

THE DOCTORAL DEGREE

General Requirements

The curricular structure of the program is listed below for students entering the program with a master's degree that is not related to criminal justice/criminology:

Theory/Policy courses	9 cr.
Research skills	12 cr.
Substantive Area	18 cr.
Electives/Indiv. Study	36 cr.
Indiv. Study/Dissertation	15 cr.
Total	90 cr.

Students entering the program with an approved master's degree are required to complete a minimum of 60 credit hours, and at least three (3) of the research skills courses must be completed at NDSU. The graduate committee will review the student's transcript to determine whether the student has successfully completed any of the required courses in their master's program. In the case that a course taken in the master's program is sufficiently similar to required courses at NDSU and a student has successfully completed that course, the requirement may be waived. (For example, if a student received an "A" in a course similar to "Advanced Criminological Theory," CJ703 may be waived as a requirement.) The student will be advised within their first semester of study as to whether any credits will be waived. Any credits waived in this manner must be completed as either electives or dissertation credits.

The curricular structure of the program for doctoral students entering with a Master's degree in Criminal Justice/Criminology is as follows:

Theory/Policy courses	9 cr.
Research skills	12 cr.
Substantive Area	18 cr.
Electives/Indiv. Study	15 cr.
Indiv. Study/Dissertation	1-15 cr.
Total	60 cr.

All students are required to achieve a grade of “B” or better in all courses. Nine credits per semester are considered a full-time graduate load. Full-time graduate assistants are expected to maintain a full-time course load. Any graduate assistant wishing to register for more than 10 credits in a regular semester must secure the approval of their academic dean and the Dean of the Graduate School.

All requirements for the PhD degree must be completed within a period of 10 consecutive years. Graduate credit for any course work, not including the Master’s degree that is more than 10 calendar years old at the time of the final oral examination may not be used to satisfy degree requirements.

Interested students may apply by completing an application on the NDSU graduate school website. [NDSU Graduate School | North Dakota State University](#)

Ph.D. Curriculum Details

REQUIRED COURSES

THEORY/POLICY COURSES (Students must complete **all** courses for a total of 9 credits)

CJ703	Advanced Criminology
CJ709	Criminal Justice Policy
Hum702	Introduction to College Teaching

RESEARCH SKILLS (Students must complete **all** courses for a total of 12 credits, 9 of these must be completed at NDSU)

Stat725	Applied Statistics
Stat726	Applied Regression and Analysis of Variance
CJ702	Program Evaluation
CJ 734 (3)	Advanced Criminal Justice Methods

SUBSTANTIVE AREAS

Students are required to complete a total of 18 credits in the substantive areas. Students must complete **four** courses in a substantive area of choice (12 credits). Additionally, students must complete **one course in each** of their non-substantive areas (6 credits total).

CRIMINOLOGY

CJ721	Individual Theories of Crime
CJ722	Structural Theories of Crime
CJ750	Violence
CJ752	Criminogenic Commodities

CORRECTIONS

CJ707	Juvenile Corrections
CJ733	Issues in Institutional Corrections
CJ762	Community Corrections
CJ763	Correctional Rehabilitation
CJ764	Punishment and Society

POLICING

CJ755	Administrative Policing
CJ760	Police and Race Issues
CJ761	Police Effectiveness
CJ754	Police and Society
CJ765	Classics in Policing

ELECTIVE COURSES

Students are also required to complete 15 credits of elective courses. The following courses are *examples* of electives that may be taken. Students should consult with their advisor as to other potentially appropriate electives.

CJ768	Gender and Justice
CDFS650	Adolescent Development
Psych640	Experimental Methods
Psych670	Experimental Social Psychology
Stat660	Applied Survey Sampling
Soc700	Qualitative Methods
Stat 665	Meta-Analysis Methods

Comprehensive Examinations

The PhD comprehensive examinations are an integral part of the Ph.D. in Criminal Justice. They represent the part of the program that requires students to demonstrate their understanding of the central issues facing the discipline. They also require students to have formed their own positions on these issues, as well as to demonstrate that they have the ability to articulate and defend these positions. As such, they place an emphasis not only on what people know but also on how they can use what they know, and if they have developed an understanding of how what we know can be transformed through research, theory development, and action. The student is expected to demonstrate in the examinations their reasoned perspective on the literature in our field and their ability to integrate that literature to describe future developments.

