



## MEMORANDUM

**ATTENTION** Senate **DATE** January 14, 2025   
**FROM** Dilson Rassier, Provost and Vice-President Academic, and Chair, SCUP **PAGES** 1/50  
**RE:** External Review Report and Action Plan for the School of Criminology (SCUP 25-08)

At its meeting on January 8, 2025, SCUP reviewed the External Review Report for the School of Criminology that resulted from its External Review.

The Educational Goals Assessment Plan was reviewed and is attached for the information of Senate.

**Motion:** That Senate approve the Action Plan for the School of Criminology that resulted from its External Review.

C: Laurel Weldon, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

8888 University Drive, Burnaby, BC  
Strand Hall, Room 3000  
Canada V5A 1S6

TEL: 778.782.5731  
FAX: 778.782.5876

vpacad@sfu.ca  
www.sfu.ca/vpacademic

**MEMORANDUM**

**ATTENTION** Dilson Rassier, Chair, SCUP **DATE** October 29, 2024  
**FROM** Peter Hall, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-  
President, Academic **PAGES** *[Signature]*  
**RE:** External Review of the School of Criminology

Attached are the External Review Report and the Action Plan for the School Criminology. The Educational Goals Assessment Plan and constructive feedback from SCUTL are included for information only. The site visit took place at the Burnaby campus, April 2 – 4, 2024. The external review committee met with students, faculty, staff, and senior administrators.

#### Excerpt from the External Review Report:

"The School of Criminology at Simon Fraser University consistently produces impactful research and maintains high teaching excellence. This reputation attracts many collaborations and partnerships with governmental and non-profit agencies, solidifying the School's status as an institution with a strong focus on applied criminal justice research. The School is also one of the leading units within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and boasts high demand for its undergraduate courses."

Following the site visit, the report of the External Review Committee\* for the School of Criminology was submitted in May 2024. The reviewers made a number of recommendations based on the Terms of Reference that were provided to them. Subsequently, a meeting was held with the dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, the director of the School of Criminology, and director of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance to consider the recommendations. An action plan was prepared taking into consideration the discussion at the meeting and the contents of the external review report. The action plan has been endorsed by the school and the faculty dean.

## **Motion:**

**That SCUP approve and recommend to Senate the Action Plan for the School of Criminology that resulted from its external review.**

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**\*External Review Committee:**

Sandra Bucerius, University of Alberta (Chair of External Review Committee)  
Bill McCarthy, Rutgers University - Newark  
Scot Wortley, University of Toronto  
Marlene Moretti (internal), Simon Fraser University

### Attachments:

1. External Review Report (May 2024)
2. School of Criminology Action Plan
3. School of Criminology Educational Goals Assessment Plan
4. Feedback on Educational Goals Assessment Plan

cc Laurel Weldon, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
Martin Bouchard, Director, School of Criminology

Program report prepared by Drs. Sandra Bucerius, Bill McCarthy, and Scot Wortley

April 2024

# External Review Report

School of Criminology  
Simon Fraser University

## **Overview**

The School of Criminology at Simon Fraser University consistently produces impactful research and maintains high teaching excellence. This reputation attracts many collaborations and partnerships with governmental and non-profit agencies, solidifying the School's status as an institution with a strong focus on applied criminal justice research. The School is also one of the leading units within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and boasts high demand for its undergraduate courses.

The School embraces a “Big Tent” approach and offers a diverse array of research and teaching interests, covering topics such as forensics, cybercrime, interpersonal violence, and more. The School's commitment to teaching is reflected in its award-winning instructors (e.g., a national 3M Teaching Fellowship, SFU's Excellence in Teaching award, and the SFU FASS Cormack Award for Excellence in Teaching).

The current leadership of the School is extremely strong, with faculty members, staff, and students expressing almost unanimous support for its current director. This strong leadership creates a positive and cohesive work environment at the School that enhances morale and job satisfaction among faculty and staff.

## **Process**

Prior to the site visit, the members of the review committee met and prepared questions for the review. The members also reviewed the very comprehensive self-study document and requested some additional information. During the site visit, the members asked various sources for additional information from various sources, such as graduate student thesis titles, course evaluations, student job placements, and so on.

The review committee had a launch meeting attended by Peter Hall, Vice Provost and Associate VP Academic (Chair), Glynn Nicholls, Director, Academic Planning and Quality Assurance, Valerie Crooks, Associate Vice-President, Research, Mary O'Brien, Vice-Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies, Laurel Weldon, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and Bal Basi, Quality Assurance Manager.

On the first day, the review committee had individual meetings with the School Director, Martin Bouchard, as well as with the Undergraduate Director, Danielle Murdoch, the Associate Director, Eric Beauregard, the Graduate Director, Garth Davies, as well as the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. The review committee also had individual meetings with four faculty members. There was also a lively lunch attended by graduate students and faculty members.

On the second day, the review committee had individual meetings with the Associate Vice-President, Research, with the Manager of the School, Tracy Anbinder, and with the Vice-Provost, Dean of Graduate Studies. In addition, the review committee met with six individual faculty members as well as with a group of graduate students (seven in total), and with the

administrative staff. The review committee also had a working lunch with the Director of the School.

On the third day, the review committee met with six additional faculty members individually and had a closing meeting with the Director of the School as well as with the senior administration. The review committee shared some initial impressions and recommendations during the closing meeting with the senior administration. A meeting with undergraduate students was planned, however, no undergraduate students attended.

## **Overview of recommendations**

The following recommendations are not in order of importance, but in the order that they appear in the following report. We have also included several suggestions to either supplement or expand on our recommendations. We note, at the outset, the school addressed many of the recommendations provided in the last external review (see pages 33-39 of the self-study report).

### ***General recommendations***

- We strongly encourage SFU to conduct an external search for a new director given the relative void of senior leaders in the department. An external director may bring new ideas and approaches and could help the School increase its complement of respected senior faculty, address internal conflicts about the direction of the School, and give the School a set of "fresh eyes" and/or a new perspective on program direction. It would also address the need for more senior faculty.
- We suggest that the administration increase the number of course releases for the director to a level commensurate with comparable institutions. This would make the position more attractive for both internal and external candidates.
- We recommend that the university address the recent decrease in the size of the faculty from 33 in 2019 to 28 in 2016 and now to 25.5 (see recommendations below).
- The School identified nine clusters of strength in the department (i.e., areas with at least two core faculty members). This is an unusually high number of core areas given the School's size – one would typically expect about three. Our review revealed that some faculty members were unsure about the core strengths of the School – often suggesting topics such as "cybercrime" or "sex offenders" as opposed to core areas, such as "policing" or "criminal behaviour". We recommend that the faculty spend some time – possibly at a faculty retreat event – to decide upon a smaller set of core strengths. This could be particularly helpful in determining which areas they might want to systematically grow in the future.
- The faculty seems to be very strong in addressing questions on how the criminal justice system works and how to explain and prevent various types of criminal

behaviour. However, the School has fewer faculty whose scholarship investigates, from a critical perspective, how the criminal justice system affects people. We strongly recommend that future hires diversify the faculty with respect to the types of questions that faculty are researching. We recommend that the School target empirically orientated scholars (either qualitative or quantitative) who employ high-quality research methods to address critical research questions. Such scholars will most easily fit/complement the strong base of current faculty members and further enhance the School's focus on methodological and empirical rigour.

- The faculty lacks diversity with respect to ethnicity, race, and/or immigrant background. We strongly recommend that future hires, regardless of area, pay particular attention to candidates from equity-deserving groups, especially because there seems to be a discrepancy between the relatively diverse student body and the faculty. The School could also make use of available bridge funding to hire in targeted search areas (e.g., scholars traditionally underrepresented in the academy and in the School, scholars who share the racial/ethnic backgrounds with the student population).
- Given the size of the faculty, it is surprising that the School has not received a Canada Research Chair Position or its equivalent. As a point of comparison, the University of Alberta's Sociology Department is home to 26 faculty members, two of which are CRC1s and two are Henry Marshall Tory Chairs. The School should apply for and ultimately hire a high-profile research chair in an area they identify as one of their core strengths (see recommendation above), with the aim of diversifying the existing faculty compliment (recommendation 5 and 6).
- The School sought our input regarding the potential establishment of connections with the newly proposed medical school. We perceive this as a promising opportunity, given that some faculty members already possess a shared interest in medical subjects pertinent to criminology, such as forensics. Our stance on whether the school should pursue this avenue is neutral and depends on which core strengths the faculty wants to focus on (see recommendation above). However, should the school opt to prioritize this collaboration, strategic planning will be imperative. This entails considerations such as bolstering faculty expertise through targeted hires, developing relevant courses, and making calculated investments to solidify this emerging strength.
- There appears to be some confusion among faculty about whether a “failed” job search would lead to the loss of the position. The University should make its position clear that a position remains within the School until it is filled (i.e., it will be carried forward in the School if the search does not result in a successful hire). Likewise, faculty positions should generally remain in the School when there is a retirement or when faculty resign their position.

- We encourage the School to reward Tri-Council funding and recognize its greater competitiveness relative to most research contracts. This could be done via teaching releases for major awards.
- We recommend that the university offer training in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion for faculty, especially for those on search committees.
- We encourage the university to reconsider providing incentives for developing online courses. Online and blended learning courses provide important flexibility for faculty and students, and as noted by the Criminology Student Association comments, there is a high demand for them. Budgetary constraints may make it impossible to provide course release for preparing these classes, but other incentives (e.g., support for student assistants, additional compensation, service credit) may help increase the number of online/blended courses in the school. We also encourage the university to develop guidelines for online/blended course assignment (e.g., no more than 25% or 50% of one's teaching assignment).
- We encourage the School to have discussions about transparency of course assignments.
- We recommend implementing a tenure stream system for new teaching faculty who are hired into full-time teaching positions (as is the case at comparable schools around the country), and discussing possibilities for granting tenure to the existing teaching faculty.
- We recommend balancing teaching assignments for teaching staff to include both larger introductory lecture-based classes, as well as smaller seminar courses capped at 25 students. The School of Criminology's ratio of full-time students to faculty members is quite high (40.1) compared to other social science programs (31.0 for Psychology, 29.6 for Economics, and 23.4 for FASS more generally; 2022-2023 data).
- We recommend developing an alternative evaluation system for teaching staff, ensuring their valuable contributions are acknowledged (if not already in place).
- We encourage the Faculty of Arts to provide funds for the School to make the Coordinator, Research Grants & Projects, a full-time, ongoing position.
- Faculty were uncertain about the responsibilities of the above-mentioned Coordinator position and the services provided by the Office of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation. Presentations by both in a regularly scheduled faculty meeting could help address this issue.

