

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

What can I do with this major?

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

SOCIAL SERVICES

Corrections
Counseling
Juvenile Justice
Casework
Administration
Probations & Parole
Victim Advocacy

State and federal correction facilities
County jails
Precinct station houses
Prison camps
Youth correction facilities
Medium-security correction facilities
Voluntary correction facilities
Halfway houses and pre-release programs
Reintegration programs
Alternative schools
Juvenile detention centers
Juvenile group homes
Women's and family shelters
Domestic violence agencies
Immigration and naturalization services
Other nonprofit organizations

Seek courses or training in topics such as victimology, social problems, diversity issues, or grieving.
Supplement curriculum with courses in psychology, sociology, or social work.
Gain experience working with a juvenile population in any capacity (i.e., sports teams, summer camp counselor, parks and recreation programs, and community/religious youth groups).
Gain related experience in employment interviewing, social casework, substance abuse, and rehabilitation.
Learn to work well with people of diverse backgrounds.
Consider learning a second language.
Maintain a blemish-free driving and criminal record.
Gain firearms and self-defense training.
Earn a master's degree in social work or counseling for therapy positions.
Obtain a masters degree in criminal justice or business for upper-level positions in facilities management or administration.

JUDICIARY AND LAW

Court Reporting
Legal Assistance
Legal Research
Administration

Local, state, and federal courts
Law firms
Corporate legal departments
Public interest law organizations

Consider a double major or minor in the social sciences such as psychology, anthropology, sociology, or political science.
Attend a postsecondary vocational or technical college that offers court reporting or paralegal certification programs.
Obtain a law degree from a law school accredited by the American Bar Association (ABA).
Learn to use software packages such as CD-ROM research databases.
Develop strong research, computer, and writing skills.
Maintain a high grade point average to gain admittance to law school.
Participate in mock trial groups.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Patrolling
Investigating
Forensics
Probation
Security

City/County Government Organizations including:
Police departments
Correction facilities
County sheriff departments
Liquor Control Commission
State Government Organizations including:
State troopers
Crime labs
Penitentiaries
Federal Government Organizations including:
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI)
Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA)
Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)
Department of Homeland Security
Postal Service
Federal Marshals
Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks
United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
National Parks Service
Crime laboratories
Colleges and universities

Obtain related training or certifications such as CPR, first aid, or EMT.
Complete a formal police academy program upon graduation.
Maintain a healthy and physically fit lifestyle.
Volunteer to work in a police department or campus safety department.
Complete an internship in a crime laboratory to gain experience in the forensic application of science.
Obtain a double major in criminal justice and a hard science (biology, chemistry, or biochemistry) if interested in a career in forensics.
Consider earning a master's degree in Forensic Science or related discipline.
Become familiar with the government application process.
Learn a second language.

BUSINESS

Private Security
Consulting
Investigating
Systems Integration
Global Intelligence
Private Investigation
Internet Security
Loss and Prevention

Insurance companies
Banks
Private security companies
Software companies
Hotels and resorts
Health care facilities
Transportation services
Nuclear power plants
Manufacturers
Online companies
Other large corporations

Minor in business or computer science.
Seek practicum/internship experiences that include training in the hardware and software of security systems.
Maintain good physical fitness.
Develop exceptional written and oral communication skills.
Seek leadership opportunities and develop strong interpersonal skills.
Attend firearm safety courses. Obtain first aid and CPR certification.
Gain military experience and training.
Earn a graduate degree in business or law for upper-level positions.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

EDUCATION

Teaching
Research

Colleges and universities
Adult education providers
Public and private high schools

Earn a graduate degree for post-secondary teaching opportunities.
Get a teaching certificate for elementary or secondary education. Gain a dual certification for increased opportunities
Serve as a tutor to other students.
Develop strong written and oral communication skills.
Assist a professor with research.
Take additional coursework related to research and statistics.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Many criminal justice professions require candidates to possess strong oral and written communication skills and good computer skills. The ability to speak a second language is also desirable.
- Develop good listening skills and the ability to work well with a wide range of diverse populations.
- Most entry-level positions for criminal justice majors reside with law enforcement and social service organizations.
- Be willing to start in an entry-level job in order to prepare for more advanced career opportunities.
- Obtain experience through volunteer, practicum, or internship opportunities.
- Supplement program of study with courses in business, psychology, anthropology, or sociology. Course work related to the hard sciences (biology, chemistry, or biochemistry) is preferred for career opportunities in forensics.
- Depending upon one's career goals, earn a master's degree in disciplines such as criminal justice, forensic science, social work, counseling, or business to obtain positions involving therapy, higher levels of administration, forensics, or research. Earn the doctorate degree for university teaching positions.
- Conduct informational interviews with professionals in fields of interest to learn more about opportunities.