

## CoSS

# Criminology B.S.

### Student Outcomes Assessment Plan (SOAP)

#### I. Mission Statement

The general mission of the Department of Criminology at California State University, Fresno, is to offer high-quality educational opportunities to qualified students at the bachelor's degree level. The Department of Criminology's mission statement for undergraduate education includes 1) offering quality academic programs, 2) promoting and enhancing the teaching and learning experience of students and faculty, 3) preparing students for entry into criminal justice system agencies, and 4) preparing students for graduate education. The mission will be accomplished in an environment of mutual respect and support among students, faculty, and staff. The Department of Criminology's undergraduate mission will complement the Department's overall mission and the missions of the College of Social Sciences and California State University, Fresno.

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#### II. Goals and Student Learning Outcomes

##### 1. Students will attain discipline-related knowledge and writing skills that prepare them for long-term careers in Criminology and Criminal Justice.

**Outcome 1:** Students will demonstrate discipline-related knowledge in Criminology and Criminal Justice.

**Definition of proficiency in discipline-related knowledge:** Students can correctly and accurately define and describe key criminological terms, theories, and specific examples from criminal law, as well as various aspects of the criminal justice system.

**Benchmark (Old):** Students will pass CRIM 20 and CRIM 100, in which these definitions and concepts are taught, with a C or above and will be given pre- and post-tests to verify their proficiency in this area. (This assessment was administered during 2011–2013.)

**Benchmark (New):** The reflection papers assigned in CRIM 1 (freshman) and the Internship (Senior) will be evaluated using a critical thinking rubric. Senior students will have a higher score on the critical thinking rubric to meet expectations (the data collection for this assessment will start from Fall 2015).

**Outcome 2:** Students will demonstrate proficiency in basic writing skills.

Definition of basic writing skills: student's ability to write a paper with appropriate use of skills in mechanics, organization, and format.

**Benchmark:** Students will receive a 3 out of 5 score on the writing rubric used by criminology in addition to receiving a B or better as their grade for the paper.

**2. Students will be able to identify, locate, access, and use information relevant to their inquiries and be able to cite this information appropriately.**

**Outcome 3:** Students will access the needed information effectively and efficiently and evaluate the information and its sources critically.

**Benchmark:** Proficiency in information literacy will be demonstrated either by completing a pre- and post -information literacy test and scoring above an 85% or by earning a grade of B or better in CRIM 170 (H), which is the Research Methods Class.

**3. Students will think critically and will apply specific knowledge and skills in order to evaluate situations according to professional values and ethics and make appropriate decisions.**

**Outcome 4:** Students will demonstrate their ability to apply critical thinking and discipline-specific knowledge to evaluate situations and make decisions in their specific field.

**Benchmark:** Students who complete internships will write a paper explaining their thought and decision-making process, and these papers will be evaluated using a critical thinking rubric. Students must score 4 out of 5 on the critical thinking rubric to meet expectations.

**4. Methodological and statistical competency: Understand basic research and quantitative strategies for uses specific to criminal justice and criminology.**

**Outcome 5:** Students will perform data analysis, interpret the findings, and make statistical conclusions.

**Benchmark:** Students will receive either an A or B on a specific statistics assignment and will receive a 3 out of 5 on a quantitative reasoning rubric.

### III. Curriculum Map (Matrix of Courses × Learning Outcomes)

Core Courses: All Options	Outcome 1 Knowledge	Outcome 2 Writing	Outcome 3 Information Literacy	Outcome 4 Critical Thinking	Outcome 5 Quantitative Reasoning
Lower Division					
CRIM 1	I	I	I	I	
CRIM 2	R	R	R	R	
CRIM 20	R	R	R	R	
CRIM 50					I
Upper-Division Core					
CRIM 100	E	E	E	E	
CRIM 112	E	E	E	E	
CRIM 114	E	E	E	E	
CRIM 170	E	E	E	E	R/E
CRIM 170H	E	E	E	E	R/E
CRIM 120 (GE)	E	E	E		
Upper-Division Requirements					
CRIM 180	M	M	M	M	
CRIM 180H	M	M	M	M	M
CRIM 181	M	M	M	M	
CRIM 181H	M	M	M	M	M
CRIM 182	M	M	M	M	
CRIM 182H	M	M	M	M	M
<b>I-Introduced</b>	<b>R-Reinforced</b>	<b>E-Emphasized</b>	<b>M-Mastered</b>		

## IV. Assessment Methods

### A. Direct Measures

1. Pre- and post-tests and papers (information literacy): Pre- and post-tests will be given to assess the extent to which students are information literate. The pre-exam will be given on the first day of instruction and the post-exam will be given on the last day of instruction. The information literacy test contains 15 questions related to library searches, use of specific information/evidence, and the APA format. Papers written by students will also be evaluated to determine the extent to which they have identified, utilized, and correctly cited the most appropriate sources.
2. Papers: One-page analysis papers, as well as other assigned papers, will be evaluated to determine the critical thinking skills (demonstrated by the application of knowledge and use of examples to support conclusions) and writing skills of students.

