Program Review Executive Summary Template

Based on the thorough program review addressing all criteria in policy, a comprehensive report should be possible within ten or fewer pages. This template is provided to assist institutions in providing a summary, which is to be presented to the institutional governing board prior to submission to the State Regents. Executive summaries should be possible within two pages using this template format.

Institution Name: Northeastern State University   **Program Name and State Regents Code:** Master of Science in Criminal Justice, 085   **List Any Options:** Certificate: Crime and Society (201), Criminal Justice Leadership and Administration (202), Planning, Resilience, and Incidence Management (211).   **Date of Review:9/27/2024**
Centrality to Institutional Mission: The Master of Science in Criminal Justice at Northeastern State University aligns closely with the university's mission of committing to student success and building a sustainable future for diverse communities. The program emphasizes inclusivity and adaptability to educational demands by offering a practitioner-oriented curriculum that enhances employment prospects and caters to a diverse student body. It supports immersive learning through extensive experiential opportunities and partnerships with community agencies, which enrich the educational experience and prepare students for effective community engagement. By doing so, the program not only supports NSU's mission but also fosters an environment where students are equipped to contribute meaningfully to their communities and the field of criminal justice. Additionally, the program includes embedded certificates in Crime & Society, CJ Leadership & Administration, and Planning, Resilience & Incident Management, which allow students to specialize further and enhance their professional qualifications. These certificates provide targeted skills and knowledge that are crucial for leadership and specialized roles within the criminal justice field, further supporting the program's alignment with NSU's mission by preparing students for advanced responsibilities and diverse career paths.
Program Objectives and Goals: Click here to enter text   **Program Outcomes:**   1. **Ascertain knowledge in the core components of criminal justice**, ensuring graduates understand the framework and operational aspects of the field.   2. **Develop knowledge in crime theory**, equipping students with theoretical insights to analyze criminal behavior.   3. **Understand the administration of criminal justice agencies and departments**, preparing graduates for leadership and management roles.   4. **Grasp legal issues within the criminal justice network**, enhancing their ability to navigate complex legal environments.   5. **Develop a comprehensive understanding of research methods in criminal justice**, empowering students to conduct rigorous research.

6. **Prepare for management roles within criminal justice agencies and departments**, focusing on operational and strategic leadership.
7. **Equip for further post-master's degree education**, laying a strong foundation for continued academic pursuits.

Program Goals:

1. **Establish the Department of Criminal Justice and Sociology as the educational partnership of choice** for the field, emphasizing the program's quality and relevance.
2. **Increase workforce connections** through active formal and informal partnerships with top employers, enhancing career opportunities for graduates.
3. **Increase student participation in research**, fostering a deeper engagement with academic and practical aspects of criminal justice.
4. **Boost student engagement** in both academic and practical components of the program.
5. **Aim to increase enrollment by 5% each year**, focusing on program growth and sustainability.

| **Quality Indicators Such As:**
– **Student Learning Outcomes**
– **Effective Teaching/Learning**
– **External Curricular Evaluation**
– **Capacity to Meet Needs and Expectations of Constituencies**
– **Other as presented in the self-study** | • Student Learning Outcomes: High achievement rates in comprehensive assessments like capstone projects, theses, or comprehensive exams, with 97% of students meeting or exceeding competency expectations.
• Effective Teaching and Learning: Utilization of diverse teaching modalities, including face-to-face, hybrid, and online courses, adhering to Quality Matters standards to enhance learning for traditional and non-traditional students.
• External Curricular Evaluation: Through strong partnerships with external agencies, the curriculum remains aligned with professional standards, directly benefiting from real-world insights and applications. This external evaluation is integral to the certificates, which are designed to meet current professional demands and trends.
• Capacity to Meet Needs and Expectations of Constituencies: The program is responsive to the needs of its diverse student body and the criminal justice field, shown by its dynamic curriculum and the targeted skills provided by the certificates. These certificates specifically address workforce demands and prepare students for advanced roles within the criminal justice system. |
| **Productivity for Most Recent 5 Years** | **Number of Degrees:** 101 |

	Number of Majors:	291

Other Quantitative Measures Such As:	
Other Quantitative Measures Such As: – **Number of Courses for Major** – **Student Credit Hour in Major** – **Direct Instructional Costs** – **Supporting Credit Hour Production** – **If available, information about employment or advanced studies of graduates of the program over the past five years** – **If available, information about the success of students from this program who have transferred to another institution.** – **Other as presented in the self-study**	• Number of Courses for Major: The program offers a structured sequence of core courses, including "The Criminal Justice System", "Crime Theory", "Criminal Justice Research Methods", "Comparative Criminal Justice", and "Constitutional Criminal Law", which are essential for a comprehensive understanding of the field. • Student Credit Hour in Major: Over the last five academic years, the program has consistently generated a significant amount of student credit hours, indicating active student enrollment and course completion rates. • Direct Instructional Costs: The program maintains a steady budget for faculty salaries and operational costs, ensuring that financial resources are effectively utilized to support high-quality instruction and learning environments. • Employment of Graduates: Graduates of the program have successfully found employment across several states, with the majority working in Oklahoma in various sectors such as law enforcement, education, and legal professions, highlighting the program's effectiveness in preparing students for professional success.
Duplication and Demand	The demand for the Master of Science in Criminal Justice program at Northeastern State University has seen a downward trend in recent years, signaling a need for enhanced recruitment strategies. Despite this, the program has successfully positioned its graduates in well-compensated roles across various fields such as law enforcement, education, and legal professions, within Oklahoma but also extending to other states. The average salary for these roles underscores the program's effectiveness in preparing students for lucrative careers. Additionally, the introduction of specialized certificates in areas like Crime & Society, Criminal Justice Leadership & Administration, and Planning, Resilience & Incident Management has enriched the curriculum, potentially increasing its attractiveness to prospective students by offering focused training and improved job prospects in specific criminal justice domains.
Effective Use of Resources	The Master of Science in Criminal Justice program at Northeastern State University effectively utilizes resources to maintain high educational standards and support student success. Careful management of financial resources ensures that direct instructional costs, including faculty salaries and operational expenses, are well-allocated. The program benefits from a faculty that combines academic rigor with practical expertise, enriching the learning experience and aligning instruction with professional standards. Additional investments in administrative support, equipment, and instructional materials further enhance the program's ability to deliver quality education and support detailed research and practical training for students.

Strengths and Weaknesses	*Strengths:*
	• Diverse and Inclusive Environment: The program boasts a diverse student body from various demographic and geographic backgrounds, enriching the learning experience and reflecting the program's commitment to inclusivity.
	• High Graduate Satisfaction: Graduates report high satisfaction with the program, particularly appreciating the practitioner-oriented curriculum and the strong interactions with knowledgeable faculty, both of which enhance their employment prospects.
	• Experiential Learning and Certificates: The program offers extensive direct learning opportunities through collaborations with local agencies and study abroad programs. Additionally, the inclusion of specialized certificates in Crime & Society, Criminal Justice Leadership & Administration, and Planning, Resilience & Incident Management allows students to gain focused expertise, further enhancing their career prospects.
	Weaknesses:
	• Prerequisite Course Requirements: There is a need to reconsider the prerequisite courses for students entering the program from non-criminal justice backgrounds, as this has been identified as a potential barrier for some students.
	• Outdated Web Presence: The program's website needs significant updates to include more comprehensive information on faculty research, teaching interests, and opportunities for student engagement, which can help attract more students.
	• Limited Recruitment Strategies: There is a need to improve recruitment efforts, particularly by focusing on transitioning undergraduate students into the graduate program and leveraging the accelerated degree program to maintain student continuity.
Recommendations	• Website Enhancement: The program should revamp its website to provide more comprehensive information about faculty research, teaching interests, and opportunities for student engagement. This improvement is aimed at better attracting and informing prospective students.
	• Recruitment Strategies: A stronger focus on recruiting undergraduate students into the graduate program is needed, leveraging tools like the accelerated degree program to maintain continuity and increase enrollment.
	• Follow through with the need for an advisory board and increase engagement with alumni.

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Institution Name: Northeastern State University
Program Name and State Regents Code: Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, 020
List Any Options: Click here to enter text
Date of Review:9/27/2024

Centrality to Institutional Mission:
The Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice at Northeastern State University (NSU) aligns seamlessly with the university's mission to promote student success and ensure a sustainable future for diverse communities. The program is structured to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in the criminal justice field, emphasizing ethical decision-making, critical thinking, and community engagement. By focusing on inclusivity and cultural competence, the program prepares graduates to contribute positively to a diverse society and promotes sustainable practices within the field. This commitment to education and community service supports NSU's overarching goals of nurturing responsible, successful individuals who are prepared to address the complexities of our diverse communities.

Program Objectives and Goals:
Program Learning Objectives
1. Develop an understanding of the origin, organization, and function of American law.
2. Understand law enforcement at local, state, tribal, and federal levels.
3. Impart knowledge of community and institutional corrections.
4. Gain an understanding of the function and structure of courts in the United States.
5. Perfect the ability to conduct research in the major components of the criminal justice system and describe the findings.
6. Perfect critical analysis and writing skills.
7. Impart knowledge of the principles of ethics and social and cultural diversity.

