

MASTER OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

STUDENT HANDBOOK



2026-2027

UCCS
Criminal Justice

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[Faculty biographies, research areas of interest, and current office hours.](#)

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EMERGENCY (University Police)	3111 from a campus phone or 719.255.3111	police@uccs.edu
UCCS Campus Store	719.255.3247	books@uccs.edu
Bursar (Tuition)	719.255.3391	bursar@uccs.edu
Campus Closure	719.255.3346	eprepare@uccs.edu
T. Rowe Price Career & Innovation Center	719.255.3340	jobhelp@uccs.edu
Disability Services	719.255.3354	dservice@uccs.edu
Excel Writing & Communication Center	719.255.4770	mlcenter@uccs.edu
Financial Aid	719.255.3460	finaidse@uccs.edu
Graduate School	719.255.3417	gradinfo@uccs.edu
Office of Information Technology (OIT)	719.255.3536	oit@uccs.edu
International Student Services	719.255.7218	international@uccs.edu
Kraemer Family Library	719.255.3296	circdesk@uccs.edu
Parking and Transportation	719.255.3528	parking@uccs.edu
Registrar (Records & Registration)	719.255.3361	admrec@uccs.edu
Gallogly Recreation and Wellness Center	719.255.4444	hlthcntr@uccs.edu
Veteran & Military Affairs	719.255.3253	military@uccs.edu

Excel Writing and Communication Center <i>Columbine Hall Room 312 & 316</i>	Offers undergraduate and graduate students in-person and virtual consultations to assist with research and writing projects, presentations, etc. Services include: • Speech/Presentation Outlining and Practice (individual and group) • Mock Interview and Resume/Cover Letter Assistance • Group Project Facilitation • Paper Assistance • Paper Brainstorming/Outlining • Citation Assistance
Academic Advising <i>Main Hall Room 208</i>	Empowers students to realize their academic goals, develop career options, and provide access to information regarding campus resources. Services include academic advising for undergraduate students and career counseling for all student levels.

<u>T. Rowe Price Career and Innovation Center</u> <i>University Center 114</i>	Provides the following services to current students and alumni: major and career options, career counseling, career assessment and interpretation, internships, job search strategies, resume review, interview preparation, graduate school exploration and application assistance, and networking events.
<u>Disability Services</u> <i>Main Hall Room 105</i>	Provides students with disabilities skills reasonable accommodations and support services to participate fully in the academic environment and opportunities available at UCCS.
<u>University Testing Center</u> <i>Main Hall Room 105</i>	A proctoring site for students who are making up an exam, taking an exam early, taking a correspondence exam, or taking a standardized exam. Fees may apply for make-up exams.
<u>Veteran and Military Affairs</u> <i>McCord-Herbst Student Veteran Center, Gateway Hall</i>	Assists student veterans with the transition from military life to the university environment, provides support during your academic experience, and informs eligible students about education benefits programs.
<u>MOSAIC</u> <i>University Center Room 110</i>	MOSAIC is a safe place for students to engage in discussions about social identities, cultures, experiences, and viewpoints. They offer a wide range of services for students of diverse backgrounds, including information on scholarships, job opportunities, mentoring opportunities, and a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ+) resource center.
<u>Wellness Center</u> <i>Recreation and Wellness Center</i>	Available to all full-time students and part-time students who have paid the student fee for the Health Center. Services include, but are not limited to: acute illness care, women's health care, physicals, sexually transmitted infection testing, referrals, and immunizations.
<u>Mental Health Services</u> <i>Recreation and Wellness Center</i>	Services include individual therapy, couples therapy, family therapy, crisis/emergency interventions, and consultation sessions for concerned friends/roommates/instructors.
<u>UCCS Campus Store</u> <i>University Center 105</i>	School supplies and official UCCS merchandise available for purchase.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Handbook

Welcome to the Master of Criminal Justice program at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS) College of Public Service.

This handbook will acquaint you with the policies and procedures of the College of Public Service (CPS) and Master of Criminal Justice (MCJ) program to facilitate your progress toward applying for the program and earning the Master of Criminal Justice degree. Please read this handbook carefully and consult our Graduate Student Services Specialist or your Faculty Advisor with any questions. It is the responsibility of each student to be familiar with the MCJ and CPS Academic Policies, as well as the [Graduate School Policies and Procedures](#). All students are bound by these requirements as stated in the [UCCS Academic Catalog](#) and expanded upon in this handbook.

Please be aware that the policies and procedures described here are subject to change and can be affected by changes in the policies of UCCS and the Graduate School. Check the [Academic Catalog](#) and [CPS's website](#) for the most up-to-date information.

The College of Public Service

The College of Public Service (CPS) provides undergraduate and graduate professional education to current and aspiring leaders in public administration and public service, public finance, public and non-profit management, social and public policy, criminology and criminal justice, homeland security, and social work. All CPS programs and degrees are connected through real-world application, theory, and partnership networks to help prepare students across a variety of public service sectors with the cutting-edge knowledge, skills, and experience needed to succeed.

The College of Public Service offers the following graduate degree programs:

- Master of Public Administration (MPA)
- Master of Criminal Justice (MCJ)
- Master of Public Administration/Master of Criminal Justice (MPA/MCJ) dual degree
- Master of Public Administration/Master of Arts in Sociology (MPA/MA SOC) dual degree
- Master of Social Work (MSW)

CPS graduate students can also pursue a more limited course of study, earning graduate certificates in:

- Criminal Justice
- Grant Writing, Management, and Program Evaluation
- Homeland Security and Emergency Management
- National Security Intelligence
- Nonprofit Management
- Public Administration Leadership and Management

All of these certificates may be earned simultaneously with a degree program.

College of Public Service Mission Statement

The mission of the UCCS College of Public Service is to improve the quality of life for people and their communities, here and abroad, through collaborative governance, public service innovation, community engagement, and research.

To accomplish this mission, we strive to:

- Improve the quality of public, nonprofit, social work, criminal justice, and national security systems.
- Educate leaders to meet societal challenges with compassion, vision, analytic rigor, and practicality.
- Foster critical thinking and decision-making, effective and confident communication, creative problem-solving, knowledge management, and global citizenship.
- Create, build, and maintain connections with current, past, and future students and all the communities we serve.
- Ground our decisions and actions in integrity, diversity, collaboration, and excellence.
- Support and model civil public discourse, citizenship, responsibility, and respect.

The Master of Criminal Justice Degree Program

The MCJ degree is designed for students interested in comprehensive professional graduate education in the field of criminal justice. It is intended to develop in the student a fundamental understanding of the basic fields within criminal justice and of background material from supporting disciplines which would enable the student to adapt to many operational specializations.

The MCJ program is flexible, allowing students to design an individualized course of study. Courses are offered in various modalities, including in-person, online, and hybrid.

Master of Criminal Justice Mission Statement

The MCJ program provides an interdisciplinary perspective on the study of crime and the criminal justice system. It focuses on criminal offending and victimization, law enforcement, the judiciary, correctional systems, juvenile justice, and the formulation of laws and codes. Individual courses explore the dynamic of criminality and victimization, systems analysis, policy analysis, organizational theory and behavior, and program development within the criminal justice system. Students pursuing professional careers will gain an understanding of theory and its applications in practice. Students looking to pursue research careers or doctoral work will acquire a strong foundation in criminology and criminal justice research.

