



Eight-Year Program Review IBHE Report Summary: see attached Resources page

PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT SUMMARY

- 1. Reporting Institution:** Eastern Illinois University
- 2. Program Reviewed:** B.A. in Criminology and Criminal Justice
- 3. Date:**
- 4. Contact Person:** Donald H. Holly Jr.
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- 5. OVERVIEW**

Eastern Illinois University's mission statement is a commitment to excellence in education, inclusion, free and rigorous inquiry, and the development of responsible citizens and leaders. Our department likewise prioritizes the education of students with the aim of preparing them to make lifelong and positive contributions to a changing and diverse world.¹

In 2017 we launched our B.A. in Criminology and Criminal Justice. Previously, students who sought careers in law enforcement, corrections, criminal investigation, and criminal administration majored in Sociology. Now such students typically elect to major in Criminology. Our department's program trajectory recapitulates the historical development of the field. For a long time, the social analysis and understanding of crime, criminal behavior, and its root causes fell under the broad umbrella of Sociology, but in the early 20th century, Criminology began to emerge as a distinct discipline. Nonetheless, connections between the two disciplines remain strong and pertinent. Mindful of this, we intentionally developed a Criminology and Criminal Justice (CCJ) program that would be informed by the sociological imagination—that is, with consideration for how individual decisions are informed (and best understood) by broader social forces and structures.

Accordingly, a key dimension of the CCJ program at EIU that distinguishes us from our competitors is its interdisciplinary curriculum and associated option for students to double major in Sociology. By default, students majoring in CCJ at EIU will take three core courses that are also required for our Sociology major (Introductory Sociology, Research Methods, and Statistics) and the cross-listed core course "Introduction to Criminology." They are also likely to take several of our five SOC/CRM cross-listed electives in the course of their academic career at EIU. Such cross-fertilization in the curriculum ensures that our students are broadly prepared to critically address criminological problems at the relevant level of "society." This training helps them advance in their careers within the CCJ field and enhances their opportunities for employment in the broader field of social services (e.g. counseling, social work, human resources).

Significant overlap between our two programs makes it 1) logistically easy for our CCJ students to double major in Sociology, and indeed, 17% of them are currently doing so. It also 2) helps our department be lean and efficient in terms of course offerings and staffing. Students at EIU can complete the CCJ major with just 46 hours, 14 of which (at a minimum) are already working toward a degree in Sociology (virtually all Criminology majors earn a minor in Sociology by default). For comparison, ISU requires 51 hours, WIU 58 hours, and SIU 42 hours, but without broader and embedded exposure to Sociology. With such opportunities to learn to think critically about

¹ <https://www.eiu.edu/about/mission.php>; <https://www.eiu.edu/sociology/about.php>

criminology and the criminal justice system from a variety of perspectives, along with rigorous skill training in research methods and statistics, our program prepares students to enter a complex, diverse, and rapidly changing world and employment environment.

The Criminology and Criminal Justice curriculum is informed by five key learning outcomes: students should be able to 1) apply key criminological and criminal justice concepts, 2) discern between foundational criminological theories, 3) recognize fundamental indicators of social and cultural diversity, 4) identify methods of social scientific inquiry, and 5) recall foundations of quantitative methods and statistical literacy. These outcomes are addressed and reiterated to students as they progress through a comprehensive curriculum composed of eight core courses, a law requirement, and seven electives. Students begin the core sequence with an introductory survey of Sociology and the Criminal Justice System, before moving on to courses that cover foundational concepts, theories, social problems, and legal issues relevant to CCJ (Introduction to Criminology, Criminological Theory, Race and Ethnic Relations, Law [students have three course options to fulfil this requirement]). By their junior year most students are enrolled in our sequenced research methods and statistics courses, which provide a solid grounding in qualitative and quantitative research design, analysis, and interpretation. Our senior capstone seminar (Contemporary Topics in Criminology and Criminal Justice) concludes and integrates the entire core curriculum.

