



Program Name	Date Completed
Criminology	May 12, 2026
Report Completed By	Report Contributors
Chris Messer	
Brief Statement of Program Mission and Goals	
<p>The criminology program provides students with a strong foundation in sociological and criminological theory and research to foster a comprehensive and contextual understanding of crime and justice in society and the capacity to think critically and creatively about what does and does not work in current crime control efforts. Courses focus on the social construction or definitions of crime, the causes of crime and delinquency, and on the origin, nature, and consequences of societal reactions to criminal offending, including practices in both public and private justice agencies. Students pursuing careers in traditional criminal justice fields, such as policing, probation & parole, corrections, reintegration, legal advocacy, victim assistance, and community activism will develop a strong foundation to work and affect social change in these fields. The criminology curriculum emphasizes the importance of research-based knowledge, theoretically informed practice, critical analysis, and ethical decision-making. Students are strongly encouraged to engage in experiential learning through courses, including our field experience class with placements in criminal justice, juvenile justice, victim services, and community-based agencies.</p>	

Table I Closing the Loop

Report on at least one data-informed change to your curriculum during AY 2025-2026 that was implemented to improve student learning, in response to prior assessment cycles or other data.

A. Describe issues or SLOs addressed in the AY 2025-2026 cycle. Paste SLOs verbatim below.
SLO 4 – An ability to engage in critical thinking about various aspects of social life and organization, including crime and criminal justice institutions.
B. In which prior academic year and semester was this SLO last assessed to generate data that informed the change(s) this year?
Spring 2025



C. What were the recommendations for change in the previous cycle?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Further explain how assignments demonstrate critical thinking ability. 2. Explain what TAs do, how they are selected, and how they support the understanding and application of research methodology. 3. Explain what it means that students meet the benchmark and how it represents success in this SLO. 4. Students scored well, so recommended to focus on a different SLO
D. How were the recommendations for change acted upon?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We used a different course, CRIM 455 Hate Crimes, to assess critical thinking. The assignment used for assessment required the utilization of critical thinking as students are asked to read and critique an article and to connect the article to prior materials in the class. The assignment was used to evaluate a student’s ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information to form an overall perspective on the article’s key arguments. 2. Due to resource limitations, TAs were not utilized. 3. We will further explain what meets the benchmark, something we aimed to achieve in this year’s assessment 4. We will require a senior seminar (capstone) course in 2027. This class will be used, in part, to conduct a consistent, holistic assessment approach, which will also make it easier to incorporate prior assessment feedback.
E. How did the change(s) implemented impact student learning? If the change was not effective, what are the next steps or new recommendations?
<p>The change was viewed as an effective strategy to ascertain student ability to engage in critical thinking as the assignments were tailored to draw out one’s ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information to form an overall perspective.</p>

Enter Comments on Table I Closing the Loop Below



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Table II Annual assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in AY 2025-26

1. Include information to share assessment processes, results, and recommendations for improved student learning. Copy this table for each assessed outcome.

A. Program SLO(s) assessed in this cycle. Copy the SLOs verbatim from the assessment plan.
SLO 4 An ability to engage in critical thinking about various aspects of social life and organization, including crime and criminal justice institutions.
B. Semester and year this SLO was previously reported on before this cycle.
Spring 2025
C. Describe the assessment method for this SLO(s).
An in-class assignment for CRIM 455 Hate Crimes. The class was held in Fall 2025. 2 reviewers (Michael Briscoe and Chris Messer) conducted independent assessments. In cases where the reviewers arrived at different scores for a particular area, the average score was used. For example, if Michael gave a score of "1" regarding the rubric's requirement of "clearly and comprehensively states the issue to be considered" and Chris gave the same paper a score of 2, then an overall score of 1.5 was provided.
D. Described student group(s) assessed. Provide the number of students or number of artifacts assessed.
11 senior Criminology majors, or 11 in-class assignments
E. Explain the expected proficiency level and proportion of students who should reach this level.
80% of students will demonstrate proficiency earning a minimum score of 1 on all four scored elements and an average score of 2 or higher (rubric below)
F. Provide Assessment results and number of students who met defined proficiency level.



11 papers were assessed using the attached rubric. 9 of the 11 students (82%) scored at least a 1 (achieves minimum standards for meeting the benchmark) on every element. The average score on all 4 elements was 2.43, or right between meeting the benchmark without difficulty and exceeding the benchmark.

G. Describe what the results or trends indicate about student performance.

The assignment required students to select one article from a set of five; to include a statement about the purpose of the article and to present themes/topics that the student will explore in the paper; to provide an in-depth and critical analysis of the article’s main themes and points and connect to previous assigned readings/discussions/experiences; and to identify the study’s most significant contribution to knowledge about hate crimes and how future research can best build upon this knowledge.

The results revealed that most students either met the benchmark or exceeded the benchmark, meaning that they provided a clear and concise introduction, connected the article they chose to prior learning, offered a critical analysis of the article they chose, and identified the article’s main contribution and how it could be used to build upon future research. In several cases, students exceeded the benchmark by going “above and beyond” in, for example, connecting the article to prior learning.

H. Describe program level changes/improvements planned for next AY (2026-2027?) which are informed by this assessment.

Assessment will be regularly conducted in a forthcoming required senior seminar course. This will allow us to routinely incorporate prior feedback and to more regularly measure additional SLOs simultaneously.

Enter Comments on Table II AY 2026 Assessment Below

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Critical Thinking SLO

- Objective Description: To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
- AAUC VALUE Rubric Considerations (Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric): explanation of issues, evidence, influence of context and assumptions, student’s position, conclusions, and related outcomes.

Paper # _____ Reviewer’s initials _____

Criteria for evaluation	0	1	2	3
The student clearly and comprehensively states the issue to be considered.				
The student effectively evaluates and synthesizes evidence from multiple sources.				
The student clearly and effectively draws conclusions that are well-supported by the available evidence.				
The student demonstrates an ability to evaluate the causes and consequences of historical change and continuity.				

- 0 - Student fails to meet the benchmark.
- 1 - Student achieves minimum standards for meeting the benchmark.
- 2 - Student meets the benchmark without difficulty.
- 3 - Student meets the benchmark, exceeding expectations.