MCJ Program Student Learning Outcomes

1. PSLO 1. Students are able to utilize, apply, and communicate criminological theory and/or multiple disciplines, perspectives, and research traditions to identify and comprehend criminal justice issues.
2. PSLO 2. Students are able to utilize, apply and communicate research, policy analysis, and evidence-based practices to criminal justice or victimization issues.
3. PSLO 3. Students are able to critically analyze crime, criminal justice, or victimization policy.

4. PSLO 4. Students are able to translate the academic skills learned in the program to the real-world criminal justice field.
5. PSLO 5. Students engage in systematic examination of the issues of diversity in criminology, victimization, or criminal justice.

Accreditation

The University of Colorado Colorado Springs is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. There is no external accreditation body for criminal justice.

Administration

The MCJ Program Director is the key administrative officer for the program. The Program Director and the Graduate Student Services Specialist (GSSS) will work with you on various issues while you continue through our program. All students should contact the GSSS as a first point of contact for questions, and they'll route you through to other faculty as needed. The MCJ Committee provides faculty governance and guides the program. It is comprised of core MCJ faculty and staff.



"Since entering the Master of Criminal Justice program, I've gained incredibly valuable knowledge and truly appreciate the insight and support of each professor. Every professor brought unique experiences and perspectives to the classroom, enriching my learning and understanding of the field. This program has equipped me with new skills and confidence as I take the following steps toward my future in the criminal justice field."

--Brianna Garcia-Decime, MCJ Alumni

2. APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

Prerequisites

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, with grades sufficiently high to indicate ability to pursue graduate work, cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 2.75 or better.
- Applicants may have majored in any field for their undergraduate degree.

Application Materials

- [Online Graduate School Application](#)
- A written statement for each of the following three prompts. Each response should be approximately 500 words. When writing your three application statements, please ensure you are personalizing each response and not using ChatGPT or other AI software to write your submission. Use of AI software is

subject to automatic denial of one's application. What are your career aspirations and how can your academic experience contribute to your career goals?

- What is relevant in your professional or academic background that contributes to your anticipated success in your masters' experience?
- Please provide an example of how your personal characteristics helped you overcome a specific challenge.
- \$60 non-refundable application fee
- Official transcripts from all previously attended institutions (both undergraduate and graduate level work) are required for admission review. Please view the Graduate School Admission's page for information on [how to send official transcripts](#).
- Current resume
- MCJ and dual MPA/MCJ applicants only: Contact information (name and email address) for two recommendations from qualified references that establish the applicant's qualifications for graduate work (professors, employers, and/or others acquainted with the prospective student's professional and/or academic work) if cumulative undergraduate GPA is below 3.25.

If the MCJ Admissions Committee needs additional information, applicants may be asked to schedule a short meeting with the MCJ program director prior to the committee's admission decision. Some applicants, including International and ESL (English as a Second Language) students, may have additional requirements. Please view the [Graduate School International Admission's page](#) for more information.

Admission Calendar

Admission to the MCJ program is made on a rolling basis, and applicants are notified as soon as an admission decision is made. Application priority deadlines are as follows:

MCJ and MCJ/MPA dual degree

- Fall semester: August 1 (Priority)
- Spring semester: December 1 (Priority)
- Summer semester: May 1 (Priority)

If you miss the deadline, please contact the Graduate Student Services Specialist at cps@uccs.edu.

Students planning to apply for financial aid should contact the [Office of Financial Aid](#) as soon as possible as March 1 is the FAFSA priority filing date and UCCS scholarship deadline for the next academic year.

Admitted students who are not able to enroll during the semester for which they were accepted may defer enrollment for up to two semesters (including summer) by contacting the Graduate Student Services Specialist at cps@uccs.edu.

Prospective MCJ students who have missed the application deadline for the upcoming semester may submit an unclassified student application to take courses prior to degree program admission. Please see the Transfer Credit section below for information on applying credits earned as an unclassified student toward a degree program.

Admission Status

When an applicant meets the qualifications for admission, they are normally admitted with regular graduate status.

In cases where a prospective student shows potential but does not meet the minimum qualifications for admission, the program *may* decide to admit the student on provisional status. Such cases only occur when elements of the application suggest the student may perform successfully in the program. Those admitted on provisional status must earn a “B” or better in their first six credit hours of the criminal justice graduate courses within the first two semesters of admission to the College of Public Service. Failure to meet the provisional criteria will result in dismissal from the program.

Readmission of Inactive, Withdrawn, and Suspended Students

Occasionally, students find it necessary to interrupt their coursework for one or more semesters. An extended interruption, however, may result in the student being placed on inactive status. Students who do not enroll in any classes during the semester for which they were admitted and students who have not registered for classes for three consecutive semesters (including summer), are placed on inactive status and will be required to reapply. Students who need to take a leave of absence from their program for one semester are required to complete a [Leave of Absence form](#) available on the Graduate School website. If additional leave is needed, the student will be required to submit a new Leave of Absence form, as leave is only approved one semester at a time.

A dismissed student is eligible to reapply for admission no sooner than one year after dismissal. Approval or rejection of this application rests with the MCJ Program Director.

3. MCJ PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The UCCS MCJ is distinctive in that it may be acquired entirely online, through in person and hybrid classes, or in combination. Many students take a combination of online, in-person, and hybrid courses during their MCJ degree. MCJ faculty teach in multiple modalities and maintain equally rigorous expectations.

General Requirements

To earn the MCJ degree, a student must:

- Complete a minimum of 36 semester hours of graduate coursework as outlined in the course requirements with a total grade-point average of B (3.0) or better;
- Receive a grade of “B-” or better in all courses, including the final capstone or thesis course(s).

Course Requirements

Core Courses

All MCJ students must successfully complete the following required courses:

CRJU 5001	Criminal Justice Systems, Policy & Practice	3 credit hours
CRJU 5002	Criminological Theory	3 credit hours

CRJU 5003	Research Methods <i>CRJU 5003 should not be taken in the first semester of study</i>	3 credit hours
CRJU 5410	Victim Studies	3 credit hours

To learn more about courses, please see the [CRJU Course Descriptions](#) (courses numbered 5000 and up are graduate level). To get a sense of upcoming course offerings and formats, please see the [MCJ Course Rotation Schedule](#).

Elective Courses

In addition to completing the required courses students must complete 15-21 credit hours of electives, depending upon internship requirements, and their choice of culminating experience (Capstone vs. Thesis). Students may focus these elective hours around a particular area based on their interests and career goals. Some electives are offered on a routine basis; others may be a one-time offering. Please consult with the GSSS for questions on upcoming course offerings and additional electives that may count towards the degree. Course schedules for upcoming semesters are posted on the [CPS website](#).

CPS graduate certificates are a great way to tailor your elective courses toward a focus area. All courses taken to complete one of our graduate certificates count towards the electives required to complete your MCJ. Please see our [certificates webpage](#) for more information about certificates offered.

Where appropriate, and with prior written approval of the MCJ Program Director, students may count 9 credit hours of specialized graduate courses offered by other UCCS departments towards the elective requirements.

Internship/Field Study Requirements

The MCJ program includes professional experience among the requirements for degree completion. Pre-service students (those with less than one year of professional work experience in the criminal justice field) are required to complete a 3-credit internship/field study course (CRJU 6910).

Students are notified upon admission whether an internship/field study is required for completion of their program. Should a student gain at least one year of professional CJ experience during their time in the program, the student can request the internship/field study waiver form by completing [the Graduate Internship Waiver Request Form](#). Internship waivers are reviewed by the MCJ Program Director.