Program Goals
1. Establish the Department of Criminal Justice and Sociology as the educational partnership of choice for the field of criminal justice.
2. Increase workforce connections through active formal and informal partnerships with top employers.
3. Increase student participation in research.
4. Increase student engagement.

5. Increase enrollment by 5% each year.	
Quality Indicators Such As: – **Student Learning Outcomes** – **Effective Teaching/Learning** – **External Curricular Evaluation** – **Capacity to Meet Needs and Expectations of Constituencies** – **Other as presented in the self-study**	• Teaching and Learning Methods: The program offers a mix of delivery methods, including face-to-face, hybrid, and online courses, utilizing technological tools and Quality Matters design principles to uphold educational standards in online formats. • Assessment of Learning Outcomes: Student learning outcomes are evaluated through various methods, including the Area Concentration Achievement Test (ACAT) and internal assessments within the Senior Seminar course, to monitor and ensure student competencies in critical areas of criminal justice. • The program actively engages with professional and external agencies to ensure curricular alignment with industry standards, enhancing the practical relevance and employability of graduates. This is achieved through ongoing partnerships and feedback mechanisms with law enforcement and criminal justice agencies. • Capacity to Meet Constituent Needs and Expectations: The program has shown adaptability by responding to student and market demands, such as revising course offerings and expanding support for experiential learning opportunities. These changes aim to enhance student engagement, workforce readiness, and the overall educational experience.
Productivity for Most Recent 5 Years	**Number of Degrees:** 331 **Number of Majors:** 1,312

Other Quantitative Measures Such As: – **Number of Courses for Major** – **Student Credit Hour in Major** – **Direct Instructional Costs** – **Supporting Credit Hour Production** – **If available, information about employment or advanced studies of graduates of the program over the past five years** – **If available, information about the success of students from this program who have transferred to another institution.** – **Other as presented in the self-study**	• Number of Courses for Major: The program offers a range of specialized courses, including "Introduction to Criminal Justice," "Criminal Law I," "Survey in American Policing," "Criminal Procedure," among others, tailored to cover the pillars of the criminal justice system. • Student Credit Hour in Major: From 2019 to 2024, undergraduate credit hours have seen fluctuations, peaking in 2019-20 with 10,794 hours and gradually declining to 6,360 hours by 2023-24. They remain a substantial contribution to the overall college and university credit hour production. Supporting Credit Hour Production: Courses supporting other programs also contribute significantly to the department's credit hour production, such as "Introduction to Criminal Justice" generating 3,348 credit hours and "Juvenile Justice" producing 1,524 credit hours. • Direct Instructional Costs: The direct instructional costs have increased over the years, from approximately $634,849 in 2019-20 to $670,631 in 2023-24, reflecting ongoing investments in teaching resources and faculty. • Employment or Advanced Studies of Graduates: Graduates are predominantly employed in government, education, healthcare, public service, and natural resources, with law enforcement being the top job category. A considerable proportion of graduates also pursue higher degrees, with 282 earning master's and 84 doctoral degrees.
Duplication and Demand	Several Oklahoma institutions offer a criminal justice program, particularly NSU's community college partners. NSU has strong relationships and signed articulation agreements with many community colleges to allow seamless transfer to NSU for degree completion. The course offerings, headcount, and credit hour production support significant demand for the program.
Effective Use of Resources	NSU's Criminal Justice program effectively utilizes resources through diverse teaching modalities, including face-to-face, hybrid, and Hyflex courses, to cater to a wide range of student needs. The program adheres to Quality Matters standards for high-quality online education and maintains strong industry alignments through partnerships that enhance curriculum relevancy and job readiness. Strategic resource management is further demonstrated by prioritizing curriculum updates and employing administrative content coordinators to keep program information accessible, optimizing both the student experience and administrative efficiency.
Strengths and Weaknesses	*Strengths:* • Diverse Educational Approaches: The program is praised for its diverse student body and versatile educational offerings, which include a mix of delivery methods

	such as face-to-face, hybrid, and online courses, demonstrating a strong commitment to inclusivity.
	• Adaptability to Educational Demands: It has successfully expanded its academic portfolio to include new majors and flexible course delivery options, showing responsiveness to changing educational landscapes and student needs.
	• Experiential Learning Opportunities: There are significant immersive learning opportunities through partnerships with local agencies and abroad programs, enriching the educational experience and enhancing student engagement and practical skills.
	Weaknesses:
	• Online Presence and Accessibility: The program's web presence needs improvement as some web pages are outdated and lack crucial information such as faculty research interests and current projects, which are essential for attracting and informing prospective and current students
	• Demand for Traditional Course Offerings: There is a noted demand among students for more traditional on-campus courses, indicating that current offerings may not fully satisfy students who prefer a conventional classroom experience.
	• Quality of Online Interaction: The quality of interaction with faculty in online courses needs to be strengthened to ensure that it matches the engagement level of face-to-face interactions, which is critical for student satisfaction and learning outcomes.
Recommendations	• Enhance Online Interaction Quality: Strengthen the interaction and engagement quality in online courses by enhancing faculty training and implementing more interactive and engaging tools within the course design to better mimic the engagement level of face-to-face classes.
	• Update and Maintain the Program's Web Presence: Continuously update and improve the online presence to ensure it reflects the current curriculum, faculty research, and student work, making the program more appealing and informative to both prospective and current students.
	• Balance On-Campus and Online Course Offerings: Develop a strategy to balance the on-campus and online course offerings to cater to the diverse preferences of students, ensuring that those who prefer traditional classroom experiences are adequately served.

Regular Program External Review Template
External Review of Northeastern State University's

Criminal Justice B.S. and Criminal Justice M.S.
Evaluation Date: September 25, 2024

Richard C. Helfers, Ph.D.
Professor (and Chair) Department of Social Sciences
The University of Texas at Tyler
October 5, 2024

Overview Statement
This report is an evaluation of the Bachelor of Science and the Master of Science in Criminal Justice programs offered at Northeastern State University as part of its regular five-year external review based on standards found in the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education *Academic Program Review* policy (OSRHE 3.7.3). Evaluators are asked to assess the viability and quality of the Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees and to evaluate the extent to which the program meets the criteria outlined in *Academic Program Review* policy (detailed below).

An evaluation of the programs entailed reviewing a self-study for each program, review of the catalog, review of each program's webpages, and virtual interviews with the Department Chair, select faculty members, students, and the College Dean.

The report will consist of my observations and dialogue with many stakeholders in the programs, along with a few recommendations for consideration for program enhancement. The undergraduate and graduate programs share many similarities and thus the narrative is weaved together, but where something pertained to a specific program, a particular mention of it will be made.

Report and Findings
Evaluators are asked to address the following:

A. **Program Vitality (3.7.3.A)**
   1. The extent to which the program's curriculum represents a current knowledge base and best practices and/or prepares students to meet industry or professional standards.

      Undergraduate: A review of the program's curriculum indicates a solid base of knowledge with a variety of courses students are required to complete along with a large selection of elective courses students can enroll in that best suit their needs/interest for their careers. The courses offered are ideal that it presents a strong curriculum. There are both traditional type of courses that are required for basic criminal justice knowledge that are mainstays of any criminal justice program curriculum (such as Introduction to CJ, Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure, Criminology, Research Methods, etc.), but there are also contemporary courses that keep pace with our changing society (such as CJ Community Relations, CJ

Computer Applications, Introduction to Homeland Security, among others). All courses provide students' knowledge for successful careers after graduation. Furthermore, an accelerated B.S. degree is offered as a pathway to the M.S. degree that affords high achieving undergraduate students the opportunity to have an advanced undergraduate experience (and gaining advanced CJ knowledge) prior to graduate school. This also provides students with an additional element toward their future success as a criminal justice practitioner. The accelerated program enables students to take up to four graduate courses while they are undergraduates and have the course hours apply to both their undergraduate and graduate degrees. In essence, a student can have a quarter of their graduate degree completed by the time they graduate with their undergraduate degree. Overall, the curriculum meets and even exceeds the standard for a B.S. degree and prepares students well for a career as a criminal justice professional. Students will develop a broad knowledge base of criminal justice related concepts that will assist them navigate the complex arena of being a criminal justice professional.

The webpage for the Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice degree is user friendly and provides a wealth of information about the degree. Most importantly, I found the Student Learning Outcomes being one of the first items a student or prospective student will come across when exploring the major at NSU, which presents an outstanding introduction to the program. My review of the webpage indicates a clear alignment between the Student Learning Outcomes and the curriculum.

Graduate: The M.S. program is also a high-quality degree that provides students with essential knowledge for success in the criminal justice profession. The curriculum is logical and requires advanced knowledge in criminological theory, research methods, and constitutional law. The electives are tailored toward student interests that may advance their career. Furthermore, the certificates provide an added element of professionalism to the course offerings that not only help students seeking a particular certificate but can assist graduate students determine the best elective courses to pursue. I found the webpage easy to navigate and contains important information. The curriculum meets or exceeds most graduate criminal justice programs. The variety of courses enables students to maximize the value of their degree because they can personalize it due to the various course offerings.