- We recommend that up-to-date calendars display courses that will be offered in a given year or provide an indication of when the course will be offered next. This will assist in student planning.
- We support the school's plan to permanently remove courses that have not been offered for some time (e.g., five years or more) and for which there are no plans to offer them.
- We encourage the School to consider offering courses in the following areas to provide a broader range of criminological instruction on the undergraduate level: Race, crime and criminal justice; Immigration, crime, and criminal justice; Criminal justice, crime prevention and health; White-collar crime (i.e., corporate and financial crimes); Crime, criminal justice, and health; and The Politics of Crime and Law Creation.
- We recommend that the School replace course titles and descriptions that use labels for people with those that use terms for behavior. For example, CRIM 316 - Sexual Offenders and Sexual Offences could be renamed Sexual Offences and Offending; CRIM 454 - Criminal Profiling (3) could be renamed Profiling.
- We recommend that the university ensure that all undergraduates have the possibility of enrolling in smaller seminar classes, capped at 25 students as part of their degree.
- We recommend that every fall, the School provide TAs, instructors and faculty, with an introduction to the university misconduct site and how to use it to learn about, respond to, and report improper behavior (e.g., Student Conduct Office/Campus Public Safety). Likewise, TAs should be given an introduction to the University's Academic Integrity process (<https://www.sfu.ca/students/enrolment-services/academic-integrity.html>).
- We recommend that undergraduate students be sent a document (via a link or email) that explicitly describes misconduct and outlines the rules of proper engagement with TAs and instructors. The same document could describe the protocols for conflict resolution and grade appeals.
- To be aligned with other Canadian schools, the School could discuss lowering the course requirements at the PhD level.
- Given the profile of the faculty, the graduate course options fall into the realms of "mainstream criminology" and are more akin to criminal justice programs in the United States. Criminology departments typically include courses that have a greater focus on studying criminal justice institutions (as opposed to criminal justice behaviour or actors), often using a sociological, and mostly, critical

approach. We recommend that the School either add courses centering alternative approaches to attract more graduate students and/or provide alternative content within their existing courses. This will better prepare graduate students for tenure track positions across Canada, the United States, and Europe.

- The number of applicants for the PhD program is extremely low for the size of the School. We recommend that the School identify and advertise its core strengths to potential domestic and international applicants, and better document and disseminate the career trajectories of former graduate students to attract high-quality graduate students.
- We strongly encourage the School to collect data on the career paths of both their undergraduate and graduate students. This information should be publicly available and easily accessible as it could help attract future students and alumni donors/community and alumni donors/community members.
- Based on our meetings with graduate students, the report contains recommendations regarding four main areas for the graduate program: a) establishing guideline expectations regarding faculty/graduate student relationships (for deadlines, feedback, frequency of meetings, and so on), b) creating a more welcoming learning environment, c) enhancing the learning environment, and d) preparing for the job market. Detailed recommendations can be found on pages 21-23.
- We recommend that the School convene a working group/committee of faculty members and graduate students to discuss how the implementation of a series of mandatory professionalization seminars and/or workshops could better support the career development of its graduate students.
- The School has an opportunity to introduce a Master's degree program in Criminal Justice and/or Criminology tailored for professionals working in the realms of law enforcement, corrections, and related fields. We recommend discussing this opportunity with the Faculty of Arts. Recommendations on how to proceed can be found in the report.

## **School Leadership**

The current director has garnered widespread support from faculty, students, and staff for his outstanding performance. Everyone we spoke to expressed strong satisfaction with the School's current leadership. Nonetheless, there's a palpable sense of unease regarding the impending selection of the next director.

This apprehension stems from divergent viewpoints within the community: on one side, there's a faction advocating for a director committed to enhancing faculty diversity and bolstering the School's emphasis on critical criminology. A smaller contrasting perspective regards such equity initiatives as encroachments on academic freedom, potentially diminishing the caliber of research associated with the program.

The dearth of internal candidates for the last director search is troubling given the number of full and senior associate (5 years or more at rank) professors for whom leadership is an appropriate service responsibility. The establishment of the associate director (similar to a vice or assistant chair in other units) and its rotation across faculty should help prepare faculty for leadership roles. Leadership roles outside the department, but within the university (e.g., Senate committees), can serve a similar function and should be encouraged (and rewarded in step allotments) for associate and full professors.

The director mentioned some difficulties in recruiting senior faculty for the School's administrative positions, such as the Graduate Program, and Undergraduate Program associate directors. As a result, these are often assigned to associate professors. This is unfortunate because it often slows their progress to promotion to full professor. Other programs have a set of bylaws for school governance that specify that the unit head (director or dean) appoint people to these positions (i.e., people are obligated to fill the role as part of their service assignment).

- Given the relative void of senior leaders in the department, we strongly encourage SFU to conduct an external search for a new director. An external director may bring new ideas and approaches that can address problems that have persisted across directorships, address internal conflicts about the direction of the School, and give the School a set of "fresh eyes" or a new perspective on program direction. It could also address the need for more senior faculty.
- We suggest that the administration increase the number of course releases for the director to a level commensurate with comparable institutions (e.g., the Chair at the University of Alberta, Director at the University of Toronto, and the Dean at Rutgers either don't teach or teach at their discretion). This would make the position more attractive for both internal and external candidates.
- We recommend that the university offer leadership training for interested faculty and staff.

## **Faculty**

Overall, faculty research is solid. There are several laudatory aspects, but also some room for improvement. As noted in the self-study, several faculty members have high citation counts and high scores on impact factor metrics (e.g., h-index). Collectively, the faculty brings in a considerable amount of external funding from contracts that help fund graduate students and supplement faculty salaries.

The faculty bios that we received show several faculty papers in leading high-impact journals (e.g. 5 papers in *Criminology*; 7 papers in the *Journal of Criminal Justice*; 1 in *Crime and Justice*, 8 papers in the *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*). Other faculty publications are in medium and lower-impact journals.

Several faculty members spoke favourably about the director's support for publishing in high-impact journals and his recognition of the higher expectations for the scholarship that is published in these outlets. We agree that publishing in major, high-impact outlets is essential for the School to maintain and enhance its reputation for cutting-edge research. We also encourage faculty to increase their engagement with major review journals (e.g., *Annual Reviews of Sociology*, *Criminology*, *Law and Social Science*, *Psychology*, *Crime and Justice*). *Annual Review* papers (invited or original submissions) are a strong indicator of someone's stature as an expert in a field and they are an excellent forum for providing an agenda for future research.

The self-study report and faculty members highlighted nine different areas of strength within the department, an unusually high number given the School's size, where typically about three core areas would be expected. However, our review found that faculty members were often unclear about these core strengths, suggesting topics such as "cybercrime" or "sex offenders" rather than more central themes like "policing" or "criminal behaviour."

- We recommend that the faculty engage in a reflective exercise, perhaps during a faculty retreat, to clearly identify a smaller set of core strengths. This process would be beneficial in deciding which areas to develop further in the future.
- We suggest that the faculty also decide if they want to prioritize connections with the medical school and invest in this as an emerging core area.

While the faculty demonstrates strong capabilities in understanding and explaining the functioning of the criminal justice system and preventing various types of criminal behaviour, there is a noticeable gap in scholarship that critically examines the effects of the criminal justice system on those who encounter it.

- We suggest that future hiring efforts aim to diversify the faculty's research focus. Specifically, the School should seek empirically oriented scholars, whether qualitative or quantitative, who utilize high-quality research methods to address critical questions. Such hires would complement the existing faculty's strengths in methodological and empirical rigor, further enhancing the School's research profile.

Additionally, the faculty lacks diversity in terms of ethnicity, race, and immigrant background. There is a significant disparity between the relatively diverse student body and the less diverse faculty.

- We strongly recommend that future hires prioritize candidates from equity-deserving groups. The School should take full advantage of available bridge funding to conduct targeted searches, focusing on scholars who are traditionally underrepresented in academia and who reflect the racial, ethnic, and nativity backgrounds of the student population.

It is also notable that, despite the size of the faculty, the School has not yet secured a Canada Research Chair (CRC) Position or its equivalent. For comparison, the University of Alberta's Sociology Department, with 26 faculty members, boasts two CRCs and two Henry Marshall Tory Chairs.

- We recommend that the School apply for and hire a high-profile research chair in a core strength area identified through the reflective exercise mentioned above. This strategic hire could also help in diversifying the faculty, aligning with our recommendations to broaden the School's research focus and improve faculty diversity.

There is substantial evidence of successful research collaborations in the department. These include collaborations involving senior and more junior scholars (e.g., Andersen & Linning; Boucher, Beauregard & McCuish), research and teaching faculty (e.g., Butler & Fabian), junior faculty (e.g., Butler & Greer) and senior colleagues (e.g., Palys & MacAlister). There is also a growing culture of co-authoring with students; as noted in the self-study, students are frequent co-authors and authors (e.g., between 20-30 chapters and articles per year for the last three years). Faculty emphasized that the administration and colleagues enthusiastically support interdisciplinary research.

There is currently limited direct faculty engagement with tri-council funding. This contrasts with student involvement. As noted in the self-study report, since 2016/17, the School's students have received an average of seven major Tri-Council awards per year. Limited faculty engagement with tri-council funding reduces revenue for the school (from overhead/ F&A), limits research experiences for graduate students (and their ability to cite tri-council funded research experiences on their CVs), and limits faculty involvement in pure, as opposed to applied research.

- We encourage the School to reward tri-council funding and recognize its greater competitiveness relative to most research contracts. This could be done via significant teaching releases for major awards, such as SSHRC Partnership Grants or smaller teaching release for SSHRC Insight Grants (one release every two years, for example).

We note that contracts are attractive to faculty for several reasons (e.g., less onerous application processes, lower levels of applicant competition, greater probability of being funded, avenues for additional salary and consulting fees, quicker turnaround, etc.). However, contracts may limit research to topics or questions mostly of interest to justice clients. By contrast, more critical research agendas may receive less attention.

- We recommend that the School achieve a better balance between contracts and Tri-Council grants.

We are not sure if the School does scheduled reviews of all its faculty. Yearly reviews of untenured faculty, bi-yearly reviews of associate faculty, and five-year reviews of full professors are common practices at most schools/universities.

- We recommend that the School conduct scheduled reviews of its faculty if it isn't already doing so.

Teaching and research faculty argued that teaching assignments and evaluations need to be more sensitive to expected variations in class enrollments caused by various scheduling issues - including the day of the week and time of the day that courses are offered. Faculty generally agreed that courses that are offered on Fridays or early in the morning draw fewer students and that faculty who teach during these times should not be given additional assignments for lower-than-expected enrollments.

Faculty members reported that the process by which courses are assigned to faculty is not transparent. Although faculty are consulted with respect to their teaching preferences, some feel that their preference preferences are overlooked to meet the needs of others.

- We encourage the School to have discussions about transparency of course assignments.