Students must complete 9 graduate credit hours of coursework to enroll in their internship/field study requirement. At least 240 hours of supervised work are required to earn 3 hours of credit towards the internship/field study. The internship/field study course is not required for in-service students (those determined to have at least one year of professional work experience in a criminal justice field). If the internship/field study course is waived, students are required to make up the 3 credits with an MCJ graduate elective course to meet the required credits for the degree (this applies to the MCJ or Dual MCJ/MPA).

Internship/Field Study Guidelines

Internship/Field Study guidelines are set forth in the [MCJ Internship Handbook](#). Internships/Field Studies are designed to meet the needs of the student, host agency, and the MCJ program. The work period may be for an academic semester or during the summer. The specific work schedules are the student's responsibility to

arrange with the internship/field study agency prior to the start of the internship/field study. The internship/field study may be either process or project based and may be either paid or unpaid.

Internship/Field Study Application and Administrative Procedures

Students should contact the MCJ Faculty Internship Coordinator at least one semester prior to their planned enrollment to discuss internship/field study intent, goals, and opportunities.

Students are responsible for identifying a potential internship/field study. Students may initiate contact with organizations and may also contact their advisors and other faculty who may have expertise and contacts in the specific area of interest for suggestions concerning internships/field studies. However, students should not commit to placement before contacting the appropriate MCJ Faculty Internship Coordinator. A permission number to enroll in CRJU 6910 will be issued once the required paperwork is completed.

Independent Study

Students interested in pursuing a specific line of study or inquiry not covered through the regular course offerings may choose to take CRJU 9500: Independent Study with a willing graduate faculty member. Students should first consider what area of study they would like to pursue and discuss the topic with a faculty member who has expertise in the area. Pending faculty agreement, the student and faculty member must submit the [Petition for Independent Study form](#). The graduate faculty will develop a course of study that meets the requirements of the University and CPS, as well as student needs. No more than six hours of independent study credit may be applied towards the MCJ degree requirements.

Culminating Experience

Capstone Seminar

All MCJ students, except those pursuing the thesis option, are required to complete CRJU 5361: Capstone Seminar (3 credit hours). The Capstone Seminar is taken during the last semester of the student's degree program. **All core courses must be completed before the Capstone Seminar is taken.** *Capstone Seminar cannot be taken during the summer semester or transferred in from another school or university.*

For capstone projects, students work with a client/agency to identify a problem and then, using the knowledge and skills they have gained in the program, carry out a project, then write and present a paper to address the problem. Projects take a uniform approach to topics ranging across all aspects of crime and criminal justice. The purpose of the capstone project is to provide students with an opportunity to integrate what they have learned in their criminal justice courses and apply their knowledge and skills to a real-world criminal justice issue. Further, it provides the faculty with an opportunity to assess the student's achievement of MCJ core competencies. Students choosing to complete the Capstone Seminar should complete the steps below:

- Attend a Capstone Orientation
 - Capstone orientation is held in both the fall and spring semesters and is a required component of the enrollment process. If you are unable to attend, you must contact a Capstone instructor listed on the course schedule to discuss alternative arrangements prior to completing the Capstone Checklist. It is essential that you attend the orientation in the semester prior to the one in which you plan to enroll in the Capstone Seminar.
- Request a Degree Audit

- After you have attended an orientation, the semester prior to your Capstone semester, you must then request a degree audit from the Graduate Student Services Specialist. Please email **cps@uccs.edu** to request your audit. Once your audit is complete, you can proceed with your capstone checklist.
- Complete All Steps of the Capstone Checklist
 - Students receive the Capstone Checklist once you attend the mandatory orientation, which will be held the semester prior to enrolling in Capstone, and your degree audit is approved. When your checklist is complete, including all reader signatures, please email the checklist to **cps@uccs.edu**.
 - Identify a problem and pre-plan your project with a partner agency for the Capstone project.
 - Obtain agreement from a CPS graduate faculty member to serve as a second reader on the Capstone project. For this to occur, you must present your Capstone project idea to your potential second reader and seek their input.
 - Work with your second reader to draft a proposal and assess the need for IRB approval.
 - If IRB approval is required, work with the Capstone Seminar instructor, in consultation with your second reader, to submit and IRB proposal for review prior to the start of the semester in which you will enroll in Capstone Seminar.
 - Submit evidence of CITI training completion.
 - Submit completed and signed Capstone Checklist to **cps@uccs.edu**.
- Register for Capstone Seminar
 - After your checklist is received and your eligibility has been verified, you will be issued a permission number to enroll in the Capstone Seminar.

Master's Thesis

In CRJU 6950 Master's Thesis, students conduct a comprehensive review of the theoretical and research literature in the subject area of their thesis and collect original data or analyze existing data in new ways. The thesis requires 6 credit hours taken over two semesters. Students should plan for the thesis to take two semesters, and with permission from the committee one of those semesters can include a summer semester. The thesis option is available to MCJ students who have achieved an exceptional academic record and who wish to pursue independent research in greater depth than would normally be possible in Capstone Seminar. It is suited for students who intend to pursue a PhD degree or to enter a research or policy environment upon completion of the MCJ degree.

Minimum eligibility requirements for pursuing a thesis include:

- Successful completion of all core courses
- Overall GPA of 3.5 or higher
- Demonstrated ability to pursue research work, as evidenced by two submitted research papers developed in CPS courses or elsewhere
- Preliminary identification of a thesis topic or area of interest
- Agreement from a CPS faculty member to serve as the thesis committee chair along with two more faculty members to serve on the thesis committee. Students are encouraged to identify their thesis chair and work with that faculty member to identify the two additional graduate faculty committee members.
 - Per the [Graduate School Policies](#) - Section E: Thesis and Dissertation Committees

- *Thesis Advisory Committee:* A thesis advisory committee must be established for each student pursuing a master's degree under Plan I (thesis option). This committee will consist of the thesis advisor, and at least two other members of the graduate faculty, which may include a member from an allied program or community organization. Upon the recommendation of the thesis advisor, the committee is appointed by the program director with the approval of the college/school Dean. Appointment of committee members to thesis committees must follow the policies of appointment to the Graduate School Faculty (see Article I, section C).

*While it is highly advised for students to identify their full thesis committee before enrolling in thesis credits, in extenuating circumstances a student may enroll for the first 3 credit hours of thesis without having yet obtained their full thesis committee, with approval of their thesis chair and the MCJ Program Director.

A student desiring to pursue the thesis option should meet with their faculty advisor to establish eligibility under the above criteria. After establishing eligibility, the student should identify a willing faculty member to serve as the thesis chair. Once the thesis chair and student have confirmations from the full thesis committee (2 other graduate faculty), the student will complete the [thesis application form](#). Once complete, the thesis application form should be submitted to cps@uccs.edu for review and approval. Upon approval, the student will be issued a permission number allowing them to register for thesis credits.

MCJ Online

Students may complete the MCJ degree entirely through online classes, an option that may be attractive for students living outside of the local area, or for those who require more flexibility in taking courses. As with all degree programs, students need to plan carefully to ensure that they can finish their degree in a timely fashion; this is particularly true of online programs. Completing the degree completely online may increase the time of completion due to course availability. Online only students should work diligently with the GSSS to plan online coursework options. In addition, online education requires technology to connect with students, faculty, and other campus experiences. Please check the [UCCS Online Student Support webpage](#) for the latest technical requirements as well as links to online student services.

