I. MISSION STATEMENT

The Justice Studies Program is an interdisciplinary program that provides a comprehensive examination of justice, crime, and the law. Faculty members teach and conduct research on a variety of topics reflecting their diverse social science backgrounds. Students majoring in the Justice Studies Program work toward a Bachelor of Science in Justice Studies degree which fosters a broad understanding of the nature of justice, crime, and the law as well as the social, political, legal, philosophic, and historical context in which questions of justice are addressed, both in the United States and around the world. Students are expected to develop not only knowledge, but also a commitment to public service, ethical consciousness, and leadership abilities. Through the course work in the Justice Studies Program, students are equipped to become proficient writers, critical and independent thinkers, and effective communicators. Graduates of the Justice Studies Program are prepared for professions within the criminal justice system, graduate school, and law school. The Justice Studies Program recognizes that the issues of crime and justice are complex, controversial topics that are open to a number of different interpretations. As such, we are committed to an open intellectual environment that encourages teaching, scholarship, and discussion from a diversity of theoretical perspectives and research methodologies. The curriculum of the Justice Studies Program reflects these values by offering a broad foundation of courses drawing on criminal justice, criminology, political science, sociology, public administration, and the law. The curriculum integrates these approaches to provide students with an understanding of the challenges of achieving justice in a complex society.

Based on the description above, the Justice Studies Program’s mission clearly supports both the college’s and university’s missions. The college’s mission is to prepare “students to achieve academic excellence, develop their analytical skills, enhance their creativity, and embrace their responsibilities as citizens of their communities, their nations, and the world.” In addition, the university’s mission statement states: “Central to the University’s mission is the faculty’s dedication to excellence in teaching and the development of a fertile learning environment exemplified by a free exchange of ideas, high academic expectations, and individual responsibility for academic achievement.” Furthermore, it states, “the university’s hallmark is a culture of engagement that bridges theory with practice, extends the learning environment beyond the classroom, and promotes student growth and life success.”

II. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Undergraduate students completing the BSJS degree in Justice Studies will be able to demonstrate the following abilities:

1) Evaluate the merits of competing theoretical perspectives used to explain the nature of crime and demonstrate an ability to apply criminological theories to specific types of crime;
2) Demonstrate an ability to apply ethical principles to criminal justice issues, policies, and practices and evaluate their implications;
3) Explain the criminal justice process, the role of discretion among criminal justice actors, and evaluate best practices;
4) Compare and contrast the United States criminal justice system with that of other nations with an understanding of historical and cultural contexts;
5) Evaluate the historical, political, and social contexts and empirical support for a particular criminal justice policy area;
6) Demonstrate an understanding of the research process by both conducting original research and analyzing existing data.

III. MEASURES
A) Types of measures and the relationship between measure and outcomes

The Justice Studies program uses direct measures from courses within its program to assess student learning outcomes (see chart below). These courses were identified as the ideal courses from which to collect artifacts based on: 1) the information covered in the class and the assignments; and 2) the papers assigned. The program assessment committee is not constrained by this list of courses, however, in its mission to assess the appropriate student learning outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses from which to Collect Artifacts:</th>
<th>LO1</th>
<th>LO2</th>
<th>LO3</th>
<th>LO4</th>
<th>LO5</th>
<th>LO6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRJU 4032 Criminal Behavior</td>
<td></td>
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<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRJU 2131 Justice and Ethics</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CRJU 4632 Senior Seminar</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRJU 4531 Comparative World CJ systems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRJU 3631 CJ Policy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRJU 4231 Research Methods</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Justice Studies Program assesses half (1/2) of its student learning outcomes during each assessment cycle. The Justice Studies Program assessed student learning outcomes LO1, LO2, and LO4 in the 2011-2012 assessment. The assessment committee therefore assessed LO3, LO5, and LO6 in this current 2012-2013 assessment. As the data collection and integrity section below will describe, artifacts from CRJU 4632 Senior Seminar were used as direct measures to assess LO3. Artifacts from CRJU 3631 CJ Policy, as well as evidence from CRJU 3331 Corrections, were examined to assess LO5. Finally, artifacts from CRJU 4231 Research Methods were collected to assess LO6.