### ***Faculty experiences***

Most faculty spoke favorably about the current university and School administration and the direction of the School. A small minority, less than ten percent, raised concerns about the School's intellectual climate and attempts to create policies and procedures that they see as impinging upon their academic freedom (e.g., policies and procedures on graduate student supervision). These faculty also believe that there has been a shift of focus in hiring in which identity matters more than scholarship. They see an EDI focus as misguided.

We strongly support academic freedom in scholarship, but do not agree that it prevents schools from establishing best practices to ensure that people are treated fairly and equitably. We also support EDI efforts and encourage the School to continue in its efforts to diversify its faculty and include more scholars traditionally underrepresented in the academy. EDI should not be a box simply to be checked but should inform all aspects of the School's operations.

- We recommend that the university offer training in EDI for faculty, and that training be required for faculty on search committees.

Some faculty members expressed that it was unclear to them if there was a university office that provided services to connect the spouses/partners of hires with employment opportunities at the university or broader Vancouver/Burnaby community.

- This service should be advertised widely if it exists so that faculty and staff can discuss it with faculty and staff candidates during recruitment.

### ***Junior colleagues***

The process by which new faculty are assigned a faculty mentor is somewhat opaque. It should be clarified and procedures developed for future hires. Mentorship should be considered in promotion and merit decisions.

There does not appear to be a system in place, or perhaps there is just a misunderstanding about such a system, for sharing course syllabi. Establishing a centralized platform or repository for sharing course syllabi would allow junior colleagues and newly hired faculty and instructors to draw on the expertise and experiences of their colleagues. It also promotes transparency and alignment across courses within the same department or program, as well as some consistency with respect to the content of courses taught by different faculty.

### ***Teaching faculty***

As part of the review process, we had the opportunity to meet with the teaching faculty and hear their unique perspective on the program. They raised multiple concerns with us regarding their workload. These concerns were also expressed and shared by the director of the School.

Teaching faculty at the School of Criminology carry out the same duties as research faculty. They teach classes, supervise undergraduate Honour students, and even supervise graduate students. Remarkably, they are involved in research projects and apply for external funding, including Tri Council grants, and as noted in the self-study report, are some of the most productive teaching faculty at the university. Teaching faculty thus only distinguish themselves from research faculty by name, status, and teaching work-load.

Equity is a central topic in today's university landscape. One notable area where inequity persists is in the absence of a tenure track stream for teaching faculty at SFU. Establishing such a track would help bridge the gap between research and teaching faculty, fostering a more equitable environment.

Granting tenure to teaching faculty is a model embraced by institutions like the University of Alberta and the University of Toronto, and for good reason. Tenure for teaching faculty not only ensures job security but also cultivates an environment where teaching faculty can excel in their roles. With the assurance of long-term employment, teaching faculty can focus wholeheartedly on refining their teaching methods, staying abreast of educational trends, and supporting their students. This stability also fosters institutional continuity, as experienced faculty members contribute invaluable knowledge and expertise to curriculum development and academic

standards. Moreover, tenure safeguards academic freedom, allowing faculty to explore innovative teaching techniques and engage in critical discourse without fear of repercussion. This freedom enriches the academic environment, encourages intellectual diversity, and promotes critical thinking. Offering tenure to teaching faculty also serves as a powerful tool for attracting and retaining top talent, ensuring that institutions remain competitive in the recruitment of educators dedicated to excellence in teaching. Providing job security and acknowledging the importance of the teaching mission enhances faculty morale and job satisfaction, ultimately leading to a more positive and productive academic community. Ultimately, the tenure model for teaching faculty aligns with the fundamental mission of universities to ensure equity, advance and disseminate knowledge, and foster an environment conducive to both faculty and student success.

- We recommend implementing a tenure stream system for teaching faculty, and discussing granting tenure to the existing teaching faculty.

Teaching faculty have reported to us that they are disproportionately burdened with large introductory classes, with some now grappling with upwards of 1,200 students per semester, rendering their workload unmanageable. Several teaching faculty spoke about the excessive demands of their positions. They believe that, collectively, they shoulder an unequal share of the burden of the increase in class sizes. This surge in class sizes is exacerbated by the contemporary trend where students, often perceived as more entitled, pose numerous inquiries and accessibility requests via emails and in person, further augmenting faculty workload. It is imperative that teaching faculty are afforded the chance to conduct small seminars to help rectify the situation (see above). This would address some of their workload concerns and would also be advantageous for undergraduate students, as teaching faculty typically excel in delivering quality instruction.

- We recommend balancing teaching assignments for teaching staff to include both larger introductory lecture-based classes, as well as smaller seminar courses capped at 25 students.

The issue of merit pay for teaching staff presents another complex dilemma. While some teaching faculty have voiced discontent with the current "step system" of evaluation, arguing it favors research faculty and overlooks teaching contributions, others advocate for recognizing the greater contributions of research faculty to the university's reputation and financial standing.

- Developing an alternative evaluation system for teaching staff may address the concerns of teaching staff, ensuring their valuable contributions are acknowledged.

Some teaching faculty seemed unaware or reluctant to request that their teaching be concentrated in two semesters (4 + 4) rather than three (3+3+2). Treating a two-semester sequence as "by exception" rather than as a normative option may be part of the problem. Due to the traditional 3+3+2 format, several teaching faculty reported that they could not take a

vacation or find time to pursue research or engage in advanced teaching-related training or publication.

- We recommend the School implement a process whereby Teaching Staff can easily request a 4 + 4 teaching load and that this option be offered on an equitable basis.

## **Administration**

Our meeting with the administrative staff within the department was very pleasant. Each member expressed contentment and fulfillment within their current workplace. This was particularly remarkable because of the prevailing atmosphere of uncertainty, with talks of potential cuts of administrative positions at SFU.

Despite the looming specter of downsizing, the administrative staff showed a remarkable resilience and positivity. Their enthusiasm for their roles and their commitment to their work shone through. There was an atmosphere of camaraderie and mutual support that was palpable from the moment the meeting started. It was evident that they were not merely colleagues, but a cohesive team bound by a genuine fondness for one another.

One noteworthy aspect of our interaction was the genuine lament expressed by the administrative staff regarding their lack of a centralized space for social interaction. This complaint served as a testament to the deep-rooted camaraderie and respect that permeated their interactions.

- We understand that there is currently a hiring freeze. Once it ends, we encourage the School to make the Coordinator, Research Grants & Projects, a full-time, ongoing position.
- Some faculty were uncertain about the responsibilities of the above-mentioned Coordinator position. They also knew little about the services provided by the Office of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation. Presentations by both in a regularly scheduled faculty meeting could help address this issue.

## **Undergraduate Curriculum**

### ***Course offerings***

The undergraduate course offering at the School are diverse and cover many of the sub-topics encompassing the discipline of Criminology including criminal behaviour, policing, forensic investigation, the criminal law, the criminal courts, and corrections. We are impressed that the program offers three research methods courses for undergraduate students including separate courses on qualitative and quantitative methods. This is above the norm for Canadian

undergraduate Criminology programs and ensures that the SFU students have the training necessary for research-related employment or graduate studies.

According to the 2022-23 course calendar, the School offers 83 different undergraduate courses. However, based on the course evaluations we received, only 56 of these 83 courses (67.5%) were offered in 2022-23. Several popular, high enrolment courses were offered numerous times. In other words, a third of the courses listed were not offered this past year. This finding is consistent with student concerns that it is often challenging to locate and enroll in courses of interest – particularly courses that offer critical or alternative perspectives on criminal justice issues. Indeed, a number of the courses not offered over the past year include those that appear to have a critical orientation including: Critical Approaches to Crime and Deviance (302); Women in Criminal Justice (304); Restorative Justice (Parts One and two); Current Issues in Corrections (346); and Gender, Courts and the Legal Professions (432).

- We recommend that up-to-date calendars only display those courses that will be offered in a given year or provide an indication of when the course will be offered next. This will assist in student planning.
- We recommend that the School permanently remove courses that have not been offered for five years or more and for which there are no plans to offer them. This will ensure that students are not misled into believing that a topic they are interested in will be covered in an upcoming course. An alternative would be to keep the courses on the books (if course approval is onerous at SFU) and to post information on when the course will be offered.
- The School has frequently used directed studies to fill substantive holes in its curriculum. Both teaching and research faculty provide these courses. We recommend that the practice be discouraged in both the MA and BA programs.

We also note that the School's current courses offerings are skewed in the direction of crime, policing, and forensics.

- The School offers 24 courses (28.9% of all course offerings) that focus on criminal behaviour in general or specific types of criminal offending (i.e., terrorism, organized crime, sexual offences, cyber-crime, violence, etc.).
- The School offers 13 courses of policing (7) or forensics (6). This represents 15.7% of all course offerings.
- The School offers 8 courses on the criminal law, the criminal courts, or criminal procedure (9.6% of offerings).
- The School offers only 3 courses on corrections (3.6% of the sample).
- The School offers 3 research methods courses (3.6% of the sample).
- The School offers six courses on special populations: 2 on gender-related issues, 2 on Indigenous issues, and 2 on youth offending/justice. This represents 7.2% of all course offerings.

- The School offers two courses on “restorative justice” (2.4%).
- The School offers only four “critical criminology courses” including Critical Issues in Criminology (302), Social Inequities in the Criminal Justice System (311), Human Rights, Civil Liberties and the Justice System (335); and Criminological Perspectives on Social Problems (312). This constitutes only 4.8% of all course offerings. We do not have access to the syllabi of these courses, so we cannot determine with certainty whether these courses actually contain critical perspectives.
- The other 18 courses offered by the program include special topics and current issues courses, directed readings, and independent research options including the Honours thesis (21.7% of all offerings).

As it stands, almost half of all School courses (44.6%) cover either criminal behaviour, policing, or forensics.

- To provide a broader range of criminological instruction we encourage the School to consider offering courses in the following areas: Race, Crime and Criminal Justice; Immigration, Crime, and Criminal Justice; Criminal Justice, Crime Prevention and Health; White-collar Crime (i.e., corporate and financial crimes); Crime, Criminal Justice, and Health; and The Politics of Crime and Law Creation.

While we have not been able to review the syllabi for individual courses, our conversations with faculty and students suggested that courses in both the undergraduate and graduate program often seem to take a “criminal justice approach”, focusing on practical aspects of, for example, policing or corrections. These courses emphasize the operational procedures and legal frameworks necessary for managing incarcerated individuals or police operations. Conversely, criminology programs typically offer courses on prisons or policing that include critical analyses of prisons or police as institutions, exploring their societal implications, power dynamics, and broader social contexts. While criminal justice courses offer valuable insights into the system's mechanics, criminology courses provide a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding incarceration or policing, examining how historical, cultural, and socioeconomic factors intersect within prison or policing systems, shedding light on issues of inequality, discrimination, and social control. Understanding prisons or police from a criminological/sociological perspective is crucial for students aiming to comprehend the broader implications of punitive measures, foster empathy toward marginalized populations, and critically assess the effectiveness of current criminal justice practices. By integrating both criminal justice and sociology of prisons courses, students gain a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of the criminal justice system, preparing them to navigate its complexities with insight and compassion.