2. The extent to which program outcomes and goals are clearly written and can be effectively assessed.

Undergraduate and Graduate: The program outcomes and goals are clearly written and accessed via the webpage for each student. The Student Learning Outcomes are easily assessable where visitors to the page can learn about the program quickly by obtaining an overview of the program/degree that contains the anticipated student outcomes and goals. In other words, prospective students can quickly learn the type of knowledge they will gain from the degree. Having the Student Learning Outcomes publicly visible is an added layer of accountability for the program because there is acknowledgement of what will be assessed. The stated

2

Student Learning Outcomes are logical and important for students of criminal justice and their assessment is critical to ensure the program is achieving its desired objective.

There is also a visual that provides the Job Outlook for Criminal Justice professionals on both webpages that I found to be important to help inform students and prospective students about the criminal justice job outlook.

3. The extent to which the program creates effective learning opportunities for students.

    Undergraduate and Graduate: The dynamic nature of the program offers a myriad of learning opportunities for students that includes traditional course settings in a face-to-face environment, hyflex (where students can choose to attend a class online or be in the classroom), and 100% online. There are also opportunities outside the class setting that includes speaking engagements from practitioners at the local, state, and federal level, along with the opportunity for internships.

    Another integral part of student learning is the vast knowledge the faculty have as former practitioners in the criminal justice system. The team of faculty members at NSU is unique due to having many faculty members with criminal justice related professional experience. Often, programs may have one or two faculty members with criminal justice practitioner experience, which minimizes student learning because students are only learning from faculty that have book/research related knowledge. The criminal justice discipline is one of those disciplines where practical experience in the field is useful in a student's education because it provides relevance to course concepts. Students are attracted to the type of faculty members NSU has and from the discussion I had with students, they recognize the value they are getting from their degree because of faculty members' ability to bridge the gap between theory and reality. Students appreciate how course concepts are actually applied in the criminal justice field. The only way that can effectively be communicated is to have years of experience working as a criminal justice practitioner. The team of faculty members is a strength of the NSU criminal justice program that sets it apart from many programs in the country and the students are the beneficiaries because of the learning opportunities they have available.

4. The extent to which the program collects and uses assessment data and/or other documentation of student achievement to evaluate student performance.

    Undergraduate and Graduate: The faculty do an excellent job of collecting, analyzing, and documenting program level data. The self-report provided a review of how students are performing at the end of the program. The self-study provided a table in Section IV-Quality Indicators that highlight the percentage of students that are achieving the minimum competency for each student learning outcome.

    Specifically, regarding annual performance, the faculty recognized the divergence in student outcomes which vary by course delivery methods and student approach.

The faculty also recognized course delivery methods could have an effect. The ease of online courses can reduce student immersion in content, which impacts retention of course knowledge. Also, the speed associated with 8-week online courses can also impact students retaining knowledge. These issues were further exacerbated by students' desire to accelerate their degree completion where students become more concerned with increasing the number of courses taken each semester. In my discussion with the faculty, it was apparent they understand the challenges associated with the need to adapt and adjust to student needs. Recently, they adjusted the courses offered and their modality to increase 16-week, 16-week hyflex, and 16-week online courses to allow for the required time for students to absorb course content in an effort to enhance the value of each student's education.

Through my conversation with faculty, it was also apparent that faculty use a wide array of assessment methods to assess students in their individual courses from discussion boards, written assignments, and exams to gauge student performance. Overall, the assessment measures appear to be used to improve program performance, along with individual course design—all with the focus on keeping the success of the students in mind.

The aggregate competency level for each of the student learning outcomes in the undergraduate and graduate programs are outstanding, which indicates the faculty are doing an excellent job ensuring the program is exceeding the learning outcomes for their students. The public nature of the Student Learning Outcomes (as stated earlier in this report) may reflect the high percentage of students that are achieving the outcomes at the end of their degree. The high visibility of Student Learning Outcomes ensures faculty remain focused on those outcomes in their course development/design and delivery.

5. The extent to which program learning resources (library, information technologies, laboratories, internship sites, mentors, etc.) support student learning and effective teaching.

Undergraduate and Graduate: There are a plethora of learning resources available to support student learning and effective teaching. For instance, students have the ability to study abroad, engage in internships with various agencies, engage in community service, use the writing center, along with the Center for Tribal Services. These resources set students up for success. Furthermore, the faculty mentioned the advisors for criminal justice students are exceptional in providing students guidance for course sequencing and selection. Also, the faculty are assigned specific undergraduate students to be another resource to support their learning. The majors are divided up among the faculty, so students always have a specific point of contact. This is an excellent initiative because it indicates to the students that they are not alone. They are part of a larger criminal justice community family at NSU. Both the faculty and the students elaborated on the resources that are available to ensure students can succeed.

As for supporting effective teaching, the faculty praised the early alert system that not only helps students get early intervention when they are struggling, but also

4

helps their teaching because it serves as a reminder to devote extra attention to students that may need more directive assistance. It was clear the faculty prioritize student learning and recognize the need to put students first. They put students first and adopt a servant leadership approach to their teaching, knowing they are the best resource to enhance students' learning experience. Furthermore, the faculty praised the online center for teaching and learning as a resource for faculty to think about pedagogical initiatives as a way to continuously evolve the learning environment in their classes.

6. The extent of the program's involvement with alumni, employers, and other external constituents to analyze program effectiveness and capacity to prepare students for future opportunities in the field.

   Undergraduate and Graduate: The self-study indicated an advisory board is one of the initiatives that will be pursued to strengthen the connection the department has with alumni, employers, and other external constituents. The creation of an advisory board will assist the program evolve to the needs of the students to maximize their potential for success after graduation. The advisory board purpose should be used to ensure the curriculum is current and offers courses that are needed for student success after graduation. In essence, the advisory board will be critical to assisting the faculty assess the efficacy of their degree offerings.

   The faculty currently do a good job using external relationships to help prepare students for the dynamic environment of criminal justice that they will be working in. They accomplish this by having guest speakers in their classes or as invited guests outside of the classroom to reach as many criminal justice and non-criminal justice majors as possible. These events are critical because they help students develop their critical thinking skills through applying classroom knowledge to the environment of criminal justice practitioners.

7. Evidence of program planning for continuous evaluation and improvement.

   Undergraduate and Graduate: There is evidence of continuous evaluation as noted in the self-study report, specifically in the Quality Indicators Section (IV) where data is displayed on the percentage of students achieving minimum competency on the various Student Learning Outcomes. There was also evidence of program improvement in the SLO Analysis Section (V). Furthermore, during my discussion with faculty members they elaborated on how assessment factors into their thought processes and discussions regarding how best to serve NSU students. (Again, publicly displaying the Student Learning Outcomes on each programs webpage displays the importance of ensuring those outcomes are reviewed continuously and at the forefront of each faculty members mind when they develop their courses and deliver them.) During my discussion with the faculty, it was clear they continuously consider how student performance and course delivery/course content are aligned. Faculty are not hesitant to make adjustments to their teaching or course content when needed to ensure students are meeting the Student Learning

Outcomes. The faculty are student-centered and recognize the value program assessment has for student success.

B. Productivity trends (3.7.3.A.2)

- Summarize the program's productivity data.
    a. Program completions, 2019-2024: Enrollment in both the undergraduate and graduate programs have been on a downward trajectory since the 2019-2020 academic year (except for the graduate program that experienced an increase in 2020-2021 vs. 2019-2020). However, enrollment in both programs is lower in 2023-2024 than it has been at any time during the review period. The number of students graduating has also corresponded to the reduced enrollment numbers. Even with the downward trend in student enrollment, both programs have healthy numbers with the undergraduate program having 187 majors and the graduate program having 44 majors in the 2023-2024 academic year.

    The downward trend in enrollment is concerning, but this has been a trend with many programs and universities across the nation. The faculty have identified areas to enhance enrollment, which indicates they stay abreast of their numbers and suggest steps to pursue to overcome challenges.

    b. Credit hour production, 2019-2024: Since enrollment has been declining, it is logical the credit hour production is also mirroring the enrollment reduction. As enrollment increases, so will the credit hour production.

- Comment on the program's productivity data and how they reflect on the program's continued viability.

    Enrollment growth is a concern among the faculty, and they have a plan in place. There is an ambitious plan to increase declared majors by 5% each year. Also, the graduate program has developed certificates (Crime and Society, Criminal Justice Leadership and Administration, and Planning, Resilience, and Incident Management) that will attract graduate students. However, they will need appropriate marketing assistance. They also recently obtained a major grant that will help fund a cybersecurity lab, which will also attract students. Lastly, the undergraduate accelerated degree plan is another initiative that can enhance graduate program enrollment. The graduate certificates, cybersecurity lab, and accelerated undergraduate degree as a pathway to the graduate program are all initiatives that will assist enrollment growth. The programs have a good number of students, and the faculty are successful graduating undergraduate and graduate students. Therefore, despite the downturn over the past few years in enrollment, the programs are viable and will continue to be one of the most popular departments at NSU.