For full-time students, comprehensive examinations (or paper comp option) should be completed no later than the end of the third year in the program for students entering the program with a Master's degree that is not in criminal justice or criminology. For students entering with a master's degree in criminal justice and/or criminology, preliminary examinations should be completed by the end of their second year in the program. Failure to do so may be seen as a

failure to make reasonable academic progress in the program and could result in denial of financial assistance or removal from the Ph.D. program altogether. Students who choose not to take the comprehensive exam will receive a “fail” each time that they do not take the exam. It is strongly recommended that students complete at least 80% of the relevant coursework in a particular area before taking that exam. However, students must remember that completion of these courses will not necessarily prepare them fully for the comprehensive exams (see “Preparation” below).

Comprehensive Exam Content

All Ph.D. students are required to complete two comprehensive examinations (one in Methods/Theory and one in Policing or Corrections) or one comprehensive exam in Methods/Theory and the comp paper option focused on Corrections or Policing.

The Theory/Methods examination includes the history of criminological theory, meanings of and trends in theory development, contemporary theories of crime and criminal behavior, research testing these theories, and applications of these theories to types of crime (e.g., drugs, violence, white collar crime, etc.) and groups of special interest (e.g., women, minorities, juveniles, and victims). In addition, this exam will require students to relate their knowledge of the methods commonly employed in criminological research, including both quantitative and qualitative methods and analytical techniques.

The Corrections examination generally covers topics including the administration of the correctional system, as well as the theory of and research on corrections, including prevention and treatment of criminal offenders, prediction of criminal behavior, and other responses by the criminal justice system to the problems posed by known or likely juvenile and/or adult offenders.

The Policing examination covers topics related to the administration, operation, theory, and research of law enforcement activities, including use of discretion, police and community issues, and the effectiveness of police activities on crime and other social problems. Students will be required to demonstrate their ability to design research on the most current police issues, as well as apply or create theories that help explain police behaviors.

Comprehensive Exam Administration

All examinations are given twice each year, generally on the second Friday and Saturday in February and the second Friday and Saturday in August. This schedule may vary depending on faculty availability, but every effort is made to keep these exams within this time frame and so there are six months between the exams. The exam will be administered from 9am – 2pm on Friday and Saturday. Students will be given several questions of which they will be required to answer four (two on Friday and two on Saturday). At each offering, the Department will designate a specific faculty member to proctor the exam process. Copies of past examinations will be available on the Department website and will be available to students to facilitate their understanding of the nature of the examinations and the expectations for their overall content.

All examinations must be word-processed. Students who elect to hand write their answers must leave the answers with the examiner at the end of the examination, then return to the Department on the next business day to key in the exact text they have handwritten during the examination.

The text will be proofread by staff. Any variation between the two versions will be handled as a case of academic dishonesty and may result in failure of the comprehensive exam.

Comprehensive Exam Preparation

Preparation for the Theory/Methods, Corrections, and Policing comprehensive examinations is facilitated by taking required and recommended courses. These courses are not required of students before taking exams but are offered as guides to the kinds of materials that should be covered during the preparation. It must be understood that completion of these courses is not all that needs to be done to prepare for comprehensive exams. In addition to satisfactory performance in course work, the students must develop their own positions and organize the literature in a way that leads them to be able to “profess” the discipline.

For the Theory/Methods examination, students should consider taking courses offered as part of the Criminological Theory track (Criminology, Delinquency, Individual Theories, Structural Theories, Criminogenic Commodities, and Violence). Courses in research and statistical methods will also be useful in preparing for this exam (Quantitative Methods, Qualitative Methods, Applied Statistics, Applied Regression Models, and Program Evaluation).

For the Corrections examination, students should consider taking classes in this track (Issues in Institutional Corrections, Community Corrections, Juvenile Corrections, and Correctional Rehabilitation). For the Policing examination, students should consider taking courses from the Policing track (Police and Society; Classics in Policing; Administrative Policing, Community Policing, Police Effectiveness, and Police and Race Issues). Again, it is important to note that successful completion of these courses is not all that needs to be done in terms of preparation for any of the comprehensive examinations.

In addition to coursework, students have access to suggested reading lists compiled by the faculty for each examination. As with coursework, these reading lists are designed to be study **guides**. In addition to the material on the reading lists, students are expected to keep up to date with current literature in the field and to find additional relevant materials.

