>

GRADUATE STUDENT MENTORSHIP

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Graduate student training consists of both classroom instruction and apprenticeship relationships with one or more faculty members. As described earlier in the Program Guide, apprenticeship occurs through any of three avenues, depending on the situation of the graduate student. These include work with an academic advisor, thesis advisor, and dissertation advisor, which may or may not be the same faculty members.

It is the responsibility of students to be proactive when it comes to the pursuit of their education and professional development. However, faculty members are expected to act in a mentorship role which explicitly functions to support scholarly and professional development. The purpose of this section of the program guide is to function as a statement of guiding principles¹ that can promote the student's successful completion of training and inform their mentors' efforts. It does not supersede institutional rules and regulations.

Effective mentoring is crucial for graduate students as they prepare for their careers. Faculty should understand that mentorship requires a commitment of substantial time and energy in order to ensure each student's successful professional and personal development. This time and energy should not be interpreted or treated as superfluous to the other roles of a faculty member. Rather, this role and the associated duties are central to the position and therefore expected of faculty members. Furthermore, mentors must recognize that the success of the relationship hinges on mutual trust and respect. The actions and duties performed by an effective mentor can include:

- Providing timely feedback and constructive criticism on scholarly products and/or ideas. Although the timeliness of feedback may vary, faculty should aim to provide comments on written work within a two-week period.
- Providing timely guidance on matters related to professional development, including networking and preparing for the job market. Faculty should be available to meet with advisees at least once per semester.
- Being respectful of the students' interests, professional goals, and personal circumstances.

Other valuable efforts that could be undertaken by effective mentors may include providing guidance on teaching-related matters, funding and assistantships, authorship on papers, familiarizing students with the professional norms and values, and collaborating on research.

Effective mentors should also strive to facilitate students' completion of their thesis/dissertations, help guide students through the requirements for degree completion, and advise students to be knowledgeable of, and act in accordance with, all university policies and procedures. Good mentors should possess and exemplify high ethical standards, competent communication skills, recognize the contributions and accomplishments of students, and have a strong commitment to original research and scholarship. Good mentors should also provide a mentoring environment that is intellectually stimulating, emotionally supportive, safe and free of harassment.

¹ These general principles are derived from a Statement of Philosophy of the Mentoring Relationship Between Graduate Students and Advisors, Wake Forest University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences: https://prod.wp.cdn.aws.wfu.edu/sites/275/2018/01/MentoringPhilosophy_statement0809.pdf

Importantly, mentors should be mindful of the time, research, and professional goals of each advisee. Not all students will be pursuing the same career or have the same constraints around their time. While students should be expected to adhere to their scholarly and professional commitments, it is also true that there is variation in workload and personal situations that could lead to misunderstandings. Therefore, effective mentors should strive to communicate with their advisees on these topics to formulate agreed-upon expectations for both parties.

STATEMENT OF MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS

To foster and maintain healthy mentor-mentee relationships, faculty supervisors should meet with their student assistants at least once at the beginning of the semester to discuss expectations and complete, sign, and keep a copy of the Statement of Mutual Expectations (SME) provided by the Graduate School <https://gradschool.umd.edu/forms>. In addition, they should strive to create an environment conducive to maintaining an open line of communication throughout the semester and revisit the SME as needed.

The mentor-mentee relationship is also built upon professional decorum and interaction. Mentors should strive to be good examples of the behaviors they want to see in their mentees. For example, like their mentees, mentors should engage in dialogue with faculty, students, and staff that is professional and respectful. They should also be punctual and responsive to requests or questions from mentees. Because these standards and expectations differ, there should be clear communication and agreement on how quickly each party should expect a response.