Mission: The Master of Science in Criminal Justice is a comprehensive, highly interactive web-based degree that is offered entirely online. Its mission is to provide high quality education for criminal justice and social service professionals who wish to continue their graduate education or who need additional knowledge and skills to advance to higher-level positions in their field. The program is also designed as a prerequisite for entry into more specified criminal justice position.

[Note: This multidisciplinary degree program (consisting of criminal justice, psychology, business and accounting, and political science courses) provides students an in-depth knowledge of theoretical criminal justice and criminology sufficient to pursue a Ph.D; a thorough understanding of applied research and statistical methodology which enables students to undertake research for policy analysis; increased knowledge of management principles and organizational and supervisory skills which enables qualified individuals to be promoted to management positions within the criminal justice agencies; and enhancement of skills in one of the three emphasis (criminal justice theory, criminal justice management, and victim and offender services.]

Student Learning Outcomes: At the time of graduation from the Master of Science in Criminal Justice Degree Program, students will: (1) demonstrate advanced, in-depth knowledge of criminology and the criminal justice system; (2) apply research and statistical methodology to policy issues in the criminal justice agency setting; (3) exhibit effective communication skills in both formal and informal written communication; (4) demonstrate organizational, managerial, and supervisory skills appropriate to criminal justice agencies; (5) identify, analyze, and solve problems at the organizational, inter-organizational, or community level; (6) show advanced knowledge and skills in one of the three areas of emphases.

Evaluation Criteria: Assessment Tools:

Tool 1: Successfully complete the coursework requirements of the Master of Science in Criminal Justice Degree Program (assignments, exams, research papers)
The Master of Science in Criminal Justice is earned upon the successful completion of 30 graduate credits – 15 credits of core requirement courses, and 15 credits of electives in a selected area of emphasis (criminal justice theory, criminal justice management, and victim and offender services).

(The Post-Course Evaluation Survey conducted at the end of each semester measures perceptions of individual course quality, to include if the course learning outcomes were met, and instructor’s teaching effectiveness; The Student Advising Evaluation Survey conducted at the end of each semester measures the perceptions of students on the quality of academic advising they received.)

Tool 2: Complete Capstone Research Paper or Thesis
All graduate students must complete the core capstone course, CJ 7920 Seminar Research Paper or CJ 7990 Thesis, the last semester of the program. The capstone course is designed to help students draw together the theoretical, empirical, and practical knowledge gained through course-related activities, and to apply the knowledge in a carefully designed research paper. The completion of this advance research paper will demonstrate that the graduate has the ability to survey a field of knowledge and research, organize, evaluate, interpret, and present evidence in an empirical, logical, and intelligent manner. All graduate capstone papers are filed for public display and review in UWP Karrmann Library.
**Tool 3: Post-Graduate Questionnaire (graduate perspectives on the quality of education they received; did the degree program meet the student learning outcomes)**

Students are surveyed immediately after graduation to obtain information on what advancements they have made in employment as the result of earning the degree. Graduates are asked if the completion of the degree resulted in a promotion and/or pay raise, or new employment opportunities. The questionnaire also gives graduates an opportunity to rate the overall rigorousness of the courses, if student learning outcomes were met, the effectiveness of the course design, the advising process, and the effectiveness and efficiency of the administrative and student support services. In addition, graduates are asked what other courses would have been helpful to take as part of the degree program.

**Tool 4: On-Going External Review by Criminal Justice Advisory Board**

The Criminal Justice Advisory Board meets annually to discuss the program’s ability to meet the needs of criminal justice agencies and about the necessary developments overtime to meet the changing needs in the field. The advisory board reviews the program’s curriculum and makes recommendations for new course development if needed to meet the challenging demands in the criminal justice field.

(Note: In 2004-05, the CJ Masters program underwent and completed the UW-System 5-Year Joint Review. As a result, UWP was formally authorized to continue this degree program.)

**Tools Measuring Attainment of Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)**

An X indicates that the tool measurements progress toward the outcome indicated.

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Summary Findings Of Assessments Efforts

**Tool 1 & 2:** It its seventh year of existence, this multidisciplinary Master of Science in Criminal Justice Degree Program has proven itself to be a vital and essential part of the graduate education at UWP. It especially serves the needs of nontraditional students who currently are employed in criminal justice agencies and are seeking promotion to supervisory or administrative positions. When examining annual admission and enrollment numbers, data (stored in the DLC) suggest that the program has, and continues to experience a steady growth in both areas. The majority of students (98%) are part-time students, employed full-time, thus enroll and complete one or two courses (3-6 credits) per semester. Time to degree has averaged 2.5 years for the master’s students in the program. In its first seven years of existence, the master’s program has graduated 63 students, of whom 75-80% are working in advanced supervisory and management positions in criminal justice agencies, teaching at colleges and universities, or pursuing doctoral or law degrees.