The Department consists of ten tenured and tenure-track faculty, and one full-time instructor. As a consequence of our interdisciplinary curriculum, nearly all faculty contribute to some extent to the CCJ program (either through core courses, electives, or interdisciplinary electives). Collectively, all are accomplished teachers, active researchers, and involved in service to their department, university, community, and profession. Since the CCJ program was established in 2017, just our four core criminology and criminal justice faculty have received several teaching awards, including the college's *Hanner Teaching Excellence Award*. They have also produced nearly two dozen publications in journals such as the *Journal of Qualitative Criminal Justice and Criminology*, *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*, *Criminal Justice Studies*, and *Criminal Justice Review*, several chapters in edited volumes, a single-authored monograph (*Routledge Press*), and they have delivered forty conference presentations. They have also received more than a dozen grants, including two competitive EIU Faculty Research Grants. These accomplishments are all the more impressive when one considers that during this time a global Covid-pandemic made it impossible for faculty to attend conferences or travel for research. Finally, our CCJ faculty are committed to service, and hold positions at the university, community, state, and national level. They also support student activities, research, and professional development—from advising our CCJ student club to providing students with opportunities for research and career development. For their exemplary service, one of our CCJ faculty was the recipient of the University's prestigious *Alan and Carlene Baharlou Distinguished Service Award*.²

6. MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Description and assessment of any major changes in the program:

The CCJ program at EIU was launched in 2017 in response to student/prospective student interest in a CCJ-specific major. Prior to 2017, students interested in a career in law enforcement, corrections, administration, and related fields, typically paired a major in Sociology with a minor in Criminology and Criminal Justice. Not unexpectedly, since establishing the Criminology major, we have witnessed a “major” migration from Sociology to CCJ. Many students, however, are electing to double major (see table below). Indeed, we see the option to double major in Sociology and CCJ as one of the strengths—and selling points—of our program. Because of overlap in core curriculum and cross-listed electives (see Overview), students can obtain two majors with relatively little extra coursework. The two majors (SOC/CCJ) also pair well together. The study of crime and its application is arguably best approached through a critical *societal* lens. Consider, for instance, how law enforcement has been increasingly tasked with policing the mentally ill, addicted, and homeless; the connection between crime and poverty; social movements and community responses to the use of deadly-force; our nation's high incarceration rate; the policing of drug-use and public-health oriented alternatives. The upshot is that Sociology serves Criminology well (and vice versa), and that students who elect to double major graduate with

² Contributions of CCJ faculty that retired or left the university during this period are not included; the accomplishments of new faculty that fall within the evaluation period are included.

both a broader understanding of the intersection of CCJ and Sociology *and* broader career options (e.g. in social services, human resources, counseling, social work).

	1 st SOC MAJOR	1 st CCJ MAJOR	TOTAL 1 ST MAJORS	S-CCJ MAJORS RATIO TO UG ENROLLMENT	TOTAL UG ENROLLMENT	2 nd SOC MAJOR	2 nd CCJ MAJOR	TOTAL 2 ND MAJORS	TOTAL all MAJORS
FA16	188	0	188	3.16%	5957	3	0	3	191
FA17	137	26	163	2.93%	5568	5	4	9	172
FA18	99	76	175	3.69%	4738	7	13	20	195
FA19	54	123	177	3.81%	4649	7	6	13	190
FA20	52	153	205	4.32%	4741	8	10	18	223
FA21	48	167	215	4.65%	4625	13	11	24	239
FA22	45	158	203	4.42%	4591	28	13	41	244
FA23	42	127	169	3.84%	4402	36	12	48	217
FA24	30	116	146	3%	4190	21	10	31	177
FA25	21	115	136	3.35%	4058	23	12	35	171

Although CCJ now make up most of the majors in our department, our department's (Sociology and Criminology) share of the total undergraduate population has remained steady over the last decade (average 3.7%), even as overall enrollment has fallen (see above chart). At the university level, our challenges are those of higher-education in general: a declining college-aged population, the rising costs of education, and competition from alternative career pathways. Political pressures and eroding public trust present additional challenges, in and outside of the academy. While the employment outlook for police officers remains good (3%), a polemic political climate, increased public scrutiny, negative public perception, and a difficult work environment could be deterring some students from pursuing a career in law enforcement. We certainly know that police agencies are experiencing high turnover.³ With this in mind, the aforementioned double-major option offers students considering a career in CCJ some flexibility and career alternatives should they elect to change careers later.

