

Criminal Justice Studies (CJS) Major FAQ:

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1. When will the CJS major be approved?

The CJS major is approved. We expect to graduate our first students with a CJS degree in spring 2009.

2. Where is CRIM141 (Introduction to Criminal Justice)? I took that course as part of the minor, will it count in the major?

CRIM141: Introduction to Criminal Justice was part of the minor criminal justice program but has been replaced by the four introductory course system to provide students with more thorough knowledge of the criminal justice field.

Students who have completed CRIM141 with a C or better can substitute it in place of SOC225 (Criminology), or in cases where both have been completed, substitute in place of any one other pre-CJS introductory course.

3. I'm a senior and was hoping to change/add a CJS major, but I don't meet the CJS admission requirements. Can I still add the CJS major?

Students who have completed at least 90 credit hours as of the start of fall 2008 and who have a GPA of at least 2.0 will not be required to complete the UCC pre-admission requirements nor the grade/GPA requirements. However, the four introductory courses are still required for the completion of the CJS degree.

Students with 90+ credit hours will meet with a sociology department advisor and can have their major changed to "criminal justice studies" without first being designated "pre-CJS."

Students with a GPA below 2.0 are not allowed to change their major until their GPA improves.

4. I'm a junior and was hoping to change/add a CJS major, but I don't meet the CJS admission requirements. Can I still add the CJS major?

Students who have completed between 70 and 90 credit hours as of the start of fall 2008 may or may not have part of the UCC admission requirements waived. This will be done on a case by case basis upon meeting with a sociology department advisor.

Students will be allowed to change their major to either "Pre-CJS" or "CJS" depending on the following guidelines: 1) a GPA of 2.5 or higher; 2) at least two of the pre-CJS introductory courses have been completed with a grade of C or higher (preferably three courses have been completed, which may include CRIM141), and 3) at least 15 hours of CJS course-work has been completed with grades of C or higher in each course.

Students assigned to Pre-CJS majors will be required to complete the pre-CJS admission requirements before applying the CJS major.

Students assigned as CJS majors will be required to complete all CJS major courses plus the four pre-CJS introductory courses, only the specific UCC requirements will be waived.

Students with a GPA below 2.0 are not allowed to change their major until their GPA improves.

5. I would like to transfer to USI to complete my degree in CJS but I don't meet the CJS admission requirements.

The sociology department is currently working on agreements with Ivy Tech and Vincennes University. However, it may take up to a year before this process is fully automated. Most courses across criminal justice curricula are pretty standard and can be placed within the USI CJS curriculum. Your advisor will help guide you through this process.

6. Should I change my current major to CJS or just add CJS and be a double major?

Rather than changing your major, we do recommend adding the CJS major (becoming a double major). The career market place is highly competitive, and having two degrees as opposed to one does make you more marketable and provides more flexibility in career choice upon graduation.

However, in what subject a student chooses to major is a personal decision based on many factors (finances, family commitments, career choice, etc.) and is your decision.

7. I'm currently a Criminal Justice Minor, how can I switch to the CJS major?

Your first step is to meet with a sociology department advisor. If you meet the Pre-CJS admission requirements, you can become a CJS major immediately once it is approved. If you do not meet all of the requirements, some of them may be waived depending on the number of credit hours you have earned and the courses you have completed (see above questions).

However, regardless of your student status or courses completed, you can change your major to "Pre-CJS" just by seeing the chair of the department. Your major will change once you have completed the pre-admission requirements.

8. I took SOC235: Juvenile Delinquency and now it is SOC335—an upper division course. How will that count in the new major?

SOC235 will count as a LOWER division elective in the new major.

9. I took CRIM200: Corrections, is that the same as CRIM234?

In short, yes.

10. I took CRIM370: Criminological Theory, is that the same as CRIM371?

In short, yes.

11. Why are there stricter admission standards for the CJS major than for sociology or political science?

Sociology and Political Science are broad-based, traditional liberal arts degrees which prepare students for a wide-variety of occupations and career choices. The admission standards for sociology and political science are therefore standard with USI's minimum GPA policy. Students must have a 2.0 GPA in order to be admitted into these majors.

Criminal Justice Studies is a combination program, part traditional liberal arts (mainly from sociology and political science) and part pre-professional program. As a pre-professional program, students are being prepared to enter specific occupations in public safety (e.g., policing, security, corrections, probation, etc.). Therefore, it is not only critical that students take specific courses to help prepare them for these positions, but that they *understand the course material well enough* (as indicated by their grade) to perform well in these occupations.

In the abstract, the requirements simply state that students perform average (a grade of C) in specific courses such as ethics and public speaking, and slightly above average (a grade of C+) in CJS introductory courses.

Additionally, the department will be seeking certification for the CJS program in the near future from the Academy of Criminal Justice Studies which will require more rigorous standards than the minimum currently set by USI.

12. How does the new CJS major affect my current minor in criminal justice?

In short, it does not affect the requirements for the current minor in criminal justice. For those students who have a declared minor in criminal justice before spring 2009, the minor requirements do not change.

The CJS minor requirements will change after spring 2009. Students declaring the minor after this date will fall under these new requirements.

13. As a sociology major, I have taken several courses in the new CJS major, will these courses count in both majors? Is there a benefit to double-majoring in sociology and CJS?

In short, yes. Courses that are required in both majors will count in both, along with several elective courses. Therefore, there is both an educational and practical advantage to majoring in both sociology and CJS. The credit hours required to complete both of these majors together (as opposed to two separate & distinct majors) is much less. Therefore students can earn two degrees with fewer required credit hours. This is a result of similarity of the two programs in both theory and practice.

The department will have a "double major check sheet" available for you soon.