

## Annual Report Form

- a. **Program name:** Department of Criminal Justice (CLAS)
- b. **Report prepared by:** Dr. Allen F. Anderson, Department Chair
- c. **Who is the current assessment contact for your program?** Same as prepared by
- d. **Should assessment information be sent to anyone else in the department?** No

### 1. What are the program's educational goals?

Upon completion of the prescribed course of study, CJUS majors will be able to:

- 1. Exhibit and understanding of criminological theories and the ability to apply those theories in explaining social policy and crime;
- 2. Demonstrate the ability to critically analyze policy issues in Criminal Justice;
- 3. Demonstrate an understanding of the structure, function, and operation of law enforcement, courts, and corrections;
- 4. Apply basic techniques of research methodology in the study of Criminal Justice;
- 5. Exhibit an understanding of how the criminal justice system functions in relation to the broader political-governmental process;
- 6. Demonstrate the ability to apply communication, computer, and statistical skills to content specific information in Criminal Justice;
- 7. Demonstrate an acceptable level of awareness of approaches to criminal justice around the world;
- 8. Demonstrate the ability to integrate knowledge and skills acquired in previous coursework during the senior capstone experience.

### 2. What assessment techniques did the program use?

The most important addition to our assessment process was the utilization, beginning fall semester, 2008, of the Major Fields Test (MFT) in Criminal Justice (Educational Testing Service). We piloted this test through a campus grant from the Assessment Committee. Given the power of the results, we will continue to use the test in the future as the cornerstone of our assessment process.

The test is given to our students in the senior capstone course (CJUS-P410) each semester. The results rank our students' performance against those in programs across the nation. This gives us a standard by which to measure our overall learning performance. As well, the Major Fields Test results indicate sub-area weaknesses that will allow us to modify course content and/or approach to deal with indicated deficiencies.

(Student performance was stronger in spring than fall, though even fall was at a relatively respectable level. It was clearly demonstrated that the range of student learning varies widely. Some of our students are in the 70<sup>th</sup>-80<sup>th</sup> percentile ranking, while a limited number are in the 40<sup>th</sup>-50<sup>th</sup> percentile range. From previous experience with national testing, I would like to see our average scores brought relatively consistently into the 70<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher. )

Given that we are a new and independent program in CLAS, this year's results will be used as a basic and relative standard by which to gauge future student performance.

Other assessment mechanisms include a survey of graduates (to be conducted during June, 2009), course-based assessment, and the use of the senior capstone course to gauge how well our students can integrate and utilize knowledge and skills from previous core courses.

### **3. What has your program done with assessment information this year?**

Major Fields results have been shared with departmental faculty. To reiterate, this year's testing sequence allowed us to develop a standard against which future performance will be evaluated. We hope that changes to the curriculum, emphasis on classroom performance, and quality advising will allow us to continually improve our MFT score.

Note that our BSCJ curriculum has been modified to include a two-year foreign language requirement. We believe that this will allow us to both attract high quality students and to graduate students that have the skills necessary to compete in a globalizing employment environment. We also re-implemented the defunct forensics area (Criminalistics) in response to student interest and the desire to utilize an outstanding forensics lab that was going unused.

As the assessment process for 2008-2009 is completed this summer, I will add an assessment section to our departmental webpage to broadly disseminate both findings and relevant program changes in response to those findings.

### **4. After reflecting on assessment activities in your unit, what are two issues you would like to address?**

- A. Any necessary course additions to the curriculum that may strengthen it relative to other programs (as indicated by the MFT test).
- B. Work to insure academic rigor in all of our courses.