4. MASTER OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE (MCJ)/MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (MPA) DUAL DEGREE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The fields of criminal justice and public administration are closely connected. The MCJ program prepares graduates to address criminal justice policy and practice, while the MPA program equips students with the skills needed for leadership roles in public and nonprofit management and policy analysis. Together, these programs provide a comprehensive education that opens doors to diverse career opportunities in public, nonprofit, and private organizations requiring expertise in both management and criminal justice. Graduates may also pursue advanced research careers or further their graduate studies. Students take the cores of both programs and choose electives that best suit their career and personal goals, completing both degrees in 54 credit hours versus the 72 credit hours it would take to complete each degree separately.

General Requirements

To earn a dual MCJ/MPA degree, a student must:

- Complete a minimum of 54 credit hours of graduate coursework with a total grade-point average of B (3.0) or better, including:
 - 9 credit hours of MCJ core coursework in criminal justice
 - 15 credit hours of MPA core coursework
 - 3 credit hours of research methods (CRJU 5003)
 - Culminating experience of either 3 credit hours of capstone or 6 credit hours of thesis
 - 18-24 credit hours of electives (number of hours depends on the student's selection of Capstone or Thesis for their culminating experience and internship/field student requirements). A minimum of 6 elective credit hours must be in Criminal Justice, with the remaining hours chosen from CRJU and/or PADM elective courses.
- Complete 3 credit hours of internship/field study (if required)
- Receive a grade of B- or better in all courses, including the final capstone or thesis course(s).
- No more than 9 credit hours of independent study.

Course Requirements

MCJ Core Courses

CRJU 5001	Criminal Justice Systems, Policy and Practice	3 credit hours
CRJU 5002	Criminological Theory	3 credit hours
CRJU 5410	Victim Studies	<u>3 credit hours</u>
Total:		9 credit hours

MPA Core Courses

PADM 5001	Introduction to Public Administration and Public Service	3 credit hours
<i>Students are expected to complete PADM 5001 within their first two semesters of enrollment.</i>		
PADM 5002	Organizational Management and Behavior	3 credit hours
PADM 5004	Budgeting and Finance	3 credit hours
PADM 5005	The Policy Process and Democracy	3 credit hours
PADM 5006	Ethics and Leadership	<u>3 credit hours</u>
Total:		15 credit hours

Research Methods

CRJU 5003	Research Methods	3 credit hours
<i>CRJU 5003 should not be taken in the first semester of study</i>		

Elective courses

In addition to completing the required courses (and the 3 credit hour internship, if required), students must complete 18-24 credit hours of electives, depending upon choice of culminating experience. CPS offers a wide variety of electives. Some are offered on a routine basis; others may be a one-time offering.

A minimum of 6 elective hours must be in coursework taught by Criminal Justice faculty (CRJU courses). Available elective courses include a mixture of specialized criminal justice and/or public administration courses, workshops, and other formats. Students may choose to focus these elective hours around a particular area based on their interests and career goals. Where appropriate, students may include specialized courses offered by other colleges of the University, with prior written approval of both program directors.

Internship/Field Study

Pre-service students—those without at least one year of professional experience in a criminal justice-related field or a public administration-related field (e.g., government, nonprofit, national security, homeland security, or emergency management)—are required to complete either **PADM 6910 Internship** or **CRJU 6910 Field Study in Criminal Justice**, which replaces one elective course. Student employment is not eligible to count as relevant work experience.

The student's need for an internship / field study is determined by the MPA and MCJ program directors at the time of admission; each student is notified of this decision in their admission letter. Students for whom an internship / field study is required should work with their advisor to find a placement that satisfies all requirements.

Students must have completed at least 9 credit hours of coursework to enroll in internship / field study. A minimum of 240 hours of supervised work is required to earn 3 hours of credit.

Should a student gain at least one year of professional experience during their tenure in the program, they may submit a **Graduate Internship Waiver Request Form** that will be reviewed by the MPA and MCJ program directors.

Independent Study

Students interested in pursuing a specific line of study or inquiry not covered through the regular course offerings may elect to take PADM or CRJU 9500: Independent Study, with a willing member of the graduate faculty. Students should first consider what area of study they would like to pursue and discuss the topic with a faculty member who has expertise in the area. Pending faculty agreement, the student and faculty member must submit the [Petition for Independent Study form](#). With faculty assistance, students then develop a course of study that meets the requirements of the University and CPS, as well as student needs. No more than 9 credit hours of independent study may apply towards the dual MCJ/MPA elective requirements.

Culminating Experience

Please see information regarding the Capstone and Thesis options under Section 3: MCJ Program Requirements above.

5. ACCELERATED MASTER'S PROGRAM (AMP) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

General Requirements

The College of Public Service offers a unique opportunity for highly qualified undergraduate criminal justice students. The Accelerated Master's Pathway (AMP) is designed to allow students to work concurrently toward the Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice (BACJ) and the Master of Criminal Justice (MCJ). The program allows qualified undergraduate students to start on their MCJ degree while simultaneously completing their BACJ degree. Graduate credit hours earned while enrolled in the AMP can be counted toward both the Bachelor of Arts and Master of Criminal Justice degrees.

Qualified students can complete up to twelve credits of graduate-level criminal justice courses eligible to double count toward their BACJ and MCJ degrees. This allows students to complete the MCJ degree on an accelerated timeframe. Interested students should meet with their undergraduate academic advisor, as well as the Master of Criminal Justice Program Director, before completing the [Intent Form](#).

- Dual credit courses must be approved by the BACJ Program Director as meeting requirements in BA program.
- Dual credit courses must be completed with a grade of B or better.
- Dual credit courses shall be taken at the graduate level to secure graduate credit.

Course Requirements

Accelerated Master's Program (AMP) students may select two required core MCJ courses (six credits) from the following list, plus two MCJ electives:

- CRJU 5001 Criminal Justice Systems, Policy and Practice
- CRJU 5002 Criminological Theory
- CRJU 5410: Victim Studies

MCJ electives can be found in the [UCCS Academic Catalog](#) and course delivery formats can be found in the [MCJ Course Rotation](#).

Eligibility Requirements

Both current UCCS and new transfer students are eligible to apply after meeting the following criteria:

- Currently enrolled in the College of Public Service as a Criminal Justice major.
- Junior year students.
- Completed the following 10 credit hours of Criminal Justice major requirements with grades of B or better:
 - CRJU 1001 Introduction to Criminal Justice
 - CRJU 2041 Crime Theory and Causes
 - CRJU 3100: Criminal Justice Research Methods or SOC 3070 Social Research Methods
- Have either successfully completed (grade of B or better) or are currently enrolled in one of the following courses:
 - CRJU 3150: Statistics for Criminal Justice,
 - CRJU 3170: Crime Prevention and Analysis, *or*
 - SOC 3170: Social Statistics

- Minimum 3.25 cumulative GPA.
- No GRE Required.

To apply for the AMP, ensure you meet the criteria above, and then complete an intent form above. Students accepted into the AMP program should then apply directly to the Master of Criminal Justice program in the final year of their Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice program.

6. STUDENT SUCCESS

Advising

Advising within the Master of Criminal Justice program is a primary responsibility of graduate faculty. The Graduate Student Services Specialist also provides support to MCJ, Dual MCJ/MPA, Certificate, and AMP students.

Upon admission to the MCJ program, students are assigned a faculty advisor; this information is provided in the student's admission letter. Students' expressed areas of interest are considered when assigned a faculty advisor. Faculty advisors are experts in their fields and can advise students on professional networking within the field, capstone/thesis planning, and career planning.