All students are exposed to an integrated core of criminal justice courses emphasizing a strong theoretical, research-oriented, problem-solving perspective grounded in the total criminal justice perspective. In addition, all students complete the capstone courses designed to help the student draw together the theoretical, empirical, and practical knowledge gained through course-related activities in his/her emphasis area, and apply knowledge in a carefully designed research paper.

Course evaluations are used to help instructors improve course content (Student learning outcomes) and teaching strategies. The course evaluations measures *course content* and *instructor’s teaching effectiveness* using a 5-point scale with 5 being high. The overall satisfaction with course content (measured by responses strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree) ranged from 3.4 (CJ XXXX) to 4.7 (CJ XXXX) with an average of 4.3 across all courses in Spring 2006. The overall satisfaction with the instructor’s teaching effectiveness ranged from 3.3 (CJ XXXX) to 4.7 (CJ XXXX) with an average of 4.2 across all courses in Spring 2006. (Note: Course evaluation scores for satisfaction of course content and instructor’s teaching effectiveness are assessed annually to aid course improvement.)

One of the greatest strengths of the program is the daily access the students have to academic advisors (who serve as core faculty member is the CJ Department) and course instructors. Students perceived the advising and guidance they receive to be very good. In addition, UWP DLC is dedicated to providing comprehensive student and faculty support. The center offers an array of student services to learners at a distance in a “one-stop shop mechanism. Students have responded very favorably to the service.

**Tool 3:** As of Fall 2006, of the 63 graduates, approximately 37-39 graduates have been, or will be promoted to higher-level management or supervisory positions in their current jobs. Thirteen graduates have been hired in higher-level management or supervisory new jobs. Six students have been hired as full-time instructors teaching at universities or community colleges. Several students are teaching as adjunct instructors at on-campus or
online institutions. Currently, 4 students are pursuing doctoral degrees, and one student is pursuing a law degree.

For Spring 2006 (current data available), when students were asked if student learning objectives and program objectives in the Master of Science in Criminal Justice Degree Program were met, most student answered strongly agree. When asked “Were there additional courses that would have been helpful to you to take as part of the degree program?” students suggested the following course topics: evaluation research, juvenile delinquency, at-risk adolescents, security management, white-collar/corporate crime, crisis-management, terrorism.

**Tool 4:** Members of the UWP CJ Advisory Board, and the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Training and Standards Bureau, Management and Leadership Advisory Committee continue to suggest: “The federal and state governments are requiring higher standards to work as a police officer and correctional officer. UW-Platteville’s Online Distance Learning Master’s program has the capacity and capability of meeting the requirements and needs for those professionals in the field.” These advisory boards suggested that the following course topics be added to existing courses or new courses in the near future: advanced leadership, first line supervisory theory and strategies, problem-oriented policing issues and strategies, project management, private policing, terrorism, computer crime, and organized crime. (Curriculum recommendations are also given when attending meetings with the Wisconsin DOJ Police-Oriented Policing Workgroup, and the Wisconsin DOJ Training & Standards Curriculum Committee.)

The UW-System 5-Year Joint Review Committee strongly recommended the continuation of the MSCJ degree program. Overall, “the program has proven to be a vital and successful program having graduated 45 students the first five years of its existence.” However, the committee recommended that current courses or new courses be developed to advance issues on diversity, and issues pertaining to today’s global society and the criminal justice system (e.g., comparative criminal justice systems). In addition, the committee recommended: “Program faculty are actively engaged in the life of the program, collaborating on cross-disciplinary research with students and faculty, and serving as faculty advisors for the capstone course. External reviewers suggested expanding this by helping students present their research at national and/or regional conferences.”

**Changes Made As Result Of Assessment**

New Course Offerings:

- CJ 7730 Evaluation and Program Analysis in Criminal Justice (alternative core research course for CJ 7130 CJ Research and Statistical Methods)
- CE 7130 At Risk Youth
- CJ 7830 Advanced Comparative Criminal Justice Systems
- PSY 7230 Crisis Intervention Theory
Many of the course revisions (e.g., CJ 7230, CJ 7430, CJ 7630, BSAD 5340) have advanced issues on diversity to include issues pertaining to sex, race, and ethnicity inequality and the criminal justice system.

CJ 7530 CJ Administration has been revised to incorporate more contemporary management issues pertaining to advance leadership, first-line supervisory issues and strategies, problem-oriented policing (POP) issues and strategies.

Continuous encouragement is given to students by academic advisors to present papers at state, national and/or regional conference; also, continuous encouragement is given to students to complete the thesis capstone course (currently most students complete the seminar research paper as their final capstone course.)

On-going processes and procedures modifications are being revamped when advising students on capstone proposals and papers.

**Changes Considered As Result Of Assessment**

New Course Developments:
- Race, Ethnicity, Gender and Crime
- White-Collar/ Corporate Crime
- Terrorism (private and public security)
- Juvenile Justice Systems
- Computer Crimes

Add more BSAD electives to program (e.g., financial management)