Conclusions

Based on the self-study and interviews, evaluators are asked to identify specific indicators and discuss the following:

A. Program Strengths & Areas for Improvement

Undergraduate and Graduate:
Strengths

1. The faculty at NSU are the strength of the programs. The practical experience that many faculty had prior to their role at NSU provides students the unique ability to learn from faculty that have worked in the various criminal justice related professions (homeland security, policing, law, juvenile justice, etc.). The learning experience NSU students obtain is unmatched in almost all other criminal justice programs across the country, primarily due to the wealth of practical experience the faculty bring to students. The passion the faculty have for their students is recognized by students----the student group I met with acknowledged the passion the faculty have, along with stating faculty are always available to help them.
2. The various modalities for learning are certainly a strength of the programs. The programs provide students with a high degree of flexibility in determining which course format is best suited for their learning, students can select from traditional in-person classrooms, hyflex, and 100% online.
3. The variety of resources the university provides to students enhances students' ability to succeed. Students mentioned to me that they appreciate the wide variety of resources that are available that contribute toward their success.
4. The accelerated degree program provides undergraduates the ability to embark upon a graduate degree to advance their knowledge. This is a cost-effective initiative that saves students money and thus reduces student debt. This is important because students are cognizant of the cost of higher education and one student mentioned to me the cost to attend NSU is reasonable compared to other institutions.
5. Small class sizes. The students I talked to emphasized this aspect as one of the main strengths of the program.

Areas for Improvement

1. Standardizing the schedule, the 8-week v. 16-week course offerings. This has recently been addressed so there is no overlap but should be considered as an area to monitor to ensure it is meeting student needs.
2. I did find that currently, there appears to be minimal engagement with alumni. Alumni are any program's best recruiting component and developing ways to engage alumni will be critical for future growth of the program. It is recommended faculty develop an initiative that connects graduating and recently graduated students to what is occurring in the department, so alumni do not lose touch with faculty, the department, and the university. The impression I was left with after meeting with students was that once they graduate, they will not have a connection to the university. Also, encourage recent graduates to be guest speakers and mentors for current students as an avenue to enhance the connection alumni has with the department and university.
3. Not all students are aware of the accelerated degree program. Thus, more effective communication with students can help attract students into the M.S. in Criminal Justice program.

B. **Recommendations**

1. NSU may be a hidden gem and the quality of the faculty (as mentioned in the strengths area along with other parts of this report) and the program should be highlighted well beyond the immediate region of NSU. The program is capable of attracting students nationwide and internationally. The course modalities enable students to enroll, especially the graduate program, from anywhere across the world. (Undergraduate may be more challenging if other programs do not offer the ability for students to complete an entire degree online since undergraduates have several courses to complete outside of the criminal justice program.) Thus, at least for the graduate program, NSU's marketing department should embrace the uniqueness of the faculty and program to enhance their marketing at least nationally.

2. Artificial Intelligence (AI)-faculty should embrace the AI revolution that is underway. There may not be any specific direction at the moment about how to deal with AI in higher education, but the faculty should consider what should be the best practice for the use of AI in the program. Develop a program policy to be "out ahead" of future decisions that may be directing institutions to adapt a specific stance on its use.

3. Develop a tracking mechanism for the 8 and 16-week courses to determine the viability of sustaining both scheduling formats. This is also a research opportunity for faculty to assess not only the two scheduling formats, but also the student views on the various modalities NSU offers, along with examining if any differences exist in student outcomes (specific type of assignments and overall course grade).

4. Advertise the accelerated degree plan aggressively to undergraduate students. Begin discussing this with students in their freshman year. Not all students are aware of the program. An example is during the student discussion, I mentioned the program and one student was not aware it existed. The information is on the department website, but more advertising and discussion about it with students during advising, class, and during casual conversations may help.

5. Develop a Blackboard course shell where all criminal justice students are enrolled. This would enable the faculty to post announcements so everyone in the major is aware of special events such as speakers coming to campus, the requirements for the accelerated degree program, etc.

6. Follow through with the need for an advisory board, as mentioned in the self-report, is critical to ensure the curriculum remains current. Also, an advisory board can serve as an avenue for recruitment into the programs and thus enhance enrollment.

Sources of Information
- Self-study
- Program catalog page: https://catalog.nsuok.edu/index.php?catoid=37 , https://catalog.nsuok.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=37&poid=5029&returnto=2452 , https://catalog.nsuok.edu/index.php?catoid=38 , https://catalog.nsuok.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=38&poid=5261&returnto=2532

- Program web page:
  https://academics.nsuok.edu/criminaljustice/DegreePrograms/CriminalJustice.aspx?_ga=2.253843979.207141433.1725369527-739158003.1719863503 ,
  https://gradcollege.nsuok.edu/DegreesCertificate/degree-criminal-justice.aspx
- Interviews with the following (list all participants):
  - Brett Fitzgerald (Chair)
  - Adam Langsam (Faculty)
  - Buster Hall (Faculty)
  - Michael Wilds (Faculty)
  - Stacy White (Faculty)
  - Rebekah Doyle (Faculty)
  - Ray Hasselman (Faculty)
  - Audell Shelburne (Dean)
  - Various students

Evaluator Information

A. **Summary of Qualifications.** Richard C. Helfers, PhD is a Professor of Criminal Justice in the Department of Social Sciences at The University of Texas at Tyler, Tyler, Texas. He is the Chair of the Department of Social Sciences and also the program coordinator for the Master of Science degree in Criminal Justice. Previously, he was the program coordinator for the Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice. Prior to his career in academia, he had over 25 years' experience in municipal law enforcement, retiring at the rank of Police Captain for a municipality with a population of over 100,000.

B. **Absence of Conflict of Interest Statement.** The Evaluator has no conflict of interest that would influence the objectivity of the evaluation. The reviewer is not an institutional employee, nor has close relatives who are employees of Northeastern State University. The reviewer's respective institution is not a direct academic competitor of NSU, nor is the reviewer a graduate of NSU. The reviewer has no vested interest or conflict of interest, either current or planned, in any component of Northeastern State University.

10/05/2024

Evaluator Signature / Date

9

M.S. Criminal Justice Fall 2024 NSU Program Review

Institution Name: Northeastern State University
Program Name and State Regents Code: Criminal Justice, M.S. 085
Program Options: N/A
Embedded Certificates: Crime & Society, CJ Leadership & Administration, Planning, Resilience & Incident Management

Previous Review Date (Year) of Last Review: 2019

I. Summarize key findings from previous internal and/or external reviews of this program.

*Strengths***:**
1. **Diversity and Inclusion**: The undergraduate student body is notably diverse in terms of demographics and geography. The variety in program offerings and course delivery methods effectively caters to this diversity.
2. **Immersive Learning Opportunities**: Students benefit from extensive experiential learning opportunities through collaborations with local agencies and various study abroad programs.
3. **Graduate Student Satisfaction**: Graduate students expressed high satisfaction with their educational experiences, particularly valuing their interactions with faculty and community agencies. The practitioner-oriented curriculum has enhanced their employment prospects.
4. **Faculty Engagement**: Students appreciate the opportunity to engage with faculty members who possess a rich blend of academic and practical knowledge.

*Areas for Improvement***:**
1. **Prerequisite Courses**: There is a need to reconsider the prerequisite courses for students entering from non-Criminal Justice backgrounds.
2. **Web Presence**: The department's website requires significant updates to include more comprehensive information on faculty research, teaching interests, and available opportunities for student engagement in research.

*Recommendations***:**
1. **Website Revamp**: Enhance the department's web presence to showcase faculty expertise, current projects, and opportunities, which could facilitate better information dissemination and attract a diverse pool of graduate students.
2. **Resource Acquisition**: Secure funding or resources for the proposed Institute of Global Studies to differentiate the program in a saturated online master's market.
3. **Recruitment Strategies**: Focus on recruiting undergraduates into graduate programs, leveraging the accelerated degree program to maintain student continuity and interest.

II. What developments and actions have taken place since the last review?

In 2019, two main improvements were targeted in the M.S. in Criminal Justice Program. Firstly, students from non-criminal justice backgrounds were not required to take prerequisite courses, a policy that changed in Fall 2020. These students are now admitted provisionally and steered through tailored core courses in their first semester. Most students are professionals in criminal justice. Secondly, the department overhauled its website, improving content management and updates. New initiatives include three certificate programs: Crime and Society, Criminal Justice Leadership and Administration, and Planning, Resilience, and Incident Management. Additionally, the program revised its capstone requirements, replacing the comprehensive exam with a project-based capstone while retaining the thesis option. This aligns with goals to prepare students for the workforce and advanced degrees. The program has also expanded its online offerings with eight-week and sixteen-week course options.