- While policing and corrections are only used as examples, we recommend augmenting existing course offerings with courses that would typically be offered by prison or policing scholars, approaching the subjects from a criminological/sociological perspective.

### ***Course titles***

Framing course titles around behavior rather than individuals fosters a more comprehensive understanding of complex societal issues. Using terms that describe illegal behavior over those that use identity labels applied to people (e.g., "criminals" or "inmate") shifts the focus from stigmatizing individuals to analyzing underlying conditions. This approach encourages students to explore the multifaceted factors contributing to behaviors, such as societal influences, psychological dynamics, and environmental conditions. It also promotes a more nuanced and empathetic perspective, recognizing that behavior is often shaped by a myriad of interconnected variables. Moreover, prioritizing behavior in course titles encourages critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as students are challenged to examine the root causes and potential interventions for various behaviors, rather than simply labeling individuals. In essence, adopting behavior-focused course titles promotes a deeper understanding of human actions and cultivates a more inclusive and constructive educational environment. This approach to language should also be used in classes, lectures, and presentations.

- We recommend that the School replace course titles and descriptions that use labels for people with those that use terms for behavior. For example, CRIM 316 - Sexual Offenders and Sexual Offences could be renamed Sexual Offences and Offending; CRIM 454 - Criminal Profiling (3) could be renamed Profiling.

### ***Class sizes***

Several faculty members bemoaned the conversion of smaller seminar classes into large lecture formats. Offering smaller seminar classes is in line with criminology programs across the country. For example, at the University of Alberta, Criminology students need to complete two small seminars before graduating. Smaller seminar classes are indispensable components of the undergraduate experience in criminology, fostering an environment of deep engagement and personalized learning. In these more intimate settings, students have the opportunity to delve into complex criminological theories, case studies, and empirical research with heightened attention and interaction. Unlike larger lecture halls, where passive listening often dominates, seminars encourage active participation, critical thinking, and lively discourse. Through small group discussions, collaborative projects, and close mentorship from professors, students acquire a comprehensive understanding of criminological concepts and develop crucial analytical and communication skills essential for future academic and professional endeavors. Moreover, seminar classes facilitate meaningful connections among peers, creating a supportive community where diverse perspectives are valued and intellectual curiosity thrives. Ultimately, these smaller settings empower students to deepen their understanding of criminology, cultivate their academic passions, and emerge as informed, analytical thinkers prepared to tackle the complexities of crime and justice in society. Equally importantly, smaller seminars help undergraduate students hone their writing skills by providing detailed feedback from faculty on writing assignments/papers that might be unfeasible in larger classes.

- We recommend that the university ensure that all undergraduates have the possibility of enrolling in smaller seminar classes, capped at 25 students as part of their degree.
- We recommend that seminar classes be assigned equitably to teaching and research faculty.

### ***Honors program***

It is evident that there is a demand for undergraduate honours thesis supervisors, placing considerable pressure on teaching faculty who already feel burdened by their existing workload. While there is a sense of obligation to provide such supervision, the current incentive structure often falls short in acknowledging and rewarding this crucial aspect of academic mentorship. Teaching faculty are pivotal in guiding and nurturing the next generation of students and scholars, but without adequate recognition and incentives, the sustainability of this vital role is at risk. While the concept of earning "brownie points" for supervision exists for other aspects in the program, it seems limited for supervising honours students. This misalignment between effort and reward not only diminishes faculty morale but also undermines the quality of mentorship provided to honor students.

- We recommend that the School reassess the reward system for supervising honour students. The School should consider implementing tangible rewards that acknowledge and appreciate the significant commitment and expertise required for effective mentorship. These rewards could range from teaching releases to reduced administrative duties.

### ***Field practice program***

The self-study report indicates that the field practice program may need to be revamped. Below, we are describing two possible options moving forward.

The experiences with field practice programs (AKA internships or practicums) at other schools (e.g., Rutgers University School of Criminal Justice) are similar to that of SFU's School of Criminology: many students express an interest in the program, a smaller number do the required work to prepare for a placement (e.g., take a required course, complete the necessary paperwork, find a placement) and do this with enough lead time to set up a placement (e.g., complete a background check in time for a placement). Student commitment, rather than a shortage of placements or instructional capacity appears to be the major issue. We suspect that students' part-time employment (and in some cases full-time) makes field practice placements especially challenging.

At Rutgers University, the approach has been to have existing staff do most of the administrative work for the field placement program. In the fall, an undergraduate advisor/counselor vets student applications. Approved students meet with the staff member who administers the placement program to discuss placement options and to outline the steps required for a

placement (i.e., visit agencies, meet potential supervisors, get a background check). This staff member has a repertoire of potential agencies and meets with all supervisors during the fall. Students enroll in a 3-credit hybrid class in the spring semester when they are doing their placement. The class is taught by a faculty member or adjunct instructor and meets several times over the semester. The class has varied from 8-15 students (about 2-3% of criminal justice majors). Placements are 150 hours (there is no additional credit given for the placement). The program could expand to include a fall option if there is evidence of student interest.

At the University of Alberta, a full-time program coordinator (with a PhD in Criminology) interviews students for possible placement in the field-stream program, which remains a competitive process. Only a quarter of criminology students who apply are admitted to the field placement program. Placement students do two field placements – one per semester – and enroll in a field placement course taught by the placement coordinator. Placements are worth 6 credits each. Field placements are arranged by the program coordinator for each individual student. Students in the field placement stream have the opportunity to apply their classroom knowledge in a work environment through two field placements with criminal justice system agencies. The field placement component of the degree requires students to work two days a week for ten weeks with a criminal justice system or related agency. In addition to gaining work experience students are expected to produce a major research paper based on the practicum experience, working closely with a criminology professor, who provides guidance and support during the process. Placement students are equally distributed among all criminology faculty. Typically, students are able to juggle work commitments and field placements as the placement is limited to two days/week. While students are enrolled in their field placements, they also take a class accompanying the placement, taught by the program coordinator. Over 75% of the students taking part in the field placement option subsequently receive their first job offer from their placement, making it an extremely attractive (and therefore, competitive) option for undergraduate students.

Moving forward, SFU seems to have two options:

- If the faculty agree on the value of the field placement option and can imagine having the program structured akin to U of A (two days/week), we recommend hiring a full-time program coordinator who will vet student applicants, set up the student placements, teach the accompanying course, and ensure that faculty members meet with their placement students and provide feedback on the major research papers. The placement coordinator could also be in close contact with the agencies and organizations and garner feedback about student performances. This will ultimately help in matching students to organizations in the future.
- If faculty do not agree on the value of the field placement option and do not want to equally share the responsibility of supervising placements, it is questionable whether the investment in a full-time program coordinator will resolve the existing issues. While the coordinator will likely alleviate some student concerns regarding the coordination of placements, we fear that such investment would create further

workload inequities by having an increased number of student applications, yet only a small number of faculty who supervise students.

### ***Student misconduct***

We appreciate the GPC's efforts to increase awareness of university policies on student misconduct. The University provides avenues for reporting and addressing student misconduct through the Office of Student Support, Rights & Responsibilities (<https://www.sfu.ca/students/studentsupport.html>).

We agree that the School needs to create a standardized process for dealing with student grade appeals. We are familiar with two approaches. One standardizes the process by removing TAs from it (e.g., including them is problematic when an appeal is launched after a TA contract has expired). Students first appeal their grade to their instructors. Students who are dissatisfied with the results of this appeal can make their case to the Undergraduate Program Committee or its associate director; the committee/director has the final say on the appeal.

A second approach establishes a firm, publicly-available conflict resolution policy and creates a formal committee to deal with these issues. Establishing such a committee at the University of Toronto both deterred complaints and provided a venue for disputes to be resolved. The U of T committee consists of two research faculty, one teaching faculty, and a senior doctoral student and deals with a range of conflicts including student-TA, student-faculty, TA-faculty, and student-supervisor disputes. Cases are forwarded to next-level FAS appeal bodies if the dispute cannot be resolved internally.

Independent of which way the School chooses, we believe it is important to educate undergraduate students, teaching assistants, and faculty on these matters and therefore make the following recommendations:

- We recommend that, every fall, the School provide TAs, instructors and faculty, with an introduction to the university misconduct site and how to use it to learn about, respond to, and report improper behavior (e.g., Student Conduct Office/Campus Public Safety). Likewise, TAs should be given an introduction to the University's Academic Integrity process (<https://www.sfu.ca/students/enrolment-services/academic-integrity.html>). This could be part of the School's Graduate Student Teaching Assistant Professional Development Program.
- We recommend that undergraduate students be sent a document (via a link or email) that explicitly describes misconduct and outlines the rules of proper engagement with TAs and instructors. The same document could describe the protocols for conflict resolution and grade appeals.

### ***Student Evaluations***

Student evaluations are generally positive for the courses for which we received data, but the response rates are low. Most instructors received more than 80% A & Bs for the four questions asked. There is also little consistency across classes with lower scores: instructors who score lower on these metrics for some classes score higher on them for others.

- If not yet implemented, we recommend that instructors dedicate class time to having students fill in evaluations, which should increase the response rate.

### **Graduate Program**

Simon Fraser University's School of Criminology graduate program retains the status as the premier program in Criminology in British Columbia. It has strong faculty, both in terms of their productivity and in terms of attracting external contracts and grants, providing graduate student applicants with many opportunities to engage in research. It is within this context that our recommendations for improvement need to be understood.

#### ***Courses***

The graduate program currently offers 24 courses. Six of these courses (25%) are methods courses – consistent with the School's goal of providing high-quality methodological training to its graduate students. There are four courses on types of criminal offending (cyber-crime, terrorism, sexual violence, and criminal networks). There is one course on young offenders, one course on policing, one course on corrections, one course on forensics, one course on restorative justice, and two on justice policy. Finally, the School lists one directed reading course and four selected topics courses which we assume vary from year-to-year and from instructor to instructor. Listed graduate courses are not offered every year. In 2022-23, for example, it seems that only 16 of these 24 courses were offered (66.7%). These data are consistent with concerns, identified in the internal review, that the graduate program has had problems delivering enough graduate seminars to meet the needs of its students. Graduate students should be able to take courses outside of the School, in adjacent disciplines. Taking graduate courses in other departments might be particularly interesting for PhD students who have completed their MA at SFU and have already been exposed to a large number of courses offered by the School.

#### ***MA program***

The MA program requires students to take 4 required courses and 3 elective courses. This is 1 course more than the University of Alberta and the University of Toronto (though this is a one-year program with a research paper option). It is 3 less than Rutgers School of Criminal Justice, but that program does not require a thesis.