The Graduate Student Services Specialist is responsible for assisting the student to successfully navigate the program and students are encouraged to meet with the Graduate Student Services Specialist to discuss registration, program requirements, and degree planning.

International students are additionally supported by the [International Affairs Office](#), which assists them with other issues such as visa requirements.

Student Resources

The MCJ program values student success. MCJ faculty and staff are available to help match resources to needs. MCJ students who believe they could benefit from academic support are encouraged to reach out to their instructors and/or faculty advisor. All MCJ students are invited and encouraged to attend informational and developmental opportunities provided by the program, school, and campus.

Many campus-level student resources exist. Below are links to some of the most frequently used academic, financial, social, and health resources available to MCJ students.

[Kraemer Family Library](#) provides a wealth of physical and virtual information and services. The [College of Public Service/Kraemer Family Library liaison](#) is Norah Mazel and can be reached at nmazel@uccs.edu.

Effective communication – written and verbal – is an important component of the MCJ program. Fostering effective communication is part of our mission. The [Excel Writing and Communication Center](#) is a valuable partner in assisting students of all skill levels to improve writing ability. The center also offers presentation practice and feedback, tutoring for creating presentations, and facilitation for small groups.

Military programs, resources, and verification of benefits are provided by the Office of [Veteran and Military Affairs](#).

[International Affairs](#) provides international student and scholar services and works with education abroad programs.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with [Disability Services](#) and [the University Testing Center](#) for accommodation requests.

The Multicultural Office for Student Access, Inclusiveness and Community ([MOSAIC](#)) supports and creates opportunities that assist all UCCS students in developing a sense of community and place on campus, with an emphasis on supporting and advocating for students from underrepresented communities. There are numerous [clubs and organizations](#) that exist on campus that welcome students to participate.

Both physical and [mental health](#) services are available via the Gallogly Recreation and Wellness Center. If you or someone you know has the potential for personal and/or psychological matters to complicate or interfere with your efforts or academic success, please reach out for anonymous screenings or services.

Professional development and career guidance and opportunities are coordinated via the [T. Rowe Price Career and Innovation Center](#). Students and alumni have access to [Handshake](#) to search for and find relevant career opportunities.

Financial Resources

The cost of a degree program will vary based on several factors such as residency status, number of credit hours taken per semester, online course fees, etc. Costs may be estimated using the Bursar Office's [Estimate Your Bill](#) tool. Financial assistance is available to support students unable to attend UCCS without aid. The primary source of information about need-based student financial assistance as well as scholarships and other non-need-based aid is the [UCCS Office of Financial Aid, Student Employment and Scholarships](#). Additional information on financial assistance programs may be obtained through the [Graduate School](#).

The College of Public Service offers scholarships and a limited number of graduate teaching or research assistantships to students and can be located on the [scholarship website](#) and through the Student Employment Assistance Network (SEAN).

Alpha Phi Sigma Honor Society

Alpha Phi Sigma is the only Criminal Justice Honor Society and is a certified member of the Association of College Honor Societies and is affiliated with the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. Alpha Phi Sigma recognizes academic excellence of undergraduate and graduate students of Criminal Justice.

The mission of Alpha Phi Sigma is to promote analytical thinking, rigorous scholarship, and lifelong learning; to keep abreast of the advances in scientific research; to elevate the ethical standards of the criminal justice professions; and to sustain in the public mind the benefits and necessity of education and professional training.

Alpha Phi Sigma is the nationally recognized honor society for criminal justice students of esteemed criminal justice programs across the nation. Each spring, MJC students are invited to join the Lambda Sigma chapter of Alpha Phi Sigma at UCCS if they have met the following criteria:

Eligibility Requirements for *Graduate* Students:

- Enrolled in the UCCS MCJ program
- Completed at least four criminal justice courses (of these, three undergrad courses can count, with a 3.4 GPA or higher in those courses but at least one must be an MCJ course)
- Have a minimum GPA of 3.4 on a 4.0 scale for overall coursework or rank in the top 25% of your class
- Have a minimum GPA of 3.4 on a 4.0 scale for criminal justice course work (including any undergraduate classes you apply towards membership)

Student Conduct and Response to Significant Situations or Events

The MCJ program and CPS subscribe in full to the university's expectations for student conduct and academic integrity.

UCCS has several mechanisms in place to respond to student crisis situations or to incidents or behaviors involving students that threaten campus life. Crisis situations may be accidental, occur without warning, or be intentional and meant to cause harm to students or the campus community. The Office of the Dean of Students maintains a [list of relevant policies and codes](#) that every student should read and become familiar with, including but not limited to:

- Student Code of Conduct
- UCCS Sexual Misconduct Policy
- Protected Class Discrimination Harassment
- Student Academic Ethics Code Policy
- Student Academic Disruption Procedure

Students are highly encouraged to register through the [UCCSAlerts](#) for updates on important safety and emergency information. Additionally, students may download the [UCCS Safe app](#) on their phones for up-to-date safety information from the UCCS Public Safety Office.

Student Code of Conduct

All students are expected to know and follow the [UCCS Student Code of Conduct](#). This document addresses the expectations of students as well as prohibited conduct. A portion of the Code appears here:

It is the duty of all students involved in the conduct process to participate honestly and conscientiously throughout the conduct process. Students are expected to read this Code, make a timely report of an incident, and file all necessary complaints through the Office of the Dean of Students.

Additionally, the Department of Criminal Justice does not tolerate rude, disrespectful, or unprofessional behavior, whether expressed in person, via electronic communication, or through any other medium. All students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the values of the criminal justice profession and the standards of the university.

As members of the campus and academic community, students are required to communicate respectfully with peers, faculty, staff, and the broader community. Disruptive behavior, including inappropriate language, personal attacks, or dismissive conduct, undermines a productive learning environment and will not be

tolerated. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in immediate removal from a class session, referral to the Dean of Students Office, or other disciplinary action as outlined in university policy.

Student Academic Ethics Code

Students are also expected to know and follow the [Student Academic Ethics Code Policy](#) which says that, “students shall observe complete honesty in all academic matters to include course requirements, classroom activities, research, and scholarship.” A few violations of the code are listed below and include but are not limited to:

- Committing acts of plagiarism (see policy above for full details).
- Using unauthorized materials or receiving unauthorized assistance during an examination or in connection with any work done for academic credit. Unauthorized materials include, but are not limited to, notes, textbooks, previous examinations, exhibits, experiments, papers or other supplementary items.
- Giving false or misleading information regarding an academic matter.
- Copying information from another student during an examination.
- Rendering unauthorized assistance to another student by knowingly permitting him or her to see or copy all or a portion of an examination or any work to be submitted for academic credit.
- Falsifying material relating to course registration or grades, either for oneself or for someone else.
- Accessing or altering any academic record by any means without authorization.
- Turning in same or similar work for multiple courses without permission from faculty to do so.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Faculty in the Department of Criminal Justice may determine their own policy around the use of AI. While AI can be a helpful tool, there are ethical and unethical ways to utilize AI. Students should carefully review the syllabi for all their courses regarding the use of AI. Using AI to complete course assignments may violate Academic Honesty and is subject to reprimand as outlined in a course syllabus.

CARE Team

The [CARE \(Campus Assessment Response and Evaluation\) Team](#) addresses concerns related to students’ safety and wellbeing, and we support students in times of challenge and crisis. The CARE Team assesses and responds to reported concerns or disruptions, we create access to resources for students to maintain their safety, health, and well-being, and we evaluate whether individuals pose a risk to themselves or others. UCCS cares about our students' holistic development and wellness.