III. Program Objectives and Goals

The objectives of the Criminal Justice, M.S. program are:

1. Ascertain knowledge in the core criminal justice components.
2. Develop knowledge in crime theory.
3. Develop knowledge in the administration of criminal justice agencies and departments.
4. Understand legal issues surrounding the criminal justice network.
5. Develop an understanding of research methods in criminal justice.
6. Be prepared to assume management roles within agencies and departments.
7. Be prepared to assume post master's degree education.

The goals for the Criminal Justice, M.S. degree over the next five years include:

1. Establish the Department of Criminal Justice and Sociology as the educational partnership of choice for the field of criminal justice.
2. Increase workforce connections through active formal and informal partnerships with top employers.
3. Increase student participation in research.
4. Increase student engagement.
5. Increase enrollment by 5% each year.

The objectives for the Crime and Society Certificate are:

1. Examine the intersections between race, ethnicity, and crime.
2. Examine the nature and extent of white-collar crime.
3. Examine the predictors and effects of victimization.
4. Examine models and theories of criminal behavior.

The objectives for the Criminal Justice Leadership and Administration Certificate are:

1. Interpret and design policy for agencies and organizations.
2. Evaluate case briefs impacting agencies and organizations.
3. design organizational charts, allocate resources, and budgets.
4. Evaluate programs across local, state, and federal levels.

The objectives for the Planning, Resilience, and Incident management Certificate are:

1. Understand issues in homeland security.
2. Develop a foundation in emergency management.
3. Understand planning and operations in emergency management.
4. Understand the nature and function of critical response and recovery.

IV. Quality Indicators

Student learning outcomes assessed; provide specific data regarding student achievement;

Student Learning Outcome (SLO)	Assessment Method	# Students Assessed 2019-24	Minimum Competency Expectation (%)	Achieving Minimum Competency (%)

Demonstrate knowledge in criminal justice systems.	Comprehensive exam, capstone project, or thesis. The thesis is completed with the guidance of a committee comprised of criminal justice faculty. The capstone is completed with the guidance of the M.S. Coordinator. The comprehensive exam is administered twice a year at the end of each semester. The exam consists of six essay questions that are completed no later than two weeks prior to the end of the semester. Students may use notes, textbook, and other academic sources to help them complete the exam.	59	70% on the comprehensive exam. Or, A successful thesis defense which includes a pass by the thesis committee members. Or, A successfully completed capstone project.	97%
Ability to understand and evaluate crime theory.	Comprehensive exam, capstone project, or thesis (please see the description above).	59	70%	97%
Develop understanding and knowledge regarding the purpose and functions of criminal justice administration.	Comprehensive exam, capstone project, or thesis (please see the description above).	59	70%	97%
Develop an understanding of the legal aspects of the criminal justice system.	Comprehensive exam, capstone project, or thesis (please see the description above).	59	70%	97%
Ability to develop and carry out research on complex issues relating to criminal justice.	Comprehensive exam, capstone project, or thesis (please see the description above).	59	70%	97%

V. SLO Analysis

Based on the available information, the program appears to be successfully matriculating its students. Overall efforts include increasing focus on student theses and developing individualized lines of research to help facilitate skills transmission, and better enabling students by facilitating career connections. We have increased our qualified graduate college faculty which has diversified thesis opportunities for the students. This has also increased the capacity to expand interest in critical issues in criminal justice when participating in the capstone experience adding diversity to the curriculum.

Based on the assessment data above, baseline measures appear to indicate students' acquisition of requisite knowledge, meeting set standards. In terms of improvements, the program intends to focus further on increasing the number of graduate faculty, while also translating student knowledge into joint collaborations with outside entities at the local, state, tribal and federal levels. As such, efforts to increase the program's prominence through connecting student learning outputs (i.e., produced works) to discipline needs appear to offer tangible opportunities for improvements.

Additionally, the program is taking a renewed focus on leadership within the field, to include an advisory board (consisting of former and current criminal justice leadership, current faculty, and past and current graduate students) which will facilitate aligning learning objectives to the current needs of the discipline and the field. Aligning the needs of local, state, tribal and federal agencies to future curriculum changes is critical. Putting together an advisory board with our partners in the criminal justice field can only benefit our students, the department, and the longstanding partnerships in existence. It is believed that this will further expand into more meaningful relationships resulting in growth to the program.

VI. Technology Analysis

The program continues to offer courses in face-to-face and asynchronous online modalities with an increase in Hyflex/Zoom classroom modalities to increase student learning while balancing the needs of nontraditional students and those outside of our geographic area. Additionally, asynchronous online courses are offered in both eight-week and sixteen-week formats. The online curriculum delivery through Blackboard is further enhanced through mandated training for all faculty on quality matters and certifications promoted through administrative oversight of curriculum delivery.

VII. Online Analysis

Blackboard shell design for course content has been standardized within the program. Further, course offerings seek to abide QM standards.

VIII. Alignment Analysis

The program actively utilizes the multiple professional relationships and organizational partnerships associated with the department and across its faculty to ensure alignment with best practices and industry standards. While the faculty share connections with numerous agencies and external partners, the value of the relationship is best expressed by joint efforts and productivity. As such, the department continues to foster relationships via direct partnerships across recurring events, ongoing research projects, and other activities. These activities foster communication with external partners and align the needs of those with whom we partner.

While the specific form of such partnerships varies, the faculty serves to foster professional relationships initially by facilitating student access to agency data (data collection processes) and guiding the research process. As student data analysis and reporting skills increase through project development, the associated faculty member(s) can move to a support role, enabling the student to assume a more managerial position in relation to the research line with the established associated partnerships already in place. This process will benefit the curriculum and student experience by placing students in direct contact with future career prospects, increasing student understanding in a real-world context, and facilitates the practical application of research.

IX. Minimum Productivity Indicators

Time Frame (e.g.: 5-year span)	Enrollment	Graduates
2023-24	44	13
2022-23	54	21
2021-22	63	28
2020-21	71	20
2019-20	59	19

X. Courses Taught Exclusively for the Major 2019-2024

See the following table detailing the core courses instructed in the M.S. Criminal Justice for the review period of 2019-2024.

Courses Taught Exclusively for the Major						
2019-2024						
Prefix	Number	Title	Total # Number of Sections	Average Enrollment per Section	Total # Number of Students	Credit Hours Generated
CR J	5063	The Criminal Justice System	10	11.7	117	351
CR J	5033	Crime Theory	9	15	135	405
CR J	5053	Criminal Justice Research Methods	10	12.3	123	369
CR J	5023	Comparative Criminal Justice	6	13.2	79	237
CR J	5073	Constitutional Criminal Law	8	14.3	114	342

XI. Student Credit Hours Major Courses, 2019-2024

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
UG Lower Division (1000/2000)	960	1143	1116	777	537

UG Upper Division (3000/4000)	9834	8430	6930	6303	5823
UG Yearly Total	10794	9573	8046	7680	6360
Graduate (5000)	783	1071	942	801	633
5-year Total	11577	10644	8988	8481	6993

XII. Courses Supporting General Education & Other Programs 2018-2023

Complete the table with a list of courses that support general education components and other major programs including certificates outside the program during the last five years. Summarize the number of credits for each course, total number of student enrollees, and the credit hours generated. In the space below, discuss what action items the data suggest. See attached document for table. Please download the file and fill in the requested information. Once completed, please copy table and paste within the "Write Narrative" portion.

XIII. Direct Instructional Costs

Using faculty salaries and other program expenses (operations, equipment & instructional materials, graduate assistants, lab assistants, etc.), estimate direct instructional costs for the program for the review period. See attached document for table. Please download the file and fill in the requested information. Once completed, please copy table and paste within the "Write Narrative" portion.

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Faculty Salaries	$631,340	$575,900	$606,350	$634,000	$668,630
Operations / Admin	$2,859	$5,718	$2,859	$2,001	$2,001
Equipment / Materials					
GAs / Lab Assistants	$650	$650	$650		
Yearly totals	$634,849	$582,268	$609,859	$636,001	$670,631

XIV. Program's Graduate Hiring Data

The following graduate information is available through the institutional membership in Steppingblocks, a graduate outcome tracking tool:

Top 5 States Where MS in Criminal Justice Graduates are Working:

1. **Oklahoma** - 126 graduates

2. **Texas** - 10 graduates

3. **Colorado** - 3 graduates

4. **Missouri** - 3 graduates

5. **Arkansas** - 2 graduates

Top 5 Job Categories for These Graduates:

1. **Law Enforcement** - 15 graduates

2. **Education** - 13 graduates

3. **Legal** - 11 graduates

4. **Management** - 9 graduates

5. **Human Resources** - 8 graduates

The average salary is $74,605.19.

XV. Closing the Loop

Perceived program strengths.

Since the 2019 review, the M.S. in Criminal Justice Program has introduced three new certificate programs. It has continued to offer the Accelerated Degree Program, supported student research, and aided other graduate programs by developing curricula and providing course offerings.