- Given the high teaching load of faculty members, the School could think about lowering the requirements from 7 to 6 courses.

The School receives an adequate number of applicants each year, with an average of 43 applicants per year over the past three years. These applicants equally come from within SFU, the rest of Canada, and from international universities.

### ***PhD program***

SFU's School of Criminology requires 7 classes for the PhD program: 3 required and 4 electives (for a student with a Masters of Arts degree). This is on the higher end compared to other Canadian programs, but on the lower end compared to U.S. programs (professional development, credit for working on comprehensives, major paper, etc. excluded). 1) University of Toronto: 1 required, 3 electives; 2) University of Ottawa: 3 required 1 elective; 3) Universite de Montreal: 2 required 1 elective 4) University of Alberta: 5 electives In comparison: 1) University of Maryland Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice: 5 required, 5 electives; 2) University of California Irvine Criminology, Law & Society: 9 required and 4 electives; 3) Rutgers University-Newark School of Criminal Justice: 7 required, 7 electives.

- The School should discuss lowering the course requirements at the PhD level to be more closely aligned with other Canadian schools

In the past three years, between 15 to 19 students applied to the program. Our understanding is that SFU admits between 10 to 12 PhDs/year. We were surprised about the relatively small number of applicants for the doctoral program for a School of this size and the only school in British Columbia offering a PhD program in Criminology.

In comparison, Rutgers School of Criminal Justice (22 faculty) typically gets between 70-75 applications a year for its doctoral program. It typically accepts about 10-15 of these and about 6-8 students accept the offer. The criminology program at the University of Alberta, with a much smaller faculty (currently 6), received between 18 and 27 criminology applicants in the past three years and typically admits between 2 and 3 PhD students/year.

The small number of applicants, coupled with the School's high admission rate, prompts some apprehension regarding the quality of PhD candidates with whom faculty members are able to collaborate.

We believe that the School's broad, all-encompassing "big tent" approach and its failure to highlight fewer key core strengths may have negatively influenced its reputation and contributed to the current situation. Prospective student applicants might lack a clear understanding of the School's unique identity and focus. In contrast, consider the University of Alberta, which has initiatives like the University of Alberta Prison Project and its Re-entry study. As a result, a significant majority of graduate students apply to the University of Alberta with a keen interest in empirical projects related to prisons or re-entry.

- We recommend carefully thinking through the core areas of the School and advertising these areas in recruitment materials.

- We support the School's efforts to increase information about its graduate program, alumni success (e.g., PhD placement and accomplishment data) and other topics but encourage a broader-based campaign of social media posts, brochures, newsletters and other sources to update scholars and researchers who may not be encouraging their students to apply. The focus needs to be national and international, albeit in a few selective geographical areas.
- We recommend having an easily accessible alumni list, displaying student career trajectories and placements in research universities (see recommendation about alumni lists below).

The students we spoke with also suggested revising course 860 to better prepare students for the qualitative and quantitative methods courses that follow it. This task could be assigned to a working group of faculty and students.

#### ***PhD supervision***

Graduate student supervision seems to be concentrated among a small number of faculty. Based on the information provided in the internal review, faculty are currently supervising 72 graduate students (MA and PhD). Nineteen of these students are supervised by just two of the School's 25.5 faculty. In other words, 7.8% of the faculty are responsible for the supervision of 26.4% of all graduate students. Eight other faculty members supervise 33 students. Thus, ten faculty members (39% of all faculty members) account for 72.2% of all SFU graduate supervisions. Furthermore, 10 faculty members are supervising only one student and one faculty members is not supervising any students. We recognize that the extent of supervision is influenced by the extent of shared interests among faculty and graduate students and by career stage (e.g., less for assistant professors and new hires); nonetheless, the imbalance in supervision is noteworthy.

- In light of the unequal supervisory load, the School should review whether the current "brownie system" adequately rewards supervisors for their involvement in graduate student supervision.

The ratio of PhD students to faculty also seems quite low for a large, prestigious school. There are currently only 41 doctoral students in the program with 25.5 faculty: 1.6 doctoral students per faculty member (1.9 when only including research faculty). At the University of Toronto the ratio is more than double: 4.1 doctoral students per faculty member. We hesitate to advocate for an increase in PhD admissions until the School garners a greater pool of PhD applicants.

#### ***Comprehensive Exam***

SFU's School of Criminology requires a Comprehensive Exam, but the title appears to be a misnomer. The students do not receive a question or questions based on a core set of readings. Instead, they write a paper that is more akin to an area, qualifying, or empirical paper.

- Comparable schools use a variety of approaches.

Comprehensive exam(s): 1) University of Ottawa: written and oral comprehensive examination; 2) University of Alberta: Students have the option to write a paper similar to SFU, a one-week long take-home written exam, or an eight hour long written exam; 3) University of Maryland Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice: One qualifying exam on core issues related to theory, the justice system, and research methods; 4) University of California Irvine Criminology, Law & Society: untimed take-home written exam, 2 essays on major theoretical, substantive, and methodological issues in criminology and law & society.

Paper: 1) University of Toronto: Comprehensive exam in the form of a major review paper on a particular topic; 2) Rutgers University-Newark School of Criminal Justice: no comprehensive exam, empirical paper; 3) University of Alberta: as stated above, students have the option to choose a paper similar to the format at SFU.

Students raised concerns about the lack of guidelines and considerable variability in faculty feedback on the comprehensive exam. Standards should be established if they do not already exist. At Rutgers, for example, our Ph.D. Handbook states expectations for faculty and students for all deliverables. The following details this for the empirical paper: 1) "Ordinarily, the empirical paper should be submitted by the end of the second year in the program. It must be submitted within one year of the completion of all coursework." 2) "Ordinarily, grading of the empirical paper will be completed and students notified of their results within approximately *four weeks* of the paper's submission"; 3) "It is generally expected that [if a revision is required] the student will submit the revised empirical paper and revision memo within *three months* [of receiving feedback].

- We recommend that the School rename the Comprehensive Exam to something that better reflects the reality of the work expected.
- We recommend that the School establish clear guidelines and timelines for the submission of work and that these be publicly available.

### ***Thesis Prospectus***

SFU's School of Criminology requires a thesis prospectus presentation/defense to the committee. This requirement is common in comparable institutions (i.e., Rutgers University; University of Ottawa and Irvine). At the University of Alberta, students have a defense with their supervisory committee and two external professors (one has to be outside of the department). At the University of Toronto, defenses are informal. As such, the practice at SFU seems to be within the norm of the discipline.

### ***Graduate supervision/TA relationships***

Several graduate students raised concerns about variation in the guidance provided by graduate supervisors. It is unclear if this variation stems from an uneven distribution of supervisory loads or is due to the individual supervisory style of faculty members. The School of Criminology does not appear to have Supervisory Guidelines that establish deadlines for reviewing chapters,

frequency of supervisory meetings, timelines for scheduling exams, etc. We recommend that the School establish such guidelines, as is common practice in other schools across the country, and that these be contained in a Graduate Program Handbook posted on the School's webpage and updated yearly.

- Regarding these guidelines, we recommend convening a working group between graduate students and faculty members that establishes guidelines regarding:
  - Meeting frequency of doctoral supervisory committees
  - Accessibility of supervisors
  - Turn-around times on the thesis prospectus, dissertation chapters and thesis
  - Turn-around time for marking course work and comprehensive exams
  - "Best Practices" that specifies the responsibilities and duties of faculty supervisors and TAs.
  - Create A School TA webpage that contains information on Best Practices. Some SFU programs have TA webpages (<https://www.sfu.ca/computing/current-students/graduate-students/tssu-employment/ta-guidelines.html>) but there are better examples (<https://music.ucsb.edu/best-practices-and-guidelines-teaching-assistants-and-supervising-faculty>).

## **Student experiences**

During our site visit, we meet with a small group of graduate students who generally felt positive about the program but also identified areas of concern. Based on our meetings with graduate students, we are grouping our recommendations into four main areas: a) guidelines expectations regarding faculty/graduate student relationships, b) creating a more welcoming learning environment, c) enhancing the learning environment, and d) preparing for the job market.

### ***Faculty/graduate student relationships***

- Create a graduate student/supervisor handbook outlining deadlines for supervisors to provide feedback on dissertation chapters and other graduate work (see above). This handbook should lay out clear expectations for graduate students and supervisors. This would also support the School's self-declared goal to swiftly move students to program completion.
- The handbook should include clear guidelines regarding communication and expectations for teaching assistantships.
- Create clear guidelines regarding conflict resolution between students and supervisors/committee members/TA-faculty relationships.

- Graduate students need additional training regarding teaching assistantships. We applaud the current graduate program director and School director for developing a Graduate Student Teaching Assistant Professional Development Program and for scheduling professional development talks. We recommend the School continue this and include workshops on TA instruction, grading, conflict resolution, and academic integrity to better prepare teaching assistants for their teaching assignments. We recommend that attendance at these workshops be mandatory for 1<sup>st</sup> year doctoral students. It may be worthwhile to use a hybrid approach with some talks in-person and some virtual in recognition of concerns raised by the Criminology Graduate Students Caucus.

### ***Creating a welcoming learning environment***

- We appreciate that space is always constrained. We encourage the School to find some space dedicated to graduate students in which they can informally hang out. Graduate students reported having offices all over the School, with little to no opportunity to informally congregate.
- During our site visit, graduate students indicated that they have little insights into how decisions about office space are being made, with some students reporting that they have no office space. We encourage the School to be transparent about how office space for graduate students is allocated.
- We encourage the School to continue to host social get-togethers, such as winter break socials, spring socials, end of term BBQs etc. to promote faculty/student gatherings.

### ***Enhancing the learning environment***

While the School covers many substantive areas of Criminology and Criminal Justice, graduate students do not get much exposure to ways of knowing that are not considered mainstream criminology. In this regard, the School of Criminology is out of step with the developments in the discipline. Over the past 30+ years, mainstream approaches have been supplemented with critical criminology, cultural criminology, feminist criminology, narrative criminology to name only a few innovations – these sub-disciplinary approaches now make up a critical mass at the American Society of Criminology meetings each year.

- We encourage the School to offer graduate classes reflecting different theoretical and epistemological approaches.
- Alternatively, different types of approaches could be included in existing classes, exposing students to mainstream approaches and those that raise critical questions about the criminal justice system. This would allow for a more well-rounded education of graduate students and preparation for the academic job market outside of SFU.

- Graduate students stated that they have few opportunities for learning about mixed methods research. Our review indicated that students receive rigorous methods training. Based on the graduate student feedback, we encourage the School to discuss whether mixed methods research can either be taught as a separate course or included in existing methods courses.
- Graduate students were hoping for graduate courses specifically focusing on policy. We encourage the School to explore this possibility.

The graduate students we spoke with also called for more ways of providing feedback to faculty and administration.