7. ACADEMIC POLICIES

University of Colorado policies govern the CU system and include Regent laws and policies, Administrative Policy Statements, and other university-wide requirements. UCCS-specific policies and procedures are nested

beneath these university-wide policies as necessary to govern the unique needs of this campus. All of these policies may be found on the [website of the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance](#). Additionally, the [UCCS Graduate School policies and procedures](#) govern academic matters for graduate students. Some of the more frequently referenced policies are presented in this Handbook, together with specific guidance that governs students within the College of Public Service and MCJ Program.

Governing Catalog

The [Academic Catalog](#) that governs a student's graduation requirements is the one in effect at the time of the student's most recent admission into the school/college of their degree program. For example, if a student was admitted in April 2026, they are following the academic year 2025-2026 catalog.

Time Limit

Students must complete their degree no later than six years after the starting date of the first class counted toward degree requirements, *even if that course is taken as a non-degree seeking student*. A student who fails to complete the degree in the six-year period must file a petition for extension with the Program Director and have it approved by the Graduate School Dean. The petition should give reasons why the student should be allowed to continue in the program and must be endorsed by the Program Director. The Program Director must approve applying any course to the degree that was taken more than six years prior to the semester of graduation, and all such courses must be validated by special examination and a [course validation form](#) must be approved by the program and Graduate School. Courses that have been validated will be eligible for use towards graduation for six years. If the student takes longer than that from time of validation to complete the degree, a new course validation form will be required.

Although the MCJ program requires intensive commitment, it does not require full-time study, and many MCJ students take courses on a part-time basis. All core courses are offered in the classroom, as a hybrid, and online in an alternating fashion to serve diverse student needs. Electives may be offered in the classroom, online, or hybrid, in intensive formats. Students in the MCJ program should generally expect to complete the degree in not less than two and no more than six years; the average completion time is about three years.

Typical Course Load

Master of Criminal Justice students typically enroll in three (one course) to six (two courses) credit hours each fall and spring semester. Graduate students are considered full time when taking five or more credit hours during fall or spring semesters or three or more credit hours during summer semester.

Grading Policies

Grades offered in CPS courses, are based on an A to F scale, with each letter grade representing the following standard narrative description:

- **A** = Work beyond the level of a typical graduate student; exemplary work. (An A equals 4 grade points, an A- equals 3.7 points; there is no A+ grade.)
- **B** = Work typical of a graduate student; indicates student has attained the knowledge and skills intended for the course. (A B+ equals 3.3, a B equals 3.0, and a B- equals 2.7 points.)
- **C** = Performance is below graduate-level expectations. (A C+ earns 2.3 grade points, a C equals 2.0, and a C- equals 1.7).

- **D** = Substandard performance in all aspects of the work of the course; inadequate comprehension of assigned reading material. (D+ equals 1.3 grade points, a D equals 1.0, and a D- equals 0.7).
- **F** = Level of performance demonstrably below that expected of a graduate student; little or no indication that the student can succeed in a graduate program.

Acceptable Grades

Students must receive a grade of B- or better in all courses applied toward the degree. To remain in good academic standing and to receive the degree, a student is required to maintain at least a B (3.0) grade point average, which includes all work required for the MCJ degree while taken at UCCS (classified and unclassified) and may differ from the University grade point average.

A student who receives a grade below a B- in a course may repeat that course once, with the approval of the MCJ Program Director, provided the course has not been previously applied toward a degree. The grade received in a repeated course may substitute for the original grade, and only the latter grade will be used in calculating the graduate program GPA required for graduation. However, all grades received during the student's graduate school experience will appear on the student's transcript and will be used in calculating the student's University GPA. These and other [UCCS Graduate School policies](#) may apply.

The calculation of a student's program grade point average (GPA) shall be based on all coursework applied to the degree, including any courses taken as a non-degree seeking student. (NOTE: Courses taken in non-degree status are not included in the overall calculation of graduate school GPA on the official transcripts but are included in the overall calculation of GPA as conducted by MCJ staff for graduation purposes.)

Retroactive Grade Changes

Students are not permitted to request grade changes for courses in which a final letter grade (other than an Incomplete) has been received except as a result of instructor error or as otherwise warranted through the academic grievance process. A student may not enter into an agreement with an instructor to retroactively change a final letter grade based on work completed by the student after the course has ended.

Standards of Performance

In order to be in good standing, students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better in the program. A grade of B- or better is required in all courses. The academic performance of each student will be reviewed at the end of each semester. A student who has attempted 9 or more semester hours at UCCS (to include 'I' and 'IP' grades) in the Graduate School and whose UCCS graduate program grade point average of awarded grades falls below 3.0 will be placed on probation for one academic year; additionally, any student receiving a grade of F in any course is automatically placed on probation. Students placed on probationary status are notified via their UCCS email account, the official means of communication.

After a student has been placed on probation, they have one academic year, to raise their GPA to 3.0. Failure to raise the cumulative GPA to 3.0 in the time period outlined will result in suspension from the program.

A suspended student is eligible to apply for readmission one year after removal from the program. Approval or rejection of this application rests with the MCJ Program Director.

Incompletes, Withdrawals, and Repeating Courses

Incompletes

A grade of Incomplete may be granted when a student has successfully completed a substantial portion of the course (75% or more) *and* is prevented from completing the class by circumstances beyond their control. The course instructor has discretion as to whether to grant an Incomplete, and students should be aware that not all faculty will do so. If the instructor agrees to grant an Incomplete, the student must make arrangements to complete the remaining coursework with the original instructor within one year, although instructors may impose a shorter completion deadline at their discretion, which should be in writing. The student may not “sit in” on the class in subsequent semesters.

If an Incomplete is granted, students must work with the faculty member and respective program director to complete an [Incomplete Grade Contract](#) outlining the assignments due and the timeline for the incomplete work to be finalized.

Once the coursework is completed, the instructor will change the “I” grade to a letter grade. The Incomplete notation will appear along with the final grade on the student’s transcript. If the coursework is not completed within a year, the Incomplete will automatically change to an F. Incompletes for the capstone seminar are rarely granted and only in exceptional circumstances.

Drops and Withdrawals

Deadlines for dropping a course are set by the Office of the Registrar. Students are responsible for knowing the drop and add deadlines and procedures published in the [Course Information Center](#). Please see the [Academic Calendar](#) for specific dates.

Students will be allowed to drop and add of their own accord in their myUCCS portal through census date (the 12th day of classes of the regular semester or the 6th day of classes of the summer term). Following that period, dropping a course is considered a withdrawal and requires course instructor and CPS Dean approval on the [Add/Drop/Withdraw Course Form](#). Courses that meet less than the full 16-week term in fall and spring and 8 weeks in the summer have special pro-rated drop and add deadlines.

There are no refunds on individual courses dropped after the course census date.

Students must initiate a drop or withdrawal and follow the appropriate procedures. Students who fail to do this and do not complete the coursework will be issued a letter grade of “F” for the course.

Repeating Courses

A student who receives a grade below B- in a course may repeat that course once, with the approval of the MCJ Program Director, provided the course has not been previously applied toward a degree. The grade received in a repeated course may substitute for the original grade, and only the latter grade will be used in calculating the graduate program cumulative GPA required for graduation. However, all grades received during the student’s graduate school experience will appear on the student’s transcript and will be used in calculating the student’s University GPA. These and other [UCCS Graduate School policies](#) may apply.