Grading of Comprehensive Exams

Comprehensive examinations will be graded by at least three faculty members with full-time appointments in the Department. Each grader will grade each question “pass” or “fail” (faculty may also make a recommendation for or against a grade of “pass with distinction”). The Department Chair, or his or her designee, will tabulate scores by student in a matrix by de-identified graders. Each student will be allowed to review the matrix for their own examination, but not for other students. All examinations with 75% of the total possible score will pass. Those with less than 75% will fail.

Comprehensive Exam Failures

If a student fails a comprehensive examination, he or she must retake the exam at the next offering or face removal from the Ph.D. program. A student who fails a Comprehensive Examination will be responsible for meeting with a faculty member for advising about how to proceed in preparation for the second administration. A student who fails the same comprehensive examination twice shall be terminated from the Ph.D. program.

Comprehensive Paper Option

After passing the Methods/Theory comprehensive exam, doctoral students can choose to take their policing or corrections comprehensive exam in a classroom setting (similar to the administration of the Methods/Theory exam), or they can write a policing or corrections paper for publication in a peer-reviewed, scholarly journal. Graduate students are encouraged to discuss the paper comp option with their mentoring professor(s) and/or the Graduate Coordinator. Graduate students must inform the CJ Graduate Coordinator of their choice (in writing) no later than two weeks after receiving notification that they passed the Methods/Theory comp. After informing the Graduate Coordinator of their choice, graduate students cannot change their mind about their choice/decision.

Graduate students will have two months (from the date that they inform the CJ Graduate Coordinator of their choice) to choose a topic and data source(s) for the paper, and hold a meeting with either the policing or corrections comp committee to get formal approval of their topic and data source(s). Comp papers must be focused on topics directly related to corrections or policing (committee members will approve paper topics). Students need to provide each committee member with a written “plan of action” two weeks before the approval meeting. The “plan of action” should include a detailed description of the purpose of the paper, as well as any data/data sources and analytic technique(s) that will be used for the completion of the paper. The “plan of action” should also identify the journal to which the paper will be submitted upon completion. If students choose to collect their own data, they need to seek IRB approval immediately following approval of the topic by the comp committee. If students want to use existing data sources, they must provide the committee with written permission from the person or group who owns the data. Exceptions to this rule would include data from the Uniform Crime Report, Census, ICPSR and any other data that is accessible to the public on the Internet. The data source(s) used for this paper must be different from the data source(s) that will be used for the dissertation. If the “plan of action” is not acceptable to the committee, the student must make appropriate changes within three weeks of the initial meeting. If the “plan of action” is still not acceptable to the committee the second time they review it, the student will receive a “fail” for the comp paper.

The paper must be solo-authored by the graduate student who has written the paper. Graduate students who choose the paper comp option cannot seek/receive help or guidance on the paper from faculty or staff (both inside and outside of the department and university) or from fellow graduate students. If graduate students seek outside help from anyone, they will receive a “fail” for the paper.

Students must have their paper completed and reviewed by the comp committee no later than nine months from the date that they informed the Graduate Coordinator of their choice. If this does not happen by the nine-month deadline, it will count as a “fail” for the paper requirement. Comp papers will receive an “accept/pass”, “revise and resubmit” or “reject/fail”. In order to receive an “accept/pass”, “revise and resubmit” or “reject/fail” from the committee, two out of three committee members must vote to “accept/pass”, “revise and resubmit” or “reject/fail” the paper. Students will have three weeks to resubmit papers that receive a “revise and resubmit” from the committee. Graduate students are allowed to submit comp papers to the committee a second time if they receive a “reject/fail” on their first attempt. The second attempt at the comp paper includes another nine-month deadline (beginning the day after a paper has received a “reject/fail” grade from the committee). Comp committee members will provide written feedback on all papers submitted for review. Graduate students will be notified of the committee’s decision no later than two weeks after submitting their paper to the committee.

All comp papers must be submitted to the journal identified in the written “plan of action” no later than one week after the comp committee has issued an “accept/pass” grade for the paper. Written proof or an email receipt of submission of the paper to a journal is required to fulfill this step in the process. Submission of a paper to a peer-reviewed, scholarly journal is the last required step in the comp paper process. If this submission deadline is not met, the paper will receive a “fail” from the comp committee.