At the same time, we have seen increased interest in “forensics” by prospective students and our matriculating majors. It's anecdotal, but at our open houses perhaps half of all the prospective students that drop by the CCJ table express an interest in forensics. Student interest may be piqued by popular television and true-crime shows, but their career dreams find support in the labor market. The US bureau of Labor predicts the employment of forensic science technicians to grow 13 percent in the next ten years, which is a much faster rate than the average of all other occupations (3%), which includes police officers and detectives. Forensic science technicians are also paid well; the median wage for forensic technicians nationwide is 65k, and in the metropolitan Chicago area it is 91k.⁴ In 2024 we proposed an interdisciplinary minor in forensics and asked to hire a forensic anthropologist to support it, but our request was not approved by the college for lack of funding. We were able to hire a criminologist for another position, however, who had some training in forensics, and he will be offering an introductory course in forensics next semester. We are expecting it to be very popular. The hope is to develop a more robust forensics curriculum with our colleagues in Biology and Chemistry in the coming years.

Description of major findings and recommendations, including evidence of learning outcomes and identification of opportunities for program improvement.

The Criminology and Criminal Justice curriculum is informed by five key learning outcomes: students should be able to 1) apply key criminological and criminal justice concepts, 2) discern between foundational criminological theories, 3) recognize fundamental indicators of social and cultural diversity, 4) identify methods of social

³ Bureau of Labor Statistics; <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/protective-service/police-and-detectives.htm>. Adams et al. “Turnover in large US policing agencies following the George Floyd protests” (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2023.102105>).

⁴ Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook, Forensic Science Technicians, at <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/forensic-science-technicians.htm>; U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, *Education and Training in Forensic Science: A Guide for Forensic Science Laboratories, Educational Institutions, and Students* (2004).

scientific inquiry, and 5) recall foundations of quantitative methods and statistical literacy. Our baseline learning assessment takes place in “Introduction to Criminology,” which is typically taken by our students in the second semester of their first year. We don’t administer the assessment in “Introductory Sociology,” which is its prerequisite, as it would capture many students who are not CCJ majors and who are taking the course to fulfil a general education requirement. We also don’t administer the assessment in Introduction to Criminal Justice, since that is typically a course that our transfer students are likely to bring in with them from elsewhere; assessment in that course would miss them. In contrast, students enrolled in “Introduction to Criminology” are mostly our majors and are likely to continue on through the curriculum. Our exit assessment occurs in our capstone seminar, Contemporary topics in CCJ, which students enroll in only after they have completed the entire core curriculum (Introductory Sociology, Introduction to CJ, Introduction to Criminology, Race and Ethnic Relations, Criminological Theory, Research Methods, and Statistics).

Our assessment instrument consists of 33 multiple choice questions. Each question addresses one of our five aforementioned learning outcomes. The summary results from our last report, submitted this fall (2025), are indicated below.

Student Learning Objective	CRM 2761 (intro CRM)	CRM 4700 (cont. topics)	Percentage change
Key concepts	60.5%	69.7%	+9.2%
Theory	50.2%	60.1%	+9.9%
Social and cultural diversity	61.8%	69.1%	+7.3%
Methods of social science inquiry	65.6%	73.6%	+8%
Statistical literacy	58.7%	66.6%	+7.9%

The report summarizes data collected between Fall 2023 and Spring of 2025. We were disappointed to discover that our students fell short of meeting our 70% proficiency benchmark in all SLO areas aside from “methods,” although note that they fell *just* short of the mark in “concepts” (69.7%) and “diversity” (69.1%). Perhaps not surprisingly, our lowest initial and final assessment scores were in the areas of theory and statistics. These are topical areas in which students are unlikely to have had any prior knowledge. They are also especially challenging in that they require application and interpretation of ideas and quantitative data; by the same logic, however, the results from our methods section offer something of an enigma.