The Justice Studies Program uses a rubric (Appendix A) to assess whether the student learning outcomes are being met. The rubric is a four-point scale consisting of: (1) unacceptable; (2) marginal; (3) competent; and (4) exceptional. For each of the six learning outcomes, the rubric provides specific detail on what is meant by unacceptable, marginal, competent, and exceptional.

The Justice Studies program also surveys students enrolled in CRJU 4632 Senior Seminar and CRJU 4792 Internships in order to collect indirect evidence on the student learning outcomes. The survey is attached as Appendix B. On the survey, students are asked whether they agree or disagree with a variety of statements (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree). Statement five on the survey provides indirect evidence for LO3: “The Justice Studies Program improved
my understanding of criminal justice institutions, procedures, and processes.” Statement eight provides indirect evidence for LO5: “The Justice Studies Program enabled me to evaluate the effectiveness of criminal justice policies.” Statement three provides indirect evidence for LO6: “The Justice Studies Program taught me to conduct basic social science research, evaluate the evidence, and synthesize the results.”

B) Data collection and Integrity

As stated in the measures section, the program assessment committee assessed LO3, LO5, and LO6 for the 2012-2013 assessment. Direct and indirect measures were collected to assess each of these three student learning outcomes. In this section, we explain how the artifacts were collected and analyzed for the Spring 2013 semester (AY 2012-2013 assessment). The program assessment committee reviewed all artifacts together at the same time, discussed each piece, and scored the artifact according to the rubric as a committee.

Direct Evidence

1) LO3: Explain the criminal justice process, the role of discretion among criminal justice actors, and evaluate best practices.
   a. At the end of the Spring 2013 semester, artifacts were collected from CRJU 4632 Senior Seminar. Students were asked to write weekly reflection papers utilizing materials from the weekly readings and discussions to link to topics covered at the prison. The instructor of record sent 25% of the students’ (n = 4) weekly reflection papers that had been submitted electronically to the assessment committee. A total of twenty-four (24) reflection papers were submitted by these four students. The assessment committee assessed the reflection papers in their totality for each student.
   b. CRJU 4632 also wrote as a class a comprehensive report entitled, “Understanding and Reducing Crime Inside and Out through Restoration and Reintegration.” As the report states on p. 1, “This report represents the information that students have learned along with their own values. In order to address the issue of crime, a multilevel effort is required to focus on changing public perceptions, preventing crime among the youth, strengthening communities, restoring victims, reducing violence in prisons, and reintegrating offenders into the community.” All three members of the committee read the report and examined it for indirect evidence of students meeting this student learning outcome.

2) LO5: Evaluate the historical, political, and social contexts and empirical support for a particular criminal justice policy area.
   a. At the end of the Spring 2013 semester, artifacts were collected from CRJU 3631 Crime and Justice in Public Policy and CRJU 3331 Corrections. CRJU 3631 directly covers material aimed at helping students meet this student learning outcome. CRJU 3631 is an elective, however, and not all students take this course. Since policy is covered in other courses as well, including required courses, the program assessment committee examined whether a required course would be suitable as well. The program committee was aware that CRJU 3331 Corrections was covering correctional policy and
that students would be writing a longer paper covering a corrections policy that seemed suitable to assess.

b. The artifacts collected from CRJU 3631 CJ Policy were 3-5 page essays in which students were asked to choose an existing criminal justice policy or program and discuss the three key elements of an impact model: (1) the intervention; (2) causes of the problem; and (3) changes in the program (including whether the program seemed to work). 25% of the artifacts were randomly chosen by the instructor and provided to the assessment committee. A total of ten (10) essays were reviewed by three members of the assessment committee.

c. The artifacts collected from CRJU 3331 corrections were 10 page papers in which the students were asked to choose a correctional policy or program and defend its utility. 25% of the artifacts were randomly chosen by the instructor and provided to the assessment committee. A total of eight (8) papers were reviewed by the two committee members. The third committee member did not review the papers for this assessment since she was the instructor of record for the course.