Oral Prospectus Hearing

Successful completion of these two exams will be followed by an oral prospectus hearing (preliminary oral exam). This hearing will encompass a demonstration of the interplay of student knowledge (theory/methods + substantive area) and their dissertation project. This will constitute a defense of the proposal for the dissertation. After successful completion of the written and oral exams, the student will be formally admitted to candidacy for the Doctor of Philosophy degree. At least one academic semester must elapse between the preliminary oral examination and the final oral examination of the dissertation.

Dissertation Guidance

A written dissertation must be completed and orally presented to the student’s committee for defense. The dissertation must show originality and demonstrate the student’s capacity for independent research. It must embody results of original research focusing on a significant problem or issue in criminal justice which constitutes a definitive contribution to knowledge.

Dissertation Requirements

General instructions on format are included in the North Dakota State University Graduate School *Guidelines for the Preparation of Disquisitions*, which is available at the Varsity Mart, and can be found at <http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool>.

Dissertation Committee

For each prospective candidate for the doctoral degree, an advisory committee consisting of at least four members will be appointed. The student, with the approval of the department chair, will select a major advisor. The advisor-student relationship must be mutually acceptable. The advisor will act as the chair of the student's supervisory committee and will be in charge of the plan of study. The advisor and student shall agree upon two additional committee members. One of these members must be from the faculty. The other member may be either a faculty member or a qualified off-campus expert in the field (off-campus experts must have a PhD and be approved by the student's advisor and the Graduate Council). A fourth committee member serves as a Graduate School appointee. This appointment is made by the graduate dean, but suggestions as to who the appointee might be are welcome and useful. One committee member must be from outside the student's academic college. The Graduate School appointee may or may not be the outside committee member. The Graduate School appointee must be a Full Member of the NDSU Graduate Faculty.

NOTE: Other qualified individuals may participate as committee members following approval by the graduate dean upon a recommendation accompanied by rationale and curriculum vitae by the appropriate department/program chair and academic dean.

The advisory committee agreed upon by the advisor and student and approved by the department/program chair and the academic dean shall be recommended to the Dean of the Graduate School for final approval. Each committee member shall have an equal vote in committee decisions.

The plan of study should be submitted to the Graduate School for approval not later than the term immediately after the supervisory committee is formed and must be filed in the Graduate School prior to scheduling of the preliminary oral examination. Revisions in the program of study must be approved by the student, advisory committee, department/program chair (when required) and Dean of the Graduate School. The graduate dean will officially notify the student, advisory committee, department/program chair, and the academic dean of all changes.

Oral Defense Hearing

Students must be registered for at least one credit in the semester in which they plan to defend their dissertation and graduate. The graduate dean will formally notify the committee and the student when and where the examination has been scheduled. The examining committee shall consist of the student's advisory committee. The dissertation in a near final form must be given to the committee members at least seven (7) days prior to the final examination.

Dissertation Approval

At the conclusion of each oral examination, the examining committee shall record in writing its approval or disapproval of the candidate and file its report with the graduate dean. The committee's decision filed on the Report of the Final Examination signifies that the student has been examined with respect to the knowledge required in the major area and that all course work

has been satisfactorily completed. This form should be filed in the Graduate School within seven (7) days.

After the exam, the student incorporates into the dissertation corrections suggested at the oral examination. One copy of the dissertation, on regular paper, is presented to the Graduate School for editing and a format check by a disquisition editor in the Office of Graduate Studies.

After editorial, format, and graduate dean approval, five (5) final copies of the dissertation, on the required paper and bearing the disquisition approval form signed by the advisor, all other supervisory committee members, and the department chair, are to be presented, unbound, to the Office of Graduate Studies. With each copy, the candidate must submit an abstract not exceeding 350 words. These five (5) final copies must be accompanied by a receipt from the Business Office for the cost of the binding. Two (2) bound copies of the dissertation go to the University Library. The remaining three (3) bound copies are for the student, the student's adviser, and the student's department. Each candidate who passes the final examination must also submit a sixth copy of the dissertation, accompanied by an additional copy of the title page and an additional copy of the Abstract signed by the major adviser.

The student has one (1) year from the date of the final examination to deliver the six (6) final copies to the Office of Graduate Studies and complete all other degree requirements. Should the disquisition not be deposited as specified or all other degree requirements not be completed, the student must repeat the final examination. If a period of time two years or greater lapses before the final copies are submitted, the student must reapply to the Graduate School and must register for a minimum of two (2) credits.