Still, we see considerable and rather uniform improvement in all areas. More importantly, there has been significant improvement in student scores since our last assessment. The table below compares *final* (CRM 4700) assessment scores from our 2023 report compared to those in the 2025 report. As you can see, there was marked improvement in all but one SLO area between 2023 and 2025. Aside from methods (which again is an enigma) student scores show a considerable improvement trajectory that will hopefully see us clearing the 70% proficiency benchmark in each assessment area in 2027.

Student Learning Objective	CRM 4700 (2023 report)	CRM 4700 (2025 report)	Percentage change
Key concepts	59.8%	69.7%	+9.9%
Theory	59.7%	60.1%	+0.4%
Social and cultural diversity	59.7%	69.1%	+9.4%
Methods of social science inquiry	86.6%	73.6%	-13%
Statistical literacy	55%	66.6%	+11.6%

The addition of Criminology-specific electives may account for some of the historic improvement in our assessment scores and could offer optimism for further progress. When we developed the CCJ program in 2017 we had to rely on a nearby community college to provide CCJ courses and our Sociology courses to fill out the curriculum (see below). Since then, we have developed some of our own core coursework (intro to CJ) and have added to our Criminology-specific elective offerings. More CCJ coursework is anticipated now that we have another CCJ faculty member in the department (started fall 2025). If students retain and enhance knowledge with focus and repetition, it stands to reason that the addition of CCJ coursework will serve to further help students master the material; ideally, assessment scores would reflect this.

Description of actions taken since the last review, including instructional resources and practices and curricular changes.

This is our first full review of the program (we submitted a progress report in 2020). As such, there is no prior review to compare it to for the purpose of assessing changes since our last review. There have, however, been significant staffing and curricular changes to the program since it was established in 2017. In terms of staffing, we lost two faculty to retirements in 2018 (unit A) and 2023 (unit B), and we hired faculty to replace these losses and grow the program in 2018 (unit A), 2020 (unit A), and 2025 (unit A). On the curriculum front, we eliminated two core courses (criminal investigations and evidence collection) early on that we were depending on community colleges to deliver. This was done for logistical reasons, as it was proving difficult for our majors to commute between our nearby community college and our campus. We also established “Introductory Sociology” as a prerequisite to “Introduction to Criminology” to help prepare students to understand social issues related to criminological behavior. We also developed two additional core courses: a dedicated course on theory, “Criminological Theory,” and a senior-capstone course, “Contemporary Topics in Criminology and Criminal Justice.” At the time of writing our progress report in 2020 we had just added “Introduction to Criminal Justice” as an elective with the goal that it would eventually become part of the core curriculum; it since has (see below).

We have added a number of elective offerings to enhance the curriculum since our 2020 report: “Gender and Crime,” “Victimology,” “Queer Criminology,” and an interdisciplinary option, “the Anthropology of War and Violence.” With the hiring of a new faculty member in fall 2025 and further course development, we are anticipating the formal addition of many more CCJ electives in the next few years, including “Drugs and Drug Use,” “Race and Crime,” “Crime and Community,” “Critical Criminology,” and a highly anticipated “Introduction to Forensic Science” course which is sure to be popular with our majors and draw curious students from across campus. We are also developing a new course, “Law and the Criminal Justice System,” that can be used to satisfy the law requirement option for our CCJ majors.

Prior to 2022, CCJ students were required to take two of three law courses: “Philosophy of Law” and the option of either “Criminal Law” or “Civil Liberties in America” (note that both Criminal Law and Civil Liberties have “American Government and Constitution” as a prerequisite). The upshot was that students had to effectively take nine hours of law courses for the major. When we sought to add “Introduction to Criminal Justice” (see above) to the core curriculum we were facing an effective 34 credit hour core, and a total 52 credit hour curriculum. This would have created scheduling challenges and made it difficult for students to graduate on time, especially our transfer students. Something had to give. We elected to reduce the law requirement from two courses to one, and to give students the option of which course they would like to take. The option now means that students can now elect to take “Philosophy of Law,” which does not have a prerequisite, and complete the core in just 28 hours.