- We encourage the School to explore the possibility of “end of semester/year” surveys or focus groups with current students and exit surveys with graduates to gather feedback on graduate student experiences.

### ***Professionalization***

Understanding where graduate students find jobs after graduation was challenging for us. Some faculty members indicated that most of their graduate students secured tenure-track positions, primarily in the United States. However, others suggested that the School may not be producing enough scholars with many graduates pursuing careers as data or crime analysts within policing or justice-related government departments. Additionally, some faculty members noted that a significant portion of graduate students tend to stay in the area, securing teaching positions at nearby colleges or alternative academic roles in government or policy.

- We recommend keeping an up-to-date alumni placement list, easily accessible for current graduate students. See recommendation on alumni list below.

Graduate students and the Criminology Graduate Students Caucus expressed dissatisfaction with the limited professionalization opportunities offered by the School. They noted a lack of instructional seminars focussing on crucial aspects of academia such as publishing, conference presentation skills, job talk preparation, submitting research ethics applications, and job interview techniques. In comparison, first-year graduate students at similar institutions, like the University of Alberta, the University of Toronto, and Rutgers University are required to attend mandatory, monthly (ungraded) professionalization seminars covering these topics.

- We recommend that the School convenes a working group of faculty members and graduate students to discuss whether the implementation of similar mandatory professionalization seminars could better support the career development of its graduate students.

## **Professional MA**

The School has an opportunity to introduce a Master's degree program in Criminal Justice and/or Criminology tailored for professionals working in the realms of law enforcement, corrections, and related fields. Such an initiative not only promises to bolster the academic portfolio of the institution but also holds the potential to augment its revenue streams.

Drawing inspiration from the successful model at the University of Alberta, the proposed program could be structured part-time, catering to the demanding schedules of working professionals.

In exploring avenues for implementation, the institution might consider two distinct approaches. Firstly, it could opt to develop specialized courses explicitly designed for professionals, tailored to address the unique challenges and dynamics of their respective fields. Alternatively, it could leverage its existing graduate offerings by opening them up to both traditional graduate students and professionals alike. This dual-path strategy not only expands access to education but also fosters a dynamic learning environment where diverse perspectives converge to enrich classroom discussions and seminars.

Offering some graduate courses as flexible online courses will accommodate unpredictable work schedules of criminal justice professionals – though the experience at the University of Alberta has been that the great majority of criminal justice professionals are able to arrange for an educational day/night/week with their organizations to complete the classes in person.

## **Alumni lists for graduate and undergraduate students**

We could not find any information on where alumni of the School find employment. There seems to be little engagement with alumni. We did not meet with anyone from a university alumni affairs office and the School does not seem to have an ongoing relationship with it.

- We recommend that the university's office of alumni affairs meet with School administration on a regular basis and build a plan for sustained alumni engagement.

Keeping an up-to-date alumni placement lists for both the undergraduate and graduate program is indispensable for several reasons, all of which significantly benefit both current students and prospective applicants.

An active alumni network serves as a valuable resource for current students seeking guidance, mentorship, and networking opportunities. Alumni who have successfully navigated the program and established themselves in their respective fields can offer insights, advice, and professional connections that can prove invaluable in the students' academic and career pursuits.

Access to alumni can also facilitate opportunities for internships, job placements, and career advancement. By maintaining a comprehensive alumni database, current students can tap into a

diverse array of industries and professions represented by former graduates, expanding their career horizons and enhancing their employability.

Having visibility into the career trajectories of past graduates provides future applicants invaluable insight into the program's effectiveness in preparing students for success – this may be particularly important for potential graduate student applicants who would like to seek a tenure track appointment. By showcasing the accomplishments and career paths of alumni, dynamic alumni lists serve as compelling evidence of the program's ability to foster talent, cultivate expertise, and place students on the academic job market. Alumni lists should be easily accessible for prospective students.

- We recommend that the university establish a mechanism for collecting post-graduate employment/education data and provide these to the School. Maintaining up-to-date alumni lists are both a logistical necessity and a strategic asset that enhances the overall quality and reputation of the School.

# External Review Action Plan

## Section A

To be completed by the Responsible Unit Person, e.g., Chair or Director

Unit Under Review: Criminology

Date of Review Site Visit: April 2-4 2024

Responsible Unit Person: Martin Bouchard

Faculty Dean: Laurel Weldon

### Notes

- 1. It is not expected that every recommendation made by the External Review Committee be covered by this Action Plan. The major thrusts of the report should be identified—some consolidation of the recommendations may be possible while other recommendations of lesser importance may be excluded.*
- 2. Attach the required plan to assess the success of the Educational Goals as a separate document (Senate 2013).*
- 3. Should any additional response be warranted, it should be attached as a separate document.*

## 1. PROGRAMMING

### 1.1 Action(s) (description of what is going to be done)

#### **Undergraduate:**

1.1A. Provide up-to-date course calendars and display courses to be offered further in advance. Remove courses that are not taught from the list of courses offered.

1.1B. The reviewers identified issues with class sizes. They recommend making sure we maintain seminar offerings for all, and that seminar and lecture options be offered to both teaching and research faculty. We can expand on seminar offerings and make additional efforts to make sure that teaching and research faculty get their preferences.

1.1C. Streamline the process for students to appeal grades and make the student conduct policy clearer.

**Graduate:**

1.1D. Better advertise our PhD program nationally and internationally to attract more diverse applications.

1.1E. Revamp CRIM 860 to better prepare students for the grad program. Rename the Comprehensive Exams to reflect what is being done in practice and provide clear guidelines.

1.1F. Address the unequal distribution of faculty supervision (majority of supervision concentrated in a minority of faculty) with a better system of rewards for supervision and the ability to use said rewards.

1.1G. Establish guidelines for graduate supervision, such as best practices for timing for providing feedback to students on drafts.

1.1H. The reviewers recommend creating a Professional MA program. We fully support this idea and believe there is a demand/market for it.

**1.2 | Resource Implications (if any)**

1.1A/C/E/G. None.

1.1B. With the closing of CODE, CRIM adjusted by transforming dozens of seminars into lectures. This helped alleviate the loss of seats, but the reviewers believe it has gone too far. Reverting back to more seminar offerings would require flexibility from FASS to reduce the number of students who take CRIM courses.

1.1D. Will require additional funds paying for ads in selected conference programs and University and research newsletters where we don't currently advertise.

1.1F. We need FASS support to allow faculty to use their frequent teaching points for course releases. Our policies require 15 points for course release. But we don't have the funds on our School budget to provide these releases to faculty.

1.1H. The creation of this program would require FASS support for a new staff member to join our team as we do not have the resources to launch this program at the moment.

**1.3 | Expected Completion Date(s):**

1.1A/C. Spring 2025.

1.1E/F. Fall 2026

1.1B/D/G/H. 3-year review Spring 2027.

**2. RESEARCH****2.1 | Action(s) (description of what is going to be done)**

2.1A. The external reviewers recommended that we diversify our research faculty by hiring faculty in different areas (e.g. critical criminology, race and crime, qualitative methods) and faculty who identify as racialized minorities.

2.1B. The reviewers recommend the creation of a mechanism to reward faculty obtaining tri-council funding, in the form of course releases, as an incentive to increase applications from CRIM faculty.

**2.2 | Resource Implications (if any)**

2.1A. In May 2024 the School requested a faculty research position with a preference for research in Crime and Inequality, as well as a position on Indigenous Peoples and Criminal Justice Issues. These requests were recently approved. The first position was approved under the British Columbia Office of the Human Rights Commissioner Special Program approval for the preferential hiring of Black Scholars.

2.1B. The School does not have the resources to provide course releases to faculty based on tri-council funding. We need commitment from the Dean to be able to address this recommendation. The possibility of obtaining course releases are especially important given the impossibility of maintaining, long-term, an active research agenda with large grants while teaching 4 courses/year.

<b>2.3</b>	<b>Expected Completion Date(s)</b>
2.1A. Summer 2025	
2.1B. 3-year review Spring 2027.	
<b>3. ADMINISTRATION</b>	
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Action(s)</b> (description of what is going to be done)
<p>The external reviewers noted a lack of faculty available for leadership positions. They noted support for the current Director but, given that he would not be able to stay away from his research program for a second mandate, they recommended making the position of Director more attractive, notably by increasing the incentives for faculty taking on this demanding role in a large unit like Criminology. Increasing the course releases from the current 50% reduced teaching load to 100%.</p> <p>The reviewers recommended an external search for a new director, and improving the incentives for taking the position. Our view is that matching incentives with the workload of the Director of a large unit like Criminology would attract more internal candidates for the position.</p>	
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b> (if any)
<p>The resources to release the Director from teaching are not available in the School. We need to work with the Dean to find ways to make the position more attractive with better incentives, especially given the size of the School.</p>	
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Expected Completion Date(s)</b>
Spring 2026	
<b>4. WORKING ENVIRONMENT</b>	
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Action(s)</b> (description of what is going to be done)
<p>4.1A. The external reviewers recommend regular review of all faculty, including junior faculty. The reviewers may not have been clear about the existence of the biennial review process. That said, we want to implement an annual check-in with the Director for all junior faculty.</p> <p>4.1B. The reviewers recommend more transparency in course assignments and course scheduling for faculty. We propose to continue and expand on our practice to provide faculty time and space for feedback on course preferences and assignments. We are also moving the scheduling task to our manager who can submit scheduling preferences to SFU earlier in the process, allowing time for adjustments as needed.</p> <p>4.1C. Reviewers recommend creating spaces for graduate students and faculty to interact, if only to have lunch together.</p>	
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b> (if any)

4.1A/B. None.

4.1C. We are happy to work with FASS and facilities to see if some of the current office space can be used.

<b>4.3</b>	<b>Expected Completion Date(s)</b>
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4.1A/B. Fall 2025.

4.1C. 3-year review Spring 2027.

<b>5. OTHER:</b> _____	
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<b>5.1</b>	<b>Action(s) (description of what is going to be done)</b>
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5.1A. The external reviewers recommended that Criminology be awarded a Canada Research Chair. Criminology never had a CRC.

5.1B. The external reviewers recommend the establish of a syllabi repository. Since then, we have implemented it.

5.1C. The reviewers recommend the establishment of a tenure-track stream for teaching faculty, with tenure. They also recommend having a separate process for biennial reviews where teaching faculty would be evaluated separately from research faculty. We wholeheartedly agree and support this recommendation. Much of this is a collective agreement issue that goes beyond what we can at the unit level. But we will explore what we can do internally

<b>5.2</b>	<b>Resource Implications (if any)</b>
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5.1A. FASS would have to agree to assign one of their CRCs to Criminology. We have been in discussions with the Dean on this issue.

5.1B/C. None.