Transfer Credit

External Transfer Credit

Up to 9 graduate-level credit hours (no more than 30% of the credit hours needed to complete the degree) of relevant coursework completed at another accredited institution or at UCCS in a unit other than the College of Public Service may be applied toward the MCJ degree. To be eligible for transfer, courses must have been taken within 5 years of the request for transfer credit, have a minimum grade of B or above, and have not been applied toward another degree. Should a transferred course become 6 or more years old before the student finishes the degree requirements, it will no longer count toward the degree unless re-validation criteria apply. All transfer work must be approved in writing by the program director. Students should request transfer of credits immediately after admission.

Credit Earned at UCCS CPS before Admission into MCJ program

Internal Transfer Credit

Up to 9 graduate-level credit hours (no more than 30% of the credit hours needed to complete the degree) completed with a B or better taken prior to enrollment in the MCJ program may be applied toward the degree. If you have completed a College of Public Service certificate at UCCS you can transfer up to 15 credit-hours, limited to the courses you took while completing the certificate requirements only. The MCJ Program Director's written approval is required to count more than 9 credit hours from another CPS discipline (i.e., courses with a prefix other than CJ/CRJU) toward the degree. Courses must be taken within 5 years of the request for application of credit. Should a course become 6 or more years old before the student finishes the degree requirements, it will no longer count toward the degree unless re-validation criteria apply.

Course Validation Process

Per the [UCCS Graduate School policy](#), Master's degree seeking students have a time limit of six years, from the date the course was taken, to complete all degree requirements, including filing a thesis. Coursework completed prior to the respective time limit (6 years for master's students) will not be accepted for the degree unless validated by a special assessment determined by the department. In the MCJ program up to 4 courses may be requested for validation while working towards degree completion.

INITIATING THE VALIDATION PROCESS

To initiate a validation review for prior coursework in the MCJ program, a student must submit a written request for validation to the MCJ program director. This written request must include the course number, course title, institution where the course was completed, date of completion, course objectives, and an attached copy of the course syllabus. The MCJ program director will review the request and identify the UCCS MCJ graduate course most closely aligned with the prior course completed. The MCJ director will also identify a consulting faculty member to assist with the special assessment.

VALIDATION SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

In the MCJ program, the special assessment involves a student demonstrating an understanding of course objectives. Together, the MCJ director and consulting faculty member will review the prior course objectives and compare these to the equivalent MCJ course objectives. Upon review, a list of course objectives will be identified for the student to provide a written response and demonstrate their understanding and application of those objectives as they pertain to the criminal justice field. Written responses should be no longer than a

few paragraphs per objective (3 pages in total before references) and should include references to scholarly literature. The student will be provided with recent UCCS course syllabi to serve as a guide on relevant readings related to the validation topic.

TIMELINE & NOTIFICATION

A student will have 1 month from when they are provided with a list of course objectives to provide a written response. The MCJ director will note the deadline when emailing the special assessment to the student. The student should send the emailed special assessment back to both the MCJ director and consulting faculty member by the deadline.

The MCJ program director and consultant faculty member will evaluate the special assessment. When a decision has been made, the MCJ Program Director will notify the student in writing of the decision. Successful validation will require completion of the [UCCS Graduate School Validation Form](#). If a validation is denied, the student will need to complete an equivalent course in the MCJ program to meet the degree requirements. The MCJ director will provide the student guidance on this for unsuccessful validation requests.

Per UCCS Graduate School policy, course validations are effective for six years from the date of the validating assessment. Students may want to consult with their Faculty Advisor on the timeline in which to initiate a validation request.

APPEALS

If a student is unsatisfied with the outcome of the validation review, they may appeal the decision to the criminal justice department chair. If the department chair is serving as the consulting faculty member, the appeal should be made to the Associate Dean in the College of Public Service. Appeals must be made in writing the same semester the validation occurs.

The student's written appeal must describe in detail the reason the decision should be reconsidered. The Chair (or Associate Dean) may contact the student for more information as well as the appropriate faculty member and MCJ director to get a written response on objections or questions raised by the student. When a decision has been made, a written statement will be provided to the student.

MCJ Graduation Procedures

All students **must apply for graduation** during the semester in which they anticipate graduating by completing the [steps outlined on the Graduate School website](#). Do not procrastinate, as deadlines are early in the semester.

- Students should meet with the Graduate Student Services Specialist and their faculty advisor to determine which requirements remain for graduation.
- Students must complete and submit an application for [admission to candidacy](#) by the specified deadline.
- Students must apply for graduation using the [online diploma card](#) in the student portal.
- Students who would like to participate in the commencement ceremony (optional) should register at the [Graduate School website](#) additional information about the ceremony may be found on the [commencement website](#).

Students who have completed all the requirements for the MCJ degree can apply for candidacy and graduation in the fall, spring, or summer semesters. Students who complete their degree requirements in the summer may participate in graduation ceremonies in the fall. No graduation ceremony is held in the summer.

Students on the graduation list but find they cannot complete the program requirements before graduation should notify the Graduate Student Services Specialist as soon as possible. They may then reapply for graduation in a subsequent semester.

Student Academic Complaints and Appeals

MCJ Student Academic Complaints and Appeals

Formal procedures by which a currently enrolled student may seek to remedy academic complaints within the MCJ program are described below. Student appeals are challenges to academic actions or decisions, including but not limited to actions such as an academic grade or evaluation of a student's work in a course, seminar, or other academic forum; a decision with respect to a student's academic standing in a program; unjust treatment by a faculty member in a class; or actions related to thesis or capstone procedures.

Step One: Informal Resolution

The student is strongly encouraged to first attempt to informally resolve the grievance through discussion with the faculty member(s) involved.

Step Two: Filing the Grievance

If the student is unable to resolve the dispute with the faculty member(s), they should file a written grievance with the MCJ Program Director. Absent unusual circumstances, the grievance should be filed within 30-days after the student learns of the event that gives rise to the grievance.

The written grievance may be filed via e-mail or delivered in writing directly to the MCJ Program Director. The grievance should clearly state the basis for the complaint and the remedy requested, and should include any evidence that supports the grievance, such as course syllabi, assignments, and statements from other students.

Students should be aware that grades and other evaluations of student work are traditionally within the jurisdiction of individual instructors and are not likely to be changed absent evidence that the faculty member 1) determined the grade based on considerations other than student performance; 2) substantially differed from previously announced criteria or procedures in determining the grade; or 3) violated university or school policy in determining the grade. The student bears the burden of proof on these allegations.

Step Three: Investigating the Grievance

The MCJ Program Director will acknowledge receipt of the grievance, forward a copy to the faculty member(s) involved, and begin the investigation of the circumstances of the grievance. They may request additional information from the student and faculty member(s) involved.

If the grievance involves the need for substantial academic expertise in a particular field in order to assess whether there is a basis for the grievance, the Program Director may appoint a panel of faculty members with expertise in the area to investigate the grievance and recommend a decision to the Program Director.

In the event that the MCJ Program Director is involved in the grievance, they shall refer the investigation of the grievance to the Department Chair for investigation pursuant to the rules of the Graduate School.

Step Four: Decision by the MCJ Program Director

Within 30 days of the grievance's filing, the MCJ Program Director shall provide a written report containing their decision on the grievance's disposition to the student and the faculty member(s).