Crime and Society Certificate

The certificate in Crime and Society focuses on the extent and nature of crime causation, the interaction of race, ethnicity, and justice, and reducing victimizations through crime prevention. This certificate targets students pursuing careers as:

- Victim Advocates
- Loss Prevention Specialists
- Counselors
- Law Enforcement
- Probation and Parole

Criminal Justice Leadership and Administration Certificate

The certificate in Criminal Justice Leadership and Administration focuses on preparing students for administrative positions within law enforcement, courts, and corrections. This certificate targets students pursuing advancement within their agencies by providing instruction in:

- Criminal Justice Administration
- Personnel Management
- Finance and Budgeting
- Program Evaluation

Planning, Resilience, and Incident Management Certificate

The certificate in Planning, Resilience, and Incident Management focuses on student development in emergency management, operations, and planning. This includes skills in critical response and recovery. This certificate targets students seeking certification in:

- Emergency Management for local government and tribal nations
- Emergency operations planning
- Private sector emergency planning
- Emergency Management Consulting
- Disaster Response and Recovery
- Environmental Emergency Management Specialist, etc.

Accelerated Degree Program

A cornerstone of recruitment into the M.S. in Criminal Justice Program is the Accelerated Degree Program (ADP). This program is an accelerated B.S. in Criminal Justice to the M.S. in Criminal Justice Program. This allows qualifying students to take up to 12 hours of graduate courses that apply to both programs. For a list of the ADP paired courses see the course catalog.

Student Research

The M.S. in Criminal Justice students have produced many research projects including multiple presentations at the regional and national conferences throughout the country and dozens of successfully defended thesis over the last five years including submissions and publications in many peer reviewed journals. Faculty and student research partnerships continue to be an important focus of the program. The program has facilitated partnerships with multiple government agencies and provided internships for students with local, state, federal and tribal governments.

Finally, the M.S. in Criminal Justice Program supports the Organizational Leadership graduate program by providing two courses embedded in the degree. These include courses in:

- Criminal Justice Organizations and Management
- Criminal Justice Supervision

Other programs benefiting from the M.S. in Criminal Justice Program include Political Science, American Studies and as well as the Organizational Leadership Program.

Perceived opportunities for program improvement.

The M.S. in Criminal Justice Program has navigated many changes in the last five years. While we feel improvements have been made, the program recognizes that enrollment numbers have not

only dropped significantly at the university level but at the program level as well. It is critical that we continue to offer a new and unique curriculum, while maintaining our current opportunities. Recruitment is a necessary improvement. This can be accomplished by refocusing interest and increasing the number of ADP students, improving retention, and maintaining and increasing our relationships with agencies seeking candidates with advanced degrees. We have added a departmental content manager to expediently update our website which will allow us to better expose potential students to not only the current changes to the curriculum, but to promote future changes in a timely manner. Further, this will help the program showcase the many faculty and student accomplishments which have been somewhat parsimoniously expressed under the current system of updating the website.

Recommendation after Self-Study

Examination of this self-study recommends maintaining the current program level and certificates with an understanding of the dynamic changes in the curriculum that will be required going forward. Enrollment/Recruitment is a priority, and the Accelerated Degree Program can help revitalize our recruitment of current undergraduate students into the graduate program. The emphasis to reach future students outside of the university is ongoing and while challenging, we believe opportunities exist. Retention efforts have remained consistent, and we believe as collaborative projects increase between faculty and students so will retention. Building agency relationships and maintaining them has always been an important component of our program. It is recommended that we concentrate on building new relationships and are currently doing so. Finally, maintaining an up to date and easily accessible website is ongoing, the addition of the new content manager has the potential to provide expansion into new markets. Key recommendations:

1. **Enrollment:** It is the aim to increase enrollment annually by five percent. This can be accomplished by increasing our ADP student participation, increasing marketing of the new certificates in the program, and maintaining and updating the current website with current events and accomplishments of students and faculty. These accomplishments include student and faculty research, current projects, and items that identify the diversity and health of the program.
2. **Retention:** We believe that retention can be improved by promoting focusing on the interests of the students. This can be accomplished by providing overlapping opportunities/projects to keep students engaged. Increased research opportunities and other activities will further help retention of students.
3. **Agency Relationships:** The M.S. in Criminal Justice program has hundreds of graduates currently working within many law enforcement and other agencies both regionally and nationally. Reaching out to these agencies and using SteppingBlocks to identify alumni is currently being realized. Renewing these relationships while building an advisory committee will renew relationships and help promote the program.
4. **Website:** While the programs and department websites have experienced major updates over the previous assessment period, the additional focus on the website offers a significant and expedient opportunity to disseminate information regarding a wide variety of topics that will serve to accentuate the positive aspects of our department and programs, bolster recruitment, identify new partnerships, and highlight student and faculty accomplishments.

B.S. Criminal Justice Fall 2024 NSU Program Review

Institution Name: Northeastern State University
Program Name and State Regents Code: Criminal Justice, B.S. 020
Program Options: N/A
Certificates: N/A

Previous Review Date (Year) of Last Review: 2019

I. Summarize key findings from previous internal and/or external reviews of this program.

The previous external review noted the following strengths, areas of improvement, and recommendations:

*Strengths***:**
1. The department boasts a diverse undergraduate student body, both demographically and geographically, supported by versatile program offerings and multiple course delivery methods, highlighting its commitment to inclusivity.
2. Responsive to changing educational demands, the department has expanded its academic portfolio by introducing two new majors and integrating online and hybrid models alongside traditional on-campus courses.
3. There are ample opportunities for immersive learning through experiential courses partnered with local agencies and various study abroad programs, enriching the educational experience.

*Areas for Improvement***:**
1. The department's online presence needs enhancement, as its web pages are outdated and lack critical information such as faculty research interests, curriculum vitae, current projects, and opportunities for undergraduate research involvement. Additionally, some links on the website are non-functional, leading to dead pages.
2. There is a demand from both graduate and undergraduate students for more traditional on-campus course offerings. Students seeking a conventional classroom experience feel their needs are not fully met, indicating a gap in addressing the preferences of all student groups.

Recommendations:
1. Allocate more resources for marketing and expanding faculty positions to support program growth.
2. Revamp and update the department's webpage to ensure it is current and user-friendly.
3. Balance on-campus and online courses to cater to diverse student preferences.
4. Strengthen access and quality of interactions with faculty in online course offerings.

II. What developments and actions have taken place since the last review?

While the period reviewed features a variety of developments, the impact of COVID-19 on the educational landscape stands out as the most significant. The pandemic introduced several challenges to education, including an expanding online market, the push to move

away from physical classrooms, a heightened need for social connection, and pressures on social cohesion. These challenges affected everyone, but they particularly impacted program goals related to the global market and student exchanges. However, this changing environment also presented an ideal opportunity to establish multiple baseline measures for future growth.

Specific developments include changes in departmental leadership over the past year. During the first year under the new Department Chair, departmental and program goals were revised to increase focus, improve efficiency, and better align with student and discipline needs. Three main goals were identified: to standardize course offerings across all departmental programs, to standardize the department and program websites, and to change the department's name. Course offerings within the program were placed into a standardized two-year rotation, which has begun to stabilize course offerings, reduce scheduling efforts, and facilitate student advising. Administrative Content Coordinators are currently updating the department and program websites, which will increase access to faculty and disseminate information on course scheduling and rotation to current and potential students. The departmental name change to the Department of Criminal Justice & Sociology reflects the collective identity of the department and its associated disciplines more accurately. Proposals for further realignment are underway, including the development of a two-tiered paralegal undergraduate certificate and the creation of a new, separate Department of Sociology. This new department will house the Sociology, Advocacy and Justice Studies, and Women and Gender Studies programs currently within the department.

Building on the strategic changes made by the department to better align with student and discipline needs, further logistical actions have been implemented to alleviate program pressures. Notably, the Area Concentration Achievement Test (ACAT) was replaced with multiple internal assessments embedded within the students' final required course, CRJ 4233 Senior Seminar, as a cost-saving measure. This course was revised to assess students in key areas such as Criminology, Research Methods, Policing, Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure, Corrections, and Juvenile Justice.

Additionally, to address a previously identified weakness in research development, the process has been integrated throughout the program's required theory and methodology courses. Students begin this process either with Research Methods for Criminal Justice (CRJ 4003) in the fall semesters or Criminology (CRJ 4223) in the spring semesters. They then continue to develop their projects directly within the coursework of the subsequent course, ensuring a seamless integration of theory and practice. This strategic embedding of research enhances both the depth and the practical application of learning, directly contributing to the department's goals of increased efficiency and alignment with student needs.

This process actively benefits students by allowing them to employ a wide range of analytical, technical, and professional skills from the program. According to Steppingblocks, a career exploration tool that tracks NSU graduates, the most prominent skills among our graduates include customer service, leadership, and public speaking by volume; criminal investigation, policing, and law enforcement by relevance; and public liability, torts, trial practice, and product liability by salary.

To continuously enhance workforce readiness, the program has adopted a skill-development approach that closely integrates student and discipline needs. Furthermore, associated agencies benefit from data-driven findings, which enable them to make informed decisions.