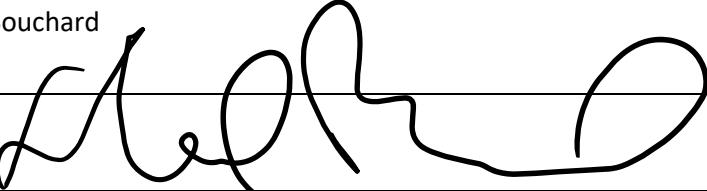
<b>5.3</b>	<b>Expected Completion Date(s)</b>
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5.1A. Fall 2025.

5.1B. Fall 2024.

5.1C. 3-year review Spring 2027.

The above action plan has been considered by the unit under review and has been discussed and agreed to by the Faculty Dean.

<b>Unit Leader (signed)</b>	<b>Date</b>
Name Martin Bouchard  Title Director	September 9, 2024

## Section B

### DEAN'S COMMENTS AND ENDORSEMENT OF THE ACTION PLAN

I appreciate the effort that went into this external review. The School worked hard on the self-study and external reviewers provided many thoughtful suggestions. The School has agreed to take up most of these recommendations and has already adopted many of them. The Dean's Office is supportive of the School's response, and we have already allocated the required resources to enable its execution, or we plan to do so.

In general, the Dean is supportive of the direction of the School's changes to the graduate and undergraduate program. In terms of faculty renewal, FASS has allocated a number of CFL in CRIM over the past two years, adding five lines so far, with the intention of alleviating some of the pressure on faculty-student ratios. (Note that reducing student-faculty ratios can be achieved either by reducing numbers of students OR by increasing CFL). Our initiative to increase CRIM CFL should make it possible to offer seminars in at least some courses.

The Dean is open to discussing strategies to make available more course or teaching releases or to allocate those releases more strategically. The current budget situation does not permit us to allocate more funds for course buyouts. Further, the current direction of the Provost's Office is to increase the share of students taught by CFL. As such, we cannot commit to more frequent buyouts for faculty if those buyouts are not externally funded and not accompanied by other measures to ensure that our students can get the courses they need without creating a reliance on temporary instruction. A discussion of the possibility of allocating teaching releases to those who procure a SSHRC grant would follow the same parameters.

The Dean's Office supports the idea of creating a Professional MA program. We agree there is a demand and market for such a program. The Dean's Office is willing to provide staff support for a revenue generating program. Note, however, that such support would not be provided in advance of the actual need for the staff person, and not before the program is approved and launched.

In addition to supporting the recommendation to increase the number of CFL in the school, the Dean supports the School's commitment to seek greater diversity in faculty appointments. Indeed, we supported the School's application to the Provost's special initiative, and have approved a faculty research position with a preference for research in Crime and Inequality, approved under the British Columbia Office of the Human Rights Commissioner Special Program approval for the preferential hiring of Black Scholars.

We also supported the School's request for a research position substantively focussed on Indigenous Peoples and Criminal Justice Issues. In addition, FASS has allocated a CRC to the School of Criminology, as recommended by the external reviewers. Criminology has never had a CRC in the past, in spite of being one of the largest units, one that attracts students from across the country, and one characterized by a robust complement of research active faculty and accomplished lecturers.

The Dean's Office appreciates the need to make the position of Director of the School more attractive especially given the size of the School. The Dean's Office is also happy to discuss the possibility of finding new facilities, or reallocating existing facilities, to find a place where faculty and students can gather together, as recommended by the external reviewers. A caveat is that this year's budget includes no funds for renovations, and the budgetary capacity to do this in the future is uncertain. Finally, we agree with the School that matters pertaining to Teaching Faculty are laid out in the collective agreement and implementing the external review recommendations in this regard would require changes to that document to implement meaningful change.

Faculty Dean (signature)	Date
	Oct 25 2024

## MEMORANDUM

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**ATTENTION:** School of Criminology; SCUP; Senate

**FROM:** Paul Kingsbury, Associate Vice-President, Learning and Teaching pro tem  
and Alice Campbell, Senior Consultant, Program Assessment, Learning Experiences Assessment  
and Planning

**RE:** School of Criminology Assessment Plan for Educational Goals associated with 2023/24 External  
Review

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**DATE:** October 22, 2024

The School of Criminology has recently submitted its Educational Goals (EG) assessment report and plan to SCUTL following its recent External Review. We have reviewed your initial draft assessment plan in conjunction with the external review report and draft action plan. We offer some thoughts that we hope will help you with refining this plan.

We commend the School for its thoughtful and rigorous approach to assessing an Educational Goal on Critical Thinking that is of particular importance to its faculty. Focusing in on one particular goal and examining it in depth, as you propose to do, will likely ensure that the data and the overall Educational Goals process are useful to the School. We also commend that you are examining this Educational Goal in both your undergraduate and your graduate programs, and that the work will be led by the programs' respective curriculum committees. This will help to ensure that the evolving assessment will happen in tandem with curricular discussions and changes.

We note that your plan combines both direct and indirect assessment methods. This provides both concrete evidence of student learning and students' valuable insights into how the program supported their learning, and potential improvements.

For the Honours, Masters, and Doctoral programs, you intend to sample 25% of theses. Theses are excellent indicators of students' attainment of Educational Goals, as they represent cumulative learning. With respect to the sample size, we wonder how many theses are completed in these programs each year, and correspondingly whether the sample size (25%) is appropriate. Depending on the number that are complete each year, you may want to consider having a larger proportion of theses in your sample.

You propose that a sub-committee will review the theses. This is an excellent strategy. One resource that may benefit you in this work is the rubric for assessing Critical Thinking at the program level that was developed by the AAC&U. As it was developed for undergraduate programs, it would likely need to be modified for the graduate programs. As part of your assessment data, you may also want to leverage supervisors', committees' and external examiners' comments. This existing secondary data can also provide rich evidence of student learning.

For the majors' program, you propose inviting faculty who teach courses that involve critical thinking, and that use critical thinking in their grading rubrics, to participate in the assessment. This approach offers two benefits. It will allow you to focus on those courses where critical thinking is explicitly assessed, and to look for patterns across courses. It provides faculty with an opportunity to share and reflect on what critical thinking is, how they teach it, and how they assess it. We hope that your invitation will be taken up widely. When faculty have the opportunity to engage in this important work together, their programs and students benefit.

Staff in the AVPLT portfolio are well equipped to support you in this work, and want to help ensure it is meaningful and manageable for the School. The LEAP (Learning Experiences Assessment and Planning) team supports program and Educational Goals assessment. Their supports include assessment design, quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, and support with data interpretation. The Centre for Educational Excellence can help with any resulting program revisions and course design.

# Educational Goals Assessment Plan – School of Criminology

Unit/Program: School of Criminology

Contact name: Director Martin Bouchard; Associate Director, Undergraduate Programs, Dr. Danielle Murdoch; Associate Director, Graduate Program, Dr. Evan McCuish

Date: September 12 2024

**1) Who were the members of your Educational Goals Assessment team? Outline who has worked on the assessment.**

Context: The School of Criminology's 2024-25 Graduate Program Committee (GPC) and Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) were established in early September. Our new Associate Director, Graduate Programs, Dr. Evan McCuish, also started on Sept 01. Evan and I (in the role of Associate Director, Undergraduate Programs) have not had an opportunity to engage in meaningful discussion about the final direction we would like to take with our Educational Goals Assessment Plan with our respective committees. We both agree on two items: first, to complete an assessment providing valuable insight about our programs for the School; and second, to consult with Alice Campbell at LEAP regarding any changes we make to our initial draft plan presented here.

To date: Danielle Murdoch with brief initial consultation with members of the 2024-25 UCC (Amy Conroy, Gail Anderson, Garth Davies, Martin Andresen, Rylan Simpson, Tamara O'Doherty, and Andrea Krusi).

Moving forward: Danielle Murdoch and other members of the UCC will work closely with the new Director of the GPC, Dr. Evan McCuish, and members of the GPC for 2024-25.

**2) Are your program's Educational Goals current, or do any of them need to be revised?**

Drs Gail Anderson and Sheri Fabian developed the School's Educational Goals and Learning Outcomes in collaboration with earlier UCCs and faculty responsible for teaching the School's diverse course offerings.

Our Educational Goals continue to reflect the discipline, course offerings, and our School's Big Tent vision, mission, and values.

### 3) Is your program's curriculum map up to date?

Dr. Evan McCuish will guide members of the GPC in their completion of the curriculum map for our remaining graduate courses. It appears the COVID-19 pandemic stalled work on this process.

### 4) Assessment Plan

In response to the last External Review, the School identified seven broad topic areas capturing our Educational Goals. These topic areas are Theory, Methods, Legal, Critical Thinking, Communication, Interdisciplinary Nature of Criminology, and Equity in the Discipline. The Educational Goals located within each topic area are provided in the Appendix.

The School has not previously assessed its Educational Goals. As such, we have decided to follow the advice from the [Provost and VP Academic](#) to “start small by focusing on a particular educational goal that is especially important to [our] program.” Critical Thinking is an especially important Educational Goal in the School of Criminology. It comes up in our School’s discussions about grading guidelines and rubrics, course content, Academic Freedom in academia, and the type of research job applicants conduct, among other discussions.

Between now and our mid-cycle report, we have chosen to focus on our undergraduate Major and Honours, MA, and PhD programs to assess Critical Thinking. We will assess this Educational Goal at the Honours, MA, and PhD level by reviewing completed theses. These theses are the final product of semesters of coursework and data collection and/or analyses and provide direct measures of student learning at the end of their programs. We recognize the value of collecting indirect evidence of Critical Thinking as well. We intend to do so by conducting interviews with students who graduated from our Criminology Honours, MA, and PhD Programs in 2023 and 2024, and who are on pace to graduate in 2025.

We will assess Critical Thinking in our undergraduate Majors program by inviting faculty who taught upper-division classes in 2023 and 2024 and who assigned assessments requiring students to demonstrate their “Critical Thinking” skills *and* included a section in their rubric to assess students’ demonstration of critical thinking to participate in the assessment process.

#### **Educational Goal 1: Critical Thinking**

Students who complete a Criminology program are expected to be able to demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills by identifying underlying assumptions, complexities, diversities, and the essence of an argument, through analysis and synthesis of information.