3) **LO6: Demonstrate an understanding of the research process by both conducting original research and analyzing existing data.**

a. At the end of the Spring 2013 semester, artifacts were collected from all three (3) sections of CRJU 4231 Research Methods. In the two in-person sections, the assessment committee reviewed research projects in which students conducted full analyses. In one section, students conducted a research project individually. In the other section, the students conducted the research project in groups of five. In the on-line section, the students did not complete a full research project but instead wrote research proposals. In the section that had students write individual research projects, 25% of the projects were submitted to the assessment committee (for a total of five). Only two of the three committee members reviewed these projects since the third member was the instructor of record. All three committee members reviewed the rest of the artifacts. In the section that had groups do research projects, one (1) of the three (3) research projects (33%) was submitted for committee approval. In the online section, 50% of the research proposals were sent to the assessment committee for review (n = 8). In total, fourteen (14) artifacts were assessed for LO6.

**Indirect Evidence**

Graduating seniors were asked to complete a senior exit survey to measure their perceptions of whether they met the student learning outcomes. They were also asked for their assessment of the Justice Studies program, the Criminal Justice and Criminology Department, and advising/mentoring. The survey also included two open-ended questions to assess perceptions of the positive aspects of the program, as well as areas that might need improvement.

A total of 30 completed surveys were received from students enrolled in Spring 2013 CRJU 4632 Senior Seminar course and Spring and Summer 2013 CRJU 4792 Internship courses.

**IV. TARGETS**
Prior to the 2011-2012 Assessment Cycle, specific percentages regarding how many students were in-progress, satisfactory, and proficient for each learning outcome were not tabulated and reported. Instead, aggregate general findings were reported. For the 2011-2012 Assessment Cycle, percentages were tabulated for students’ work that was considered in-progress, satisfactory, and proficient for LO1, LO2, and LO4. These findings can be used as targets for next year’s assessment (AY 2013-2014) even though the rubric changed from three categories to four categories.

Since we are assessing LO3, LO5, and LO6 for this assessment, and benchmark data is not available on these learning outcomes from two assessments ago, we cannot base our targets off of previous findings. Therefore, the Justice Studies Program’s primary target for this assessment cycle is to gather baseline data to better understand how our students are doing in achieving the learning goals of LO3, LO5, and LO6.

It is our goal, however, that 100% of the students will be considered at least “competent” on the three learning outcomes and 75% will be rated as “excellent.”

V. FINDINGS
A) Presentation of results

As explained above, artifacts from Justice Studies courses were collected and scored using the Justice Studies Program’s rubric to assess the three Student Learning Outcomes being assessed this cycle. Below are the findings:

1) LO3: Explain the criminal justice process, the role of discretion among criminal justice actors, and evaluate best practices.
   a. Of the four (4) students’ compilation of weekly reflection papers, the committee scored three students as a four (exceptional) and one as a three (competent).
   b. Regarding the comprehensive report written by the class, the committee agreed that the report showed evidence that the students were able to understand the criminal justice system and evaluate how some criminal justice practices have led to injustice, while other policies have legitimate crime control effects.
   c. The mean response for question five on the senior exit exam, “The Justice Studies Program improved my understanding of criminal justice institutions, procedures, and processes,” was 4.73 on a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being strongly agree). 30 students answered the survey question, and there was no missing data. In other words, all 30 students answered this question.

2) LO5: Evaluate the historical, political, and social contexts and empirical support for a particular criminal justice policy area.
   a. Artifacts from CRJU 3331: Of the eight papers scored, zero (0%) received a “1