Internship reports written by students will be evaluated.

3. Quantitative assignments/exercises: Student in-class assignments will be used to assess quantitative skills. The percentage of students who are able to complete the assignments properly and reach accurate conclusions will be used for the assessment (CRIM 50). A rubric will be used to evaluate assignments.

### B. Indirect Measures

1. Reflection papers: A dual approach to the introduction of reflection papers will be taken.
  - a) Beginning in Spring 2015, students who have applied for graduation will be asked to submit a reflection paper commenting on the extent to which the Criminology program at Fresno State has prepared them for their chosen career.
  - b) Beginning in Spring 2014, students entering the Criminology program will be asked to submit a reflection paper commenting on their future career plans and academic goals. The Criminology Department will in a matter of a few years be able to match up reflections submitted during students' first and last years as majors and be able to determine how and in what ways students changed and acquired key skills and experiences during their time in the program.
2. Alumni survey: The survey will ask students a number of multiple-choice and short-answer questions and assess their experience with the Department in terms of critical thinking, discipline-related knowledge, writing skills, and information literacy.
3. Employer survey: The employer survey will ask supervisors to evaluate the knowledge, critical thinking, written communication, and information literacy skills of Criminology majors that they have hired.

## V. Student Learning Outcomes × Assessment Methods Matrix

	Outcome 1 Knowledge	Outcome 2 Writing	Outcome 3 Information Literacy	Outcome 4 Critical Thinking	Outcome 5 Quantitative Reasoning
<b>Direct Measures</b>					
Pre- and post-tests	X		X		
Pre- and post-tests	X	X	X		
Term papers	X	X	X	X	
Quantitative assignments/exercises					X
<b>Indirect Measures</b>					
Alumni survey	X	X	X	X	
Employer survey	X	X	X	X	
Reflection papers	X			X	

## **VI. Time Line for Implementation of Assessment Methods and Summary Evaluations**

### **Year 2011 to 2012**

Revision of SOAP including development of new learning outcomes, assessment measures, and surveys. A pilot test was also conducted to collect data to use for evaluating assessment measures.

Pre- and post-tests (knowledge) were administered.

Internship evaluations were administered.

### **Year 2012 to 2013**

Pre- and post-information literacy exams were administered.

Pre- and post-exams assessing writing were administered.

Pre- and post-tests (knowledge) were administered.

Internship evaluations were administered, and the findings will be discussed in Year 2013 to 2014.

### **Year 2013 to 2014**

The internship evaluation was assessed and discussed.

A minor revision was made to comply with the WASC requirements.

Papers assessing writing and information literacy were administered and the results discussed (GE).

An alumni survey was administered and the results discussed.

Pre- and post-tests (MyWritingLab) for assessing writing proficiency were administered, and the findings will be discussed in Year 2014 to 2015.

### **Year 2014 to 2015**

The findings of the pre- and post-tests (MyWritingLab) will be discussed.

Quantitative assignments/exercises will be administered.

An employer survey will be administered.

Reflection papers will be collected.

### **Year 2015 to 2016**

Review the SOAP and the effectiveness of the direct measures.

Papers will be evaluated for information literacy.

Papers will be evaluated for written communication skills.

## **VII. Process for Closing the Loop**

The SOAP Committee of the Department of Criminology reviews the outcome of the SOAP and discusses the implications and possible changes. Then, the suggestions will be presented at a Department meeting and, if necessary, the Curriculum Committee will meet and discuss the curriculum changes.

Furthermore, the Department has four different options, and if issues are across the options, the Option Coordinators will hold a meeting to discuss any necessary changes.

Finally, the Department plans to hold a retreat in Spring 2015, and the program goals and directions based on the SOAP will be intensively discussed at that meeting.

### **1. Writing Proficiency and Changes:**

The Department discussed offering a “W” section in Criminology. The majority disagreed with doing so due to the lack of resources and the fact that Criminology is one of the largest departments with approximately 1,600 undergraduate criminology major students.

Alternately, the Department had unanimous agreement on changing the road map and advising students to take a “W” class during their junior year.

Also, the writing assessment indicated that many of the writing problems could be improved by careful proofreading or with the assistance of writing software. The Department has experimentally implemented computer-based writing software (MyWritingLab) to see if it could improve students’ writing skills. The data collection will be completed in May 2014, and the final report will be completed in Fall 2014. The Department will revisit the idea in AY 2014–15.

Finally, the Department will seek an effective way to measure writing skills, and a signature assignment with a standardized rubric will be created and tested in AY 2014–15.

### **2. Information Literacy and Changes**

The Department maintained a close relationship with the College of Social Sciences librarian in 2013–14. For example, the Social Sciences librarian organized a foundation grant workshop and an announcement was sent to the faculty and students. Also, the faculty invited her to classrooms to give information literacy lectures and referred students who had trouble finding articles.

The Department will continue to work with the Social Sciences librarian and modify the library Web site for Criminology and Victimology and consult with her on better ways to obtain articles and use APA citation guidelines.