Description of Assessment Methods:	What would indicate that students had met the EG?	Is this direct or indirect?	When do you plan to collect the data?
<p>We will randomly sample 25% of all Honours, MA, and PhD theses submitted in 2023 and 2024:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Program-generated work: Honours Theses</li> <li>2. Program-generated work: Masters Theses</li> <li>3. Program-generated work: Doctoral Theses</li> </ol>	<p>A sub-committee of faculty comprised of members from the School's GPC and UCC will be responsible for reviewing the sample of selected theses across each program to determine whether there is evidence students have:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reflected on their own assumptions, biases, and beliefs and considered alternatives when thinking about and discussing criminological issues.</li> <li>2. Engaged in analytic thinking to evaluate evidence, sources, knowledge production, and to identify relationships between and across sources, data, or other content.</li> <li>3. Presented creative solutions to complex social problems concerning crime and social disorder.</li> </ol>	Direct	Data collection and analysis: January to September 2025.
We will invite students who graduated from our Criminology Honours, MA, and PhD Programs in 2023 and 2024, and who are on pace to graduate in 2025, to participate in a short interview about their learning experience in their respective program.	<p>We will develop a semi-structured interview schedule to ask students to identify:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The degree to which they feel they attained Critical Thinking skills via participation in their respective program.</li> <li>2. Gaps and unhelpful redundancies across multiple courses in their respective program.</li> <li>3. Knowledge/skills they attained in the program they use and/or value, as well as knowledge/skills that would have benefitted them.</li> </ol>	Indirect	Data collection and analysis: January to September 2025.
<p>We will assess Critical Thinking in our Majors program by inviting faculty who taught upper-division classes in 2023 and 2024 and who assigned assessments requiring students to demonstrate their "Critical Thinking" skills and included a section in their rubric to assess students' demonstration of critical thinking to participate in the assessment.</p> <p>Faculty willingness to participate in the process and share their materials will dictate whether we are able to review all course submissions or whether we decide to select a sub-sample of courses (e.g., our four required upper-division</p>	<p>A sub-committee of faculty comprised of members from the GPC and UCC will be responsible for reviewing faculty submissions to assess how our Majors students are performing with respect to critical thinking.</p> <p>We realize Faculty may define and measure critical thinking differently and aligned with their course content and assessment. Further, we recognize Faculty likely use different rubric categories (e.g., Exemplary, Accomplished, Developing, and Not Demonstrated; Very Good, Good, Satisfactory, or Needs Improvement). We will carefully consider how best to capture the diversity in assessments and rubrics and determine the frequency with which students are achieving the higher metrics (it is very likely we will connect with LEAP for assistance here).</p>	Direct	Data collection and analysis: January to September 2025.

courses, should these faculty meet the inclusion criteria).			
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**5) How do you plan on sharing your findings within your unit?**

The School's GPC and UCC will co-author a report to be emailed to all School Faculty and Staff. The Associate Directors, Graduate and Undergraduate, will also share the findings orally during their report at a faculty meeting or faculty retreat. Faculty will have the opportunity to comment and ask questions of members of the GPC and UCC.

**6) Assessment Timeline**

Next Mid-cycle Review: January 2027 to January 2028

Next External Review: Early 2031

## Appendix: **Educational Goals in Criminology – Overview**

The School of Criminology aims to meet the learning needs of diverse students in several programs. As part of a general university education, students who take optional Criminology courses are exposed to a wide range of Criminological research. Graduate students specializing in Criminology in both the M.A and PhD programs, and undergraduate students completing a B.A. with a Criminology Major, Joint Major, Minor, Extended Minor, or Honours program, have more prescribed course patterns.

The Educational Goals are similar to and based on previously published goals of undergraduate Criminology and related programs across Canada. The areas are listed below with a description for each of the expectations for student exposure and learning, recognizing the expectation for depth and breadth of knowledge in each category will depend on the degree program or credential towards which the student is working.

The areas listed below reflect the work undertaken by the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee for our last external review in 2015/16, and under the leadership of the then-Associate Director Undergraduate Programs, Dr. Gail Anderson, in 2020/21.

### **Theory**

- The discipline of Criminology, its history, its evolution, and its position in relation to other social science disciplines.
- What is a theory, who are key different theorists and their respective theories, and how are criminological theories developed and applied.
- Historical and contemporary theoretical approaches to the study of crime, the merits and limitations of each.

### **Methods**

- The various social science research strategies (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods) that are employed in the discipline of Criminology.
- The importance of research ethics in the field of Criminology.
- How to conduct a literature search and review.
- Critiques of criminological research and limitations of research from a methodological point of view
- Critiques of research in Criminology from an anti-colonial point of view.

### **Legal**

- The structure of the Canadian legal system, with a particular emphasis on public forms of law, such as constitutional and criminal law, the court system, and fundamental principles of justice relevant to the common law system.

- How law, jurisprudence, and their related procedures and evidentiary requirements apply in hypothetical scenarios.
- The social, economical, and political inequities arising from law, the differential application of law, and the use of law for redress to social inequity.
- Legal style and formatting, including common forms of legal writing and referencing.

### **Critical Thinking**

- Analytic thinking to evaluate evidence, sources, knowledge production, and to identify relationships between and across sources, data, or other content.
- Healthy skepticism of unsubstantiated claims about criminological issues.
- Creative solutions to complex social problems concerning crime and social disorder.
- Differences between opinion and scientific knowledge, and what is meant by evidence-based policy and practice.
- Reflections on own assumptions, biases, and beliefs and consideration of alternatives when thinking about and discussing criminological issues.

### **Communication**

- Oral communication skills through presentations, discussions, debates, oral examinations, and other similar activities.
- Written communication skills through written examinations, term papers, research reports, online discussions, and other similar written exercises and assessments.
- Communication of information, arguments and analyses, respectfully and effectively, to a range of audiences.
- Academic integrity in all written and oral communications.
- The importance of professional ethics in the field of criminology and criminal justice.

### **Interdisciplinary Nature of Criminology**

- The diverse and interdisciplinary nature of Criminology.
- The applied nature of the discipline and how to apply theory, methods, law, and other criminological concepts in different contexts, hypothetical scenarios, etc.
- The criminal justice system and its relationship to other systems, as well as how components of the criminal justice system work together and against one another.
- Teamwork through group and partner work to acquire skills needed to work in the criminal justice system and through cross-disciplinary interactions.

## Equity in the Discipline

- Key concepts related to colonialism and systemic racism and how they function to target Indigenous, Black, and other People of Colour for legal intervention and result in simultaneous over-incarceration, under-protection, misrepresentation of levels of criminal behaviour, and maintenance of inequity in the CJS.
- Differential impacts on groups and individuals, particularly as they relate to diverse forms of discrimination such as ethnicity, race, gender, religion, sexuality, culture, disability, age, sex, and socio-economic status, among other grounds of discrimination.
- Critiques of laws, their creation, enforcement, and related scholarship, including theory and knowledge production, and the ways they are all rooted in specific historical socio-political contexts—such as colonialism—that have created and maintain inequities across many intersecting oppressions.
- Examination of both oversurveillance (or over-sampling) and under-protection (or exclusionary sampling) of some groups in society affect perceptions about criminality, bias the distribution of state protection, and increase harms and risks of participation in research for people, stakeholders, and communities.

## Educational Goals by Program/Credential

For brevity, we have only included the Educational Goals for the programs we will focus on in the current Educational Goals Assessment Plan: our PhD, MA, Major, and Honours Programs.

Note the expectations for each degree type are distinguished by the verbs used. For example, while students pursuing an undergraduate degree with a Minor in Criminology would be expected to be able to *identify* and *describe* theoretical approaches to the study of crime, those pursuing a Major in Criminology would also be expected to be able to *critique*, *apply*, and *synthesize* the merits of these theoretical approaches. The following caveats apply to these educational goals:

- We do not expect each educational goal to apply to every course we offer in Criminology.
- We accept that while the aim is to have every student achieve each goal this expectation may not be realistic.

Table 5.2: Program Level Educational Goals

EDUCATIONAL GOALS	COURSES / MAPPED BY
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**CRIMINOLOGY Ph.D.**

Students who complete a Ph.D. in Criminology:

(1) are expected to be able to critique, interpret, synthesize, and evaluate the merits and shortcomings of historical and contemporary theoretical approaches to the study of crime.	
(2) are expected to be able to assess, interpret, apply, and evaluate the various social science research strategies including quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and research ethics.	
(3) are expected to be able to demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills by identifying underlying assumptions, complexities, diversities, and the essence of an argument through analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information.	
(4) are expected to have the ability to articulate in both written and oral forms, information, arguments and analyses respectfully and effectively.	
(5) are expected to be able to design and conduct an extensive research project that addresses (a) criminological question(s), is an original and significant contribution to the body of criminological literature, and is presented as both a written thesis and orally in a public forum.	

**CRIMINOLOGY M.A.**

Students who complete an M.A. in Criminology:

(1) are expected to be able to critique, interpret, and synthesize the merits and shortcomings of historical and contemporary theoretical approaches to the study of crime.

(2) are expected to be able to describe, apply, and synthesize the various social science research strategies including quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and research ethics.

(3) are expected to be able to demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills by identifying underlying assumptions, complexities, diversities, and the essence of an argument through analysis and synthesis of information.

(4) are expected to have the ability to articulate in both written and oral forms, information, arguments and analyses respectfully and effectively.

(5) are expected to be able to design and conduct an extensive research project that addresses (a) criminological question(s), is an original contribution to the body of criminological literature, and is presented as both a written thesis and orally in a public forum.

**CRIMINOLOGY MAJORS**

Students who complete a Criminology Major:

(1) are expected to be able to describe, critique, apply, and synthesize the merits of historical and contemporary theoretical approaches to the study of crime.

(2) are expected to be able to identify, describe, assess, and apply the various social science research strategies including quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and research ethics.

(3) are expected to be able to describe and critique the Canadian legal system, including police, courts, and corrections, and applications of criminal law, procedure, and evidence.	
(4) are expected to be able to demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills by identifying underlying assumptions, complexities, and diversities and the essence of an argument through analysis and synthesis of information.	
(5) are expected to have the ability to articulate in both written and oral forms, information, arguments and analyses respectfully and effectively.	
(6) are expected to be able to comprehend the diverse, applied, and interdisciplinary nature of criminology.	
(7) are expected to demonstrate critical thinking about the CJS (the institutions, laws, and their enforcement), related knowledge production, theory development and application, and the ways these can all contribute to and perpetuate inequalities.	

## **CRIMINOLOGY HONOURS**

Students who complete an Honours degree in Criminology:

(1) are expected to be able to describe, critique, apply, and synthesize the merits of historical and contemporary theoretical approaches to the study of crime.	
(2) are expected to be able to identify, describe, assess, and apply the various social science research strategies including quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and research ethics.	
(3) are expected to be able to describe and critique the Canadian legal system, including police, courts, and corrections, and applications of criminal law, procedure, and evidence.	

(4) are expected to be able to demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills by identifying underlying assumptions, complexities, and diversities, and the essence of an argument through analysis and synthesis of information.	
(5) are expected to have the ability to articulate in both written and oral forms, information, arguments and analyses respectfully and effectively.	
(6) are expected to be able to comprehend the diverse and interdisciplinary nature of criminology.	
(7) will be exposed to advanced theory and methods.	
(8) will conduct an extensive research project that is presented as both a written thesis and orally in a public forum.	