The program facilitates multiple opportunities for direct student-agency contact, ranging from initial inquiries related to data acquisition to comprehensive project partnerships tailored to agency needs, thereby formalizing career path processes. Additionally, many members of the program's student body currently serve in criminal justice capacities, reinforcing the value of the degree to the organizations already connected to the department.

Ultimately, more closely aligning the methods by which the department facilitates career paths not only bolsters existing avenues for advancement but also showcases the skills acquired, further enhancing the program's impact and relevance.

As student engagement is critical to both recruitment and retention, a primary goal is to create a more cohesive student body. In terms of student engagement, the department has begun growing the number of students actively engaged over the assessment period. Additionally, the level of engagement clearly continues to grow. Student opportunities for engagement in the criminal justice program include the following:

Internships and Experiential Learning

The department offers multiple opportunities for graduate assistantships, internships, and other forms of experiential learning. Partners in these initiatives include the U.S. Attorney Offices, Cherokee Nation, Office of Juvenile Affairs, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Marshals, Tulsa Police Department, Broken Arrow Police Department, Tahlequah Police Department, multiple county sheriff's offices within the region, and other local opportunities such as law firms and legal aid.

As examples of recent partnerships, two undergraduate and one graduate student are currently involved in work experience programs within the department, funded by the Cherokee Nation and NSU's College of Extended Learning. Additionally, a memorandum of understanding has been enacted with the Tulsa Police Department, allowing their CLEET academy graduates to receive 27 credits towards their degree. Similar partnerships are being developed with other agencies, such as the Arkansas State Police. Furthermore, federal agencies like the National Security Agency are actively recruiting students for internships.

Student involvement in various events and venues has continued to expand. Examples of this increasing participation include:

- **Local level**: Students have engaged in activities such as the Criminal Justice Career Fair, the Criminal Justice-Red Cross Symposium, and NSU Undergraduate Research Day.

- **State level**: Participation extends to events like Oklahoma Research Day and meetings with the Oklahoma Public Health Association.

- **Regional level**: Involvement includes participation in the Southwestern Association of Criminal Justice and collaboration with the Cherokee Nation, though it's unclear at what level this engagement occurs.

- **National level**: Students have also taken part in broader platforms such as the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences and the American Public Health Association.

This broad spectrum of involvement not only enhances their educational experience but also solidifies their presence in the field of criminal justice.

Recruitment and Retention Plan
The department has revised its recruitment and retention plan. Historically, efforts included participation in university, college, and department-level events such as the Riverhawk Rally and Riverhawk Jam. However, the department is now exploring new ways to strengthen the program's student body. Some of the current initiatives include:
- The Community Emergency Response Term Certificate camp, which attracted numerous youths and adolescents to the campus.

- The Criminal Justice and Red Cross Volunteer Symposium, scheduled for October 10th from 8 am to 12 pm in the Annex Room at the BA campus.

- The creation of a Homeland Security and Emergency Management student organization, with criminal justice students serving as President and Vice President. This organization participated in the Student Organization Fair at Second Century.

- Hosting various workshops, such as those on emergency weather response at the Tahlequah campus.

The immediate plan focuses on establishing a structure to enhance access to locations with potential student streams. The initial steps of this plan, which are being refined as the departmental processes evolve, include:
- Identifying cluster points of known potential student populations.
- Establishing communication with these individual access points.
- Increasing access by organizing and scheduling visits to these identified points.

Public schools, community colleges, and various facets of the criminal justice field have been identified in this regard. The recursive nature of criminal justice education presents additional opportunities to increase the university's representation across the criminal justice system by targeting students already employed within it. This approach overlaps functions and gives a clear indication of the program's influence within police agencies, adult and juvenile court systems, and corrections within the state. Furthermore, military branches and other sources associated with the discipline have been identified as opportunities for further assessment and growth.

Although complete datasets are not available due to time constraints, the following points outline the direction in which the department intends to move:

- Identifying the composition of the student body, their interests, and current career aspirations.
- Determining the locations and travel distances associated with major points of access, such as larger population hubs.
- Tracking the status of established relationships with identified locations, including smaller hubs closer to university sites.
- Intersecting program data to directly identify and quantify pathways into various careers associated with the program.
- Formalizing career pathways.

As an example, lists for all community colleges, public high schools, and all UCR-reporting state police agencies were geocoded, distances calculated, placed into ArcGIS to display.

III. Program Objectives and Goals

The objectives of the Criminal Justice, B.S. program are:
1. To develop an understanding of the origin, organization and function of American law.

2. To develop and understanding of law enforcement at the local, state, tribal and federal levels.

3. To impart knowledge of community and institutional corrections.

4. To gain an understanding of the function and structure of courts in the United States.

5. To perfect the ability to conduct research in the major components of the criminal justice system and describe the findings.

6. To perfect critical analysis and writing skills.

7. To impart knowledge of the principles of ethics and social and cultural diversity.

The goals for the Criminal Justice, B.S. degree over the next five years include:
1. Establish the Department of Criminal Justice and Sociology as the educational partnership of choice for the field of criminal justice.

2. Increase workforce connections through active formal and informal partnerships with op employers.

3. Increase student participation in research.

4. Increase student engagement.

5. Increase enrollment by 5% each year.

IV. Quality Indicators

Student learning Objectives assessed and specific data regarding student achievement;

Student Learning Outcome (SLO)	Assessment Method	# Students Assessed 2019-24	Minimum Competency Expectation (%)	Achieving Minimum Competency (%)
Develop an understanding of the issues surrounding the administration of justice in the United States.	ACAT*/Senior Seminar	ACAT: 564 / Senior Seminar: 53	70%	58.8% / 93.2%

Develop an understanding of the origin, organization and function of American law.	ACAT*/Senior Seminar	ACAT: 564 / Senior Seminar: 53	70%	64.4% / 90.5%
Develop an understanding of the relationship between the US Constitution and the Criminal Justice System.	ACAT*/Senior Seminar	ACAT: 564 / Senior Seminar: 53	70%	73.3% / 82.6%
Impart knowledge of criminal law and procedure.	ACAT*/Senior Seminar	ACAT: 564 / Senior Seminar: 53	70%	53.2% / 87.34%
Impart knowledge of crime and correctional theory.	ACAT*/Senior Seminar	ACAT: 564 / Senior Seminar: 53	70%	72.9% / 88.7%
Conduct research in the major components of the Criminal Justice System and describe the findings.	ACAT*/Senior Seminar	ACAT: 564 / Senior Seminar: 53	70%	51.4% / 91.0%
Develop critical analysis and writing skills.**	ACAT*/Senior Seminar	ACAT: 564 / Senior Seminar: 53	70%	62.4% / 91.0%
Impart knowledge of the principles of ethics and social and cultural diversity.**	ACAT*/Senior Seminar	ACAT: 564 / Senior Seminar: 53	70%	62.4% / 91.0%

*ACAT scores for the years 2019-2021 currently available in hardcopy form. Available upon request, once digitized.

**Averages for the sum total of the previous metrics are provided for the associated figures. These Learning Objectives are qualitative in nature. Assessments to better directly relate these objectives are being developed.

Note: Unstandardized ACAT scores and direct assessment grade averages are reported in this review, compared to ACAT weighted percentiles, which are based on national averages.

V. SLO Analysis:

The following provides a narrative analysis of the data and how the program uses data to improve student learning outcomes and the program.

Prior to Fall 2023, ACAT results were used to determine student learning effectiveness and whether any curriculum adjustments were necessary. Internal methods for assessing graduating seniors were developed in Spring 2023 and piloted during the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 semesters. The results from Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 assessments appear to demonstrate better patterns of performance compared to student ACAT results. This is likely due to the increased alignment between core courses taught and the assessment instruments used. Additionally, the new assessment instruments offer a better alignment to the program's specified SLOs.

VI. Technology Analysis

The following discusses effective teaching measures used by the program including the use of instructional technology.

The program offers courses in face-to-face, asynchronous online, and synchronous face-to-face/online modalities (e.g., Hyflex) in efforts to increase student learning while balancing the needs of nontraditional students and those outside of our geographic area. Additionally, asynchronous online courses are offered in both eight-week and sixteen-week formats.

VII. Online Analysis

The following discusses the program's efforts to ensure that online offerings follow best practices for online instruction including the use of the NSU LMS template, use of Quality Matters design principles, any courses Quality Matters approved, design work with NSU Online's instructional designers

Blackboard shell design for course content has been standardized within the program. Further, course offerings seek to abide QM standards.

VIII. Alignment Analysis

The following discusses the program's alignment with industry or professional standards; how does the program develop and sustain relationships with external partners relevant to program offerings

The program actively utilizes the multiple professional relationships and organizational partnerships associated with the department and across its faculty to ensure alignment with best practices and industry standards.

While the faculty share connections with numerous agencies and external partners, the value of the relationship is best expressed by joint efforts and productivity. As such, the department continues to foster relationships via direct partnerships across recurring events, ongoing research projects, and other activities. These activities foster communication with external partners and align the needs of those with whom we partner. Prior sections of this review speak of these efforts.