We also changed the CCJ minor. Our previous “Criminology” minor dated back to before we had a CCJ major, and in that context, it had a lot of structure and requirements for those (then) Sociology majors interested in pursuing a career in CCJ. The original minor had a core curriculum, and the option of two tracks (Crim. admin or CJ), each with different requirements. It was burdensome, rigid, and overly specialized anyway, but especially so once we added the CCJ major. Our new revised minor (2023) gives students much more flexibility. Students are required to take three core courses (intro to CJ, intro to SOC, intro to CRM), and then they are free to take whatever 12 hours of CCJ electives interest them. Students can choose from a large selection of interdisciplinary courses to satisfy three of these hours.

Description of actions to be taken as a result of this review, including instructional resources and practices, and curricular changes.

Our first formal review of the CCJ program provided us with an opportunity to reflect on *curricular* changes to the program since it was established in 2017, and to *assess* student learning outcomes and trends with regard to student interest in our *programs* (majors). The last eight years have witnessed the development of new core courses and electives, improvement in student learning outcomes, and an increase in students electing to major in CCJ and to double major in Sociology. Looking ahead, we are anticipating (*curriculum*) further enhancement of our CCJ electives, and the prospect of developing additional coursework—and perhaps an interdisciplinary minor—in the area of forensics. We will also be closely monitoring our *assessment* data to see if progress in

student learning outcomes follows the further development of CCJ-specific coursework. We will also continue to track *program* enrollment trends in CCJ and the double major in Sociology option. Should forensics become popular, and a forensics minor develop, it is possible that we may see our CCJ majors elect to focus on the CCJ curriculum and take fewer Sociology or Sociology-cross-listed courses, and the number of double majors to drop. The development of EIU's new Bachelor in Social Work program (beginning Fall 2026) may likewise lead our Sociology majors to opt for more Sociology/Social Work focused courses. This too could lead to fewer (SOC/CRM) double majors. Beyond these areas, it will be critical for us to respond to evolving student interests and to changes in the higher-ed and employment environment.

Comments from the College Dean:

The B.A. in Criminology and Criminal Justice (CCJ) continues to be a successful program at EIU. Enrollment in the program has varied year by year since the short progress report in 2021 but overall has averaged around 140 majors annually. In addition, the department has seen an increase in the number of students who double-major in Sociology and CCJ. The two majors pair well together and provide students with enhanced employment opportunities after graduation. At the state and national levels, demand for criminology and criminal justice remains steady and the Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts continued growth in the field, especially in the related area of forensics. Since the short progress report, the department has implemented several key changes including the addition of two new core courses and four new elective options. The program is currently comprised of four full-time CCJ faculty members with further instructional support offered by the Sociology and Anthropology faculty. Given the specialties of recently hired faculty members, the department plans to develop additional electives including an introductory Forensic Science course. The department has implemented a robust assessment plan for the CCJ program, and they are effectively drawing on these data to inform programmatic and curricular decisions.

We recommend a decision of **Program in Good Standing**

VPAA Decision:

- ☒ Program in good standing
- ☐ Program flagged for priority review
- ☐ Program enrollment suspended

VPAA Explanation:

Criminology and Criminal Justice BA (430107)

The summary above describes a flourishing Criminology and Criminal Justice BA program. Since its inception in 2017, the program has drawn many majors (around 150 annually). While such growth was fully anticipated, the number of double majors in Criminology and in Sociology provides an area for more growth as students expand their range of professional expertise. This flexibility suits today's students as they explore career options in law enforcement, criminal law, social services, and forensic science. The program's assessment has garnered useful information for addressing the learning needs of students. The curricular modifications include streamlining, modernizing, and adapting to the career preparations of majors. The program expects to develop a minor in forensic science to meet increasing demand.



