What Can I Do With A Major In…

Criminal Justice?

Compiled by the staff at the SUNY Oneonta Career Development Center

Introduction

A degree in Criminal Justice allows graduates to employ their Social and Behavioral Science skills to address pressing topics in our society, including but not limited to; terrorism, drug abuse, computer crime, legal issues, and prison overcrowding. Graduates are often employed by the government as law enforcements officials or in related positions. Others work for private businesses or are self employed.

The Department of Sociology offers the Criminal Justice Major for those who wish to pursue employment and/or further study in criminal justice occupations. The program at SUCO has a “criminological” focus, which is to say that we can concentrate on the causes and consequences of crime, community relations, and analysis of criminal justice policy. There are advantages to a “liberal arts” approach, namely that there is considerable focus on writing, research, critical thinking, and analysis. Because the program is situated in a sociology department, a student who is somewhat unsure has the flexibility to switch to a track of the sociology major should career plans change, such as a student who decides to go to Law School (Liberal Arts Track) or become a Prison Counselor (Human Services Track). There are disadvantages as well, specifically that occupational training (such as Firearm use and Self Defense courses) is not offered through the department.

Functional Skill Set for Criminal Justice Majors

- Aptitude for accuracy and detail
- Ability to speak second language.
- Ability to think logically and critically.
- Proficiency in oral and written communication.
- Proficiency with computers.
- Develop good listening skills.
- Ability to work well with a wide range of diverse populations.
- Ability to lead, supervise and direct others.
Start a Strategic Plan

- Obtain experience through volunteer, practicum, or internship opportunities.
- Join Professional Organization.
- Conduct Informational interviews with professionals.
- Learn a second Language.
- Take on Leadership roles in clubs or organizations.

Related Career Titles for Criminal Justice Majors:

- Airport Security
- Arson Specialist
- ATF Agent
- Bailiff
- Bank Protection Specialist
- Body Guard
- Border Agent
- Child Care Worker
- Child Support Investigator
- Civil Aviation Sec. Specialist
- Claims Representative
- Coast Guard
- Compliance Officer
- Coroner
- Court Clerk
- Credit Investigator
- Crime Scene Investigator
- Criminologist
- CIA Agent
- Detective
- District Attorney
- Forensics/ Forensic Psychologist
- Game Warden
- Inmate Records Coordinator
- Intake Investigator
- Intelligence Criminologist
- Judicial Attorney
- Laboratory Technician
- Lawyer
- Legal Researcher
- Licensing Clerk
- Litigation Paralegal
- Lobbyist
- Loss Prevention Specialist
- Narcotics Detective
- Paralegal
- Park Ranger
- Parole/Probation Officer
- Police Officer/ State Trooper
- Police Records Manager
- Prison Guard
- Private Investigator
- Recreational Counselor
- Researcher
- Secret Service Agent
- Security Officer
- Teacher
- Undercover Agent
- Victim Services Specialist
- Warden
- Youth Services Coordinator
Some Organizations that Typically Employ Criminal Justice Majors:

- State and Federal Correction Facilities
- County Jails
- Precinct Station Houses
- Prison Camps
- Correctional Facilities (Youth, Voluntary, Medium and High-Security)
- Halfway Houses and Pre-Release Programs
- Re-integration Programs
- Alternative Schools
- Juvenile Detention Centers
- Juvenile Group Homes
- Women’s and Family Shelters
- Domestic Violence Agencies
- Immigration and Naturalization Services
- Non Profit Organizations
- Local, State and Federal Courts
- Law Firms
- Corporate and Legal Departments
- Public Interest Law Organizations
- Security Companies

- State Government Organizations:
  - State Troopers, Penitentiaries
  - Crime Laboratories
  - Colleges and Universities
  - Insurance Companies
  - Banks
  - Software Companies
  - Hotels and Resorts
  - Health Care Facilities
  - Nuclear Power Plants
  - Online Companies
  - Private Probation
  - City/County Government Organization: Police Dept., Corrections, County Sheriff Dept., and Liquor Control Commission

Professional Organizations and Associations for Criminal Justice Majors:

US Department of Justice
http://www.usdoj.gov/

Federal Bureau of Investigation
http://www.fbi.gov/
National Federation of Paralegal Associations
http://www.paralegals.org/

National Associations of Legal Assistants
http://www.nala.org/

Central Intelligence Agency
http://www.cia.gov

American Bar Association
http://www.abanet.org

National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives
http://www.noblenatl.org/