IX. Minimum Productivity Indicators

Time Frame (e.g.: 5-year span)	Enrollment	Graduates
2023-24	187	48
2022-23	198	44
2021-22	256	66

2020-21		313	83
2019-20		358	90

X. Courses Taught Exclusively for the Major 2019-2024

Courses Taught Exclusively for the Major						
2019-2024						
Prefix	Number	Title	Total # Number of Sections	Average Enrollment per Section	Total # Number of Students	Credit Hours Generated
CR J	1013	Introduction to Criminal Justice	15	74.4	1116	3348
CR J	3013	Criminal Law I	11	55	605	1815
CR J	3033	Survey in American Policing	11	39.5	435	1305
CR J	3083	Criminal Procedure	12	36.5	438	1314
CR J	3343	Corrections	12	41	493	1479
CR J	4003	Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology	15	31.1	466	1398
CR J	4223	Criminology	12	43.5	522	1566
CR J	4233	Senior Seminar	15	29.7	445	1335
CR J	4253	Juvenile Justice System	14	36.3	508	1524
CR J	5063	The Criminal Justice System	10	11.7	117	351
CR J	5033	Crime Theory	9	15	135	405
CR J	5053	Criminal Justice Research Methods	10	12.3	123	369
CR J	5023	Comparative Criminal Justice	6	13.2	79	237
CR J	5073	Constitutional Criminal Law	8	14.3	114	342

XI. Student Credit Hours Major Courses, 2019-2024

	2019-20	**2020-21**	**2021-22**	**2022-23**	**2023-24**
UG Lower Division (1000/2000)	960	1143	1116	777	537
UG Upper Division (3000/4000)	9834	8430	6930	6303	5823
UG Yearly Total	10794	9573	8046	7680	6360
Graduate (5000)	783	1071	942	801	633
5-year Total	11577	10644	8988	8481	6993

XII. Courses Supporting General Education & Other Programs 2018-2023

Prefix	Number	Title	Total # Number of Students	Credit Hours Generated
CR J	1013	Introduction to Criminal Justice	1116	3348
CR J	3103	Criminal Law I	41	123
CR J	3023	Criminal Law II	162	486
CR J	3083	Criminal Procedure	438	1314

CR J	3053	Criminal Justice Organization & Mgt	40	120
CR J	3073	Criminal Justice Supervision	5	15
CR J	3123	Forensics I	207	621
CR J	3213	Criminal Investigation	135	405
CR J	3223	Evidence	376	1128
CR J	3313	Native American Criminal Justice	242	726
CR J	3603	Introduction to Homeland Security	318	954
CR J	3633	Terrorism	209	627
CR J	4113	Introduction to Law and American Court Sys	347	1041
CR J	4253	Juvenile Justice	508	1524
CR J	4323	Current Issues in Native American Law	11	33

XIII. Direct Instructional Costs

The following data estimates the direct instructional costs for the program for the review period.

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Faculty Salaries	$631,340	$575,900	$606,350	$634,000	$668,630
Operations / Admin	$2,859	$5,718	$2,859	$2,001	$2,001
Equipment / Materials					
GAs / Lab Assistants	$650	$650	$650		
Yearly totals	$634,849	$582,268	$609,859	$636,001	$670,631

XIV. Program's Graduate Hiring Data

The program utilized the institution's membership in Steppingblocks to identify 1,164 graduates with known location information. A detailed summary is provided below.

Total Graduates: The dataset includes a total of 1,164 graduates.

- **Highest Degree Earned**:

  - Bachelor's degrees are the most common, with 643 graduates.

- 282 graduates have earned master's degrees.

- 84 have achieved doctoral degrees.

- 27 hold associate degrees.

- **Top Industries**: Graduates are predominantly employed in the following industries:

  - Government (126 graduates)

  - Education (68 graduates)

  - Healthcare (65 graduates)

  - Public Service (40 graduates)

  - Natural Resources (38 graduates)

- **Job Categories**: The top job categories among the graduates include:

  - Law Enforcement (112 individuals)

  - Legal professions (77 individuals)

  - Management (71 individuals)

  - Executive roles (51 individuals)

  - Education-related positions (41 individuals)

- **Median Salary**: The median salary among graduates with known salary data is approximately $62,686 per year.

This overview provides insights into the educational achievements and professional landscape of the alumni, indicating a diverse spread across various sectors with a concentration in public service-oriented industries.

XV. Closing the Loop

Perceived program strengths.

Since the last review in 2019, the Department of Criminal Justice B.S. in Criminal Justice Program has maintained diversity in both student population and geography. Our

curriculum not only supports students seeking a degree in criminal justice but also supports degrees in the following:

- Cyber security
- Legal Studies
- Psychology
- Sociology
- American Studies
- Riverhawk Scholars Program
- Emergency Management
- Homeland Security

Our curriculum is delivered in multiple formats including:

- Traditional Face-to-Face
- Online 16-week format
- Online eight-week format
- Hyflex Zoom/face to face

As we continue to widen the net by supporting other programs with existing curriculum, many workshops are provided in multiple delivery formats designed to fully support inclusivity within the University population.

1. The demand from both graduate and undergraduate students for more traditional on-campus course offerings is being addressed. The department is fully dedicated to the traditional student experience. We have reduced the number of traditional face-to-face cancellations by increasing enrollment using hyflex delivery, we have offered and taught graduate evening courses on both the Tahlequah and Broken Arrow campuses. The goal is to maintain the traditional students ability to graduate without being forced into the online curriculum environment. Students seeking a conventional classroom experience are still facing a gap, but a much smaller gap.

Perceived opportunities for program improvement.

As we navigate the ever-changing educational demands we have submitted many curriculum certifications, while the B.S. in Criminal Justice has not realized the certificate influence we are posed to put forward a certification in Juvenile Justice and in Law Enforcement Leadership. We continue to provide opportunities for immersive learning through experiential courses partnered with Federal, Tribal, State, and local agencies and including various study abroad programs and internships.

Over the last five years we have addressed many of the past evaluations suggestions for improvement. The department's online presence has been completely updated and is currently being imported into the university webpage to include the following:

- faculty biographies that are updated
- recent publications
- awards (both faculty and student)
- curriculum vitae
- current projects

- undergraduate opportunities for research and internships
- standardized course rotations

Further the department has been provided the opportunity to have its own content manager that will allow expedited content adjustments and additions.

XVI. Recommendation after Self-Study

Based on our self-study, we recommend maintaining the current program level while addressing dynamic curriculum and administrative developments according to established timelines. Despite a decline in declared majors over the past four years, we have seen an increase in the current year through revitalized recruitment, enhanced retention strategies, modified curriculum delivery, an updated website, and standardized schedules that enable academic advisors to guide students effectively. Here are the key strategic initiatives:

1. **Increase Declared Majors**: We aim to boost our declared majors by 5% annually over the next five years. After a nearly 40% drop in B.S. in Criminal Justice declarations over the past five years, we've managed a 2-3% increase this year, with final numbers still pending. This growth is driven by enhancements in our website, curriculum review, standardized schedules, and heightened community marketing. Additionally, we are expanding our network with local law enforcement to include a curriculum review board comprising leaders from law enforcement across Oklahoma and Arkansas. These measures are ongoing, with progress monitored annually by the Program Coordinator, the Department Chair, and Academic Affairs.

2. **Enhance Recruitment Activities**: To invigorate recruitment, we have renamed the department to better reflect its degrees and curriculum. Future plans include utilizing "stepping blocks" and other tools to engage alumni and actively recruit from high schools and community colleges within and beyond our region. We are also strengthening partnerships with several law enforcement agencies, including the Arkansas State Police, and expanding our presence into Western Oklahoma and Western Arkansas. These efforts are continuous, with progress reviewed annually.

3. **Boost Retention**: We plan to enhance communication with current students beyond academic advising by increasing faculty involvement in career, graduate school, and research advisories. Faculty will proactively contact students each semester to offer support and guidance. This initiative is complemented by our accelerated degree program, which provides graduate credits to qualifying undergraduates. Progress will be tracked annually.

4. **Innovate Curriculum Delivery**: We continue to offer traditional face-to-face classes while expanding our hyflex and online course options, both in eight-week and 16-week formats. These adjustments are designed to meet diverse student needs and are reviewed annually for effectiveness.

5. **Revamp the Website**: Over the past year, we've developed a functional, user-friendly website that provides detailed information about each major, including core

and elective courses, updated faculty profiles, and new program additions such as certificates. After positive feedback from a student cohort and faculty approval, the new website is being integrated into the university system, supported by our dedicated content manager.

6. **Standardize Course Rotation**: The course rotation for the B.S. in Criminal Justice has been standardized on a biennial basis to streamline academic advising. This rotation, which began in Spring 2024, alternates core courses annually, with electives distributed over two years. This structure supports both the College of Extended Learning and the College of Continuing Education, ensuring continuous implementation and annual evaluations.

These strategic efforts are designed to strengthen the program's structure and appeal, ensuring it remains responsive to student needs and industry trends.