Resources for Completing the Eight-Year IBHE Program Review Report

Section 5. Overview

This section will focus the review for your reader.

In no more than half a page, please explain your program's mission and its relationship to Eastern's mission (and, if applicable, to the mission of graduate education). Identify similar programs in the state; distinguish your program from them. You also should identify your program's student learning objectives and career/further education objectives, and summarize significant changes, achievements (by faculty and students and the program itself), and plans for the future.

Section 6. Major Findings and Recommendations

These are the standard IBHE questions:

a. Description and assessment of any major changes in the program:

- (1) changes in the overall discipline or field**
- (2) student demand**
- (3) societal needs**
- (4) institutional context for offering the degree**
- (5) other elements appropriate to the discipline in question**

What, if any, internal or external events have affected your program since the last review? Have enrollments, degree production, costs, student satisfaction, job placement, etc. changed significantly? Has the discipline's governing body approved a new name for the programs it represents; updated/revised curricular requirements; identified new markets; developed new emphases? Have nationwide demographic changes or social policies affected enrollments or requirements for good or for ill?

In addition to the items included in the "Accountability" section of the VPAA website (see the left-hand navigation box at <http://castle.eiu.edu/~acaffair/>), the resources listed below may help you to respond to item 6.a:

1. The IBHE Data Bank <http://www.ibhe.state.il.us/Data%20Bank/default.htm> includes the *Data Book*, which provides statewide discipline-based data on enrollments, degree production, and costs; as well as a variety of other data on statewide enrollments, degree production, credit hour production, and costs.
2. The Institutional Research web page available at <https://www.eiu.edu/ir/> houses EIU's Data Books and the IBHE Alumni survey results, as well as a great deal of information about EIU students (ACT scores, degrees awarded, retention rates, etc.)
3. Occupational projections are available from many professional journals and organizations, as well as:

- a. the Bureau of Labor Statistics <http://stats.bls.gov/>
 - b. ISBE's Educator Supply and Demand Report
http://www.isbe.state.il.us/research/htmls/supply_and_demand.htm
 - c. the Illinois Workforce Information Center
http://www.ides.illinois.gov/Pages/Workforce_Information_Center.aspx
4. Staff members in the Office of Institutional Research also are available to aid you in assembling and analyzing administrative data.

b. Description of major findings and recommendations, including evidence of learning outcomes and identification of opportunities for program improvement

While 6.b also asks you to discuss other significant findings, it is basically the assessment section of the program review. As such, the responses here are crucial to your review's success. Departments that cannot demonstrate that their assessment programs meet the established guidelines will be expected to revise those programs within six months of the final review deadline. The IBHE's **assessment guidelines are appended to this document.**

Since your overview already identifies your student learning objectives, focus here on the assessment program and its results. What measures are you using to assess learning? How well are students achieving the objectives identified for them? What are their specific strengths and weaknesses? What changes have you made and will you be making as a result of assessment? Emphasize direct assessment, but mention the indirect measures you are using as well. Support your generalizations with specific data/evidence. And be sure to include feedback from key stakeholders—students, alums, employers, peer reviewers, etc.—since the IBHE requires it.

c. Description of actions taken since the last review, including instructional resources and practices, and curricular

d. Description of actions to be taken as a result of this review, including instructional resources and practices, and curricular

6.c and 6.d are straightforward. However, by this point, you already may have mentioned the most significant actions your department has taken/is planning to take. Do not repeat yourself. Merely refer the reader to a previous section or sections.

Section 7. Outcome

After consultation with the College Dean, the Provost's Office will indicate whether the program will be deemed "in good standing" or "flagged for priority review." The latter category is used to identify programs experiencing serious concerns—significantly low enrollments, high costs, negative accreditation findings, below-average pass rates on statewide exams, below-average employment placement rates, a continuing lack of satisfaction among students or employers, etc. Departments will be asked to examine and address the identified concern(s) and report the results in an interim review, due in 1-3 years. Typically, however, the IBHE program review results in a positive decision, and the next review is due in eight years.