National Drug Enforcement Officers Association
http://www.ndeoa.org

National Sheriff’s Association
http://www.sheriffs.org

National Security Agency
http://www.nsa.gov

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# CRIMINAL JUSTICE

## What can I do with this major?

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<tr>
<th>AREAS</th>
<th>EMPLOYERS</th>
<th>STRATEGIES</th>
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<tr>
<td>SOCIAL SERVICES</td>
<td>State and federal correction facilities</td>
<td>Seek courses or training in topics such as victimology, social problems, diversity issues, or grieving.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corrections</td>
<td>County jails</td>
<td>Supplement curriculum with courses in psychology, sociology, or social work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td>Precinct station houses</td>
<td>Gain experience working with a juvenile population in any capacity (i.e., sports teams, summer camp counselor, parks and recreation programs, and community/religious youth groups).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Juvenile Justice</td>
<td>Prison camps</td>
<td>Gain related experience in employment interviewing, social casework, substance abuse, and rehabilitation.</td>
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<td>Casework</td>
<td>Youth correction facilities</td>
<td>Learn to work well with people of diverse backgrounds.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Medium-security correction facilities</td>
<td>Consider learning a second language.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Probations &amp; Parole</td>
<td>Voluntary correction facilities</td>
<td>Obtain a law degree from a law school accredited by the American Bar Association (ABA).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Victim Advocacy</td>
<td>Halfway houses and pre-release programs</td>
<td>Learn to use software packages such as CD-ROM research databases.</td>
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<td>Reintegration programs</td>
<td>Develop strong research, computer, and writing skills.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Alternative schools</td>
<td>Maintain a high grade point average to gain admittance to law school.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Juvenile detention centers</td>
<td>Participate in mock trial groups.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Juvenile group homes</td>
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<tr>
<td>JUDICIARY AND LAW</td>
<td>Women’s and family shelters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Court Reporting</td>
<td>Domestic violence agencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Assistance</td>
<td>Immigration and naturalization services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Research</td>
<td>Other nonprofit organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
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Local, state, and federal courts

Law firms

Corporate legal departments

Public interest law organizations

Consider a double major or minor in the social sciences such as psychology, anthropology, sociology, or political science.

Attend a postsecondary vocational or technical college that offers court reporting or paralegal certification programs.

Obtain a law degree from a law school accredited by the American Bar Association (ABA).

Learn to use software packages such as CD-ROM research databases.

Develop strong research, computer, and writing skills.

Maintain a high grade point average to gain admittance to law school.

Participate in mock trial groups.
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<tr>
<td><strong>LAW ENFORCEMENT</strong></td>
<td>City/County Government Organizations including:</td>
<td>Obtain related training or certifications such as CPR, first aid, or EMT.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patrolling</td>
<td>Police departments</td>
<td>Complete a formal police academy program upon graduation.</td>
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<td>Investigating</td>
<td>Correction facilities</td>
<td>Maintain a healthy and physically fit lifestyle.</td>
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<td>Forensics</td>
<td>County sheriff departments</td>
<td>Volunteer to work in a police department or campus safety department.</td>
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<td>Probation</td>
<td>Liquor Control Commission</td>
<td>Complete an internship in a crime laboratory to gain experience in the forensic application of science.</td>
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<td>Security</td>
<td>State Government Organizations including:</td>
<td>Obtain a double major in criminal justice and a hard science (biology, chemistry, or biochemistry) if interested in a career in forensics.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>State troopers</td>
<td>Consider earning a master's degree in Forensic Science or related discipline.</td>
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<td>Crime labs</td>
<td>Become familiar with the government application process.</td>
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<td>Penitentiaries</td>
<td>Learn a second language.</td>
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<td>Federal Government Organizations including:</td>
<td>U.S. Customs and Border Protection</td>
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<td>Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA)</td>
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<td>Internal Revenue Service (IRS)</td>
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<td>National Parks Service</td>
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<td>Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Crime laboratories</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Colleges and universities</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BUSINESS</strong></td>
<td>Insurance companies</td>
<td>Minor in business or computer science.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Security</td>
<td>Banks</td>
<td>Seek practicum/internship experiences that include training in the hardware and software of security systems.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consulting</td>
<td>Private security companies</td>
<td>Maintain good physical fitness.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investigating</td>
<td>Software companies</td>
<td>Develop exceptional written and oral communication skills.</td>
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<td>Systems Integration</td>
<td>Hotels and resorts</td>
<td>Seek leadership opportunities and develop strong interpersonal skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global Intelligence</td>
<td>Health care facilities</td>
<td>Attend firearm safety courses. Obtain first aid and CPR certification.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Investigation</td>
<td>Transportation services</td>
<td>Gain military experience and training.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet Security</td>
<td>Nuclear power plants</td>
<td>Earn a graduate degree in business or law for upper-level positions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loss and Prevention</td>
<td>Manufacturers</td>
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<td>Online companies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Other large corporations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
STRATEGIES

AREAS

EDUCATION

Teaching
Colleges and universities
Adult education providers
Public and private high schools

EMPLOYERS

STRAATEGIES

Earn a graduate degree for post-secondary teaching opportunities.
Get a teaching certificate for elementary or secondary education. Gain a dual certification for increased opportunities.
Serve as a tutor to other students.
Develop strong written and oral communication skills.
Assist a professor with research.
Take additional coursework related to research and statistics.

GENERAL INFORMATION

• Many criminal justice professions require candidates to possess strong oral and written communication skills and good computer skills. The ability to speak a second language is also desirable.
• Develop good listening skills and the ability to work well with a wide range of diverse populations.
• Most entry-level positions for criminal justice majors reside with law enforcement and social service organizations.
• Be willing to start in an entry-level job in order to prepare for more advanced career opportunities.
• Obtain experience through volunteer, practicum, or internship opportunities.
• Supplement program of study with courses in business, psychology, anthropology, or sociology. Course work related to the hard sciences (biology, chemistry, or biochemistry) is preferred for career opportunities in forensics.
• Depending upon one's career goals, earn a master's degree in disciplines such as criminal justice, forensic science, social work, counseling, or business to obtain positions involving therapy, higher levels of administration, forensics, or research. Earn the doctorate degree for university teaching positions.
• Conduct informational interviews with professionals in fields of interest to learn more about opportunities.