Appealing the Decision of the MCJ Program Director to the Department Chair

If a student is not satisfied with the results of the appeal process to the MCJ Program Director, the student may appeal to the Department Chair within 14-days of notification of the Program Director's decision, following the same procedure specified in Step Two above. The Department Chair shall then review the materials submitted by the student, the materials submitted to and used by the MCJ Program Director in deciding the disposition of the grievance, and any other materials they consider relevant to the inquiry. Within 14 business days of receiving the student's appeal of the Program Director's decision, the Department Chair shall provide a written report containing their decision on the disposition of the grievance to the student, the faculty member(s), and the MCJ Program Director.

Appealing the Decision of the Department Chair to the Associate Dean

If a student is not satisfied with the results of the appeal process to the MCJ Program Director and Department Chair, the student may appeal to the Associate Dean of the College of Public Service within 14 business days of notification of the Department Chair's decision, following the same procedure specified in Step Two above. The Associate Dean shall then review the materials submitted by the student, the materials submitted to and used by the MCJ Program Director and Department Chair in deciding the disposition of the grievance, and any other they consider relevant to the inquiry. Within 14 business days of receiving the student's appeal of the Department Chair's decision, the Associate Dean shall provide a written report containing their decision on the disposition of the grievance to all the parties involved.

Appealing the Decision of the Associate Dean to the Dean

If a student is not satisfied with the results of the appeal process to the MCJ Program Director, Department Chair, and Associate Dean, the student may appeal to the Dean of the College of Public Service within 14-business days of notification of the Associate Dean's decision, following the same procedure specified in Step Two above. The Dean shall then review the materials submitted by the student, the materials submitted to and used by the MCJ Program Director, Department Chair, and Associate Dean in deciding the disposition of the grievance, and any other they consider relevant to the inquiry. Within 14 business days of receiving the student's appeal of the Associate Dean's decision, the Dean shall provide a written report containing their decision on the disposition of the grievance to all the parties involved.

Campus-Level Appeals

Grade appeals are decided within the College of Public Service; the Dean has final jurisdiction. If a resolution to the problem identified in the student's appeal on other academic issues cannot be reached on the program or school level, the student may submit a written appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School according to [Article V of Graduate School Policies and Procedures](#).

Campus Level Student Code of Conduct and Academic Ethics Code Violations

As described in Section 5 of this Handbook, all students enrolled in credit or non-credit courses at UCCS are bound by the [UCCS Student Academic Ethics Code Policy](#) and the [UCCS Student Code of Conduct](#).

Student Code of Conduct

The purpose of the Student Code of Conduct (“Code”) is to maintain the general welfare of the University community, and support community safety and student growth by helping students. The University strives to make the campus community a place of study, work, and residence where people are treated with respect and civility. The University views the student conduct process as a learning experience that can result in growth and personal understanding of one's responsibilities and privileges within both the University community and the greater community.

Students are expected to read the Code, make a timely report of an incident, and file all necessary complaints through the Office of the Dean of Students.

Student Academic Ethics Code Policy

Anyone who believes a Code violation has occurred should immediately report the circumstances to the faculty member of the course involved or to the Program Director/chair of the department where the course is offered.

If a faculty member has reason to believe that a Code violation has occurred (due either to the faculty member's own observation or due to a report by a third party), the faculty member shall discuss the matter with the student, provide the student with the supporting documentation and ask the student for a response.

If the student admits to the Code violation or the faculty member finds that a Code violation has occurred, then it is the faculty member's prerogative to impose a sanction at the course level. Such sanctions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. downgrading the student on the assignment/exam/activity in which the academic Code violation occurred, with or without the opportunity to redo;
- b. failing the student on the assignment/exam/activity in which the academic Code violation occurred, with or without the opportunity to redo;
- c. lowering the student's grade for the course;
- d. failing the student for the course.

If the faculty member believes that a sanction more severe than a course-level sanction should be levied, then the faculty member shall follow all department and college procedures for such sanctions. The Program Director or Dean may levy more severe sanctions including probation, suspension, expulsion, or withholding or revoking a degree.

Students may dispute the faculty member's finding that a Code violation has occurred by following the appeals process outlined below. Students **may not** appeal course-level sanctions.

Step One: Filing the Appeal

If the student contends that they are innocent of a Code violation and is unable to resolve the situation with the faculty member(s), they should file a written appeal with the MCJ Program Director. Absent unusual circumstances, the appeal should be filed within 30 days after the dispute.

The written appeal may be filed via e-mail or delivered directly to the MCJ Program Director. The appeal should contain all relevant information.

Step Two: Investigating the Appeal

The MCJ Program Director will acknowledge receipt of the appeal, forward a copy to the faculty member(s) involved, and begin an investigation. They may request additional information from the student and faculty member(s) involved.

In the event that the MCJ Program Director is involved in the dispute, they shall refer the investigation of the appeal to the assistant Dean of the College of Public Service for investigation.

Step Three: Decision by the MCJ Program Director

Within 30 days of the filing of the appeal, the MCJ Program Director shall provide a written report containing their decision to the student and the faculty member(s).

Appealing the Decision of the MCJ Program Director to the Department Chair

If a student is not satisfied with the results of the appeal process to the MCJ Program Director, the student may appeal to the Department Chair within 14 business days of notification of the Program Director's decision, following the same procedure specified above. The Department Chair shall then review the materials submitted by the student, the materials submitted to and used by the MCJ Program Director in deciding the disposition of the appeal, and any other materials they consider relevant to the inquiry. Within 14 business days of receiving the student's appeal of the Program Director's decision, the Department Chair shall provide a written report containing their decision on the disposition of the appeal to the student, the faculty member(s), and the MCJ Program Director.

Appealing the Decision of the Department Chair to the Associate Dean

If a student is not satisfied with the results of the appeal process to the MCJ Program Director and the Department Chair, the student may appeal to the Associate Dean of the College of Public Service within 14 business days of notification of the assistant Dean's decision, following the same procedure specified above. The Associate Dean shall then review the materials submitted by the student, the materials submitted to and used by the MCJ Program Director and Department Chair in deciding the disposition of the appeal, and any other materials they consider relevant to the inquiry. Within 14 business days of receiving the student's appeal of the Department Chair's decision, the Associate Dean shall provide a written report containing their decision on the disposition of the grievance to all of the parties involved.

Appealing the Decision of the Associate Dean to the Dean

If a student is not satisfied with the results of the appeal process to the MCJ Program Director, Department Chair, and Associate Dean, the student may appeal to the Dean of the College of Public Service within 14 business days of notification of the Associate Dean's decision, following the same procedure specified in Step Two above. The Dean shall then review the materials submitted by the student, the materials submitted to and used by the MCJ Program Director, Department Chair, and Associate Dean in deciding the disposition of

the grievance, and any other they consider relevant to the inquiry. Within 14 business days of receiving the student's appeal of the Associate Dean's decision, the Dean shall provide a written report containing their decision on the disposition of the grievance to all the parties involved.

Campus-Level Appeals

Students may dispute the faculty member's finding that a Code violation has occurred at the campus level only after exhausting the CPS appeals process. Students may not appeal course-level sanctions but may appeal more severe program- or school-level sanctions such as probation, suspension, expulsion, or withholding or revoking of a degree as levied by the school. This process is outlined in the [Student Academic Ethics Code Policy](#).



"My time in the Master's in Criminal Justice program has strengthened my passion for advocacy and deepened my understanding of the criminal justice and legal system. I've been fortunate to work with professors who are supportive of my interests, and this experience has further fueled my desire to continue advocating for underrepresented populations in the legal field."

--Danna Ceja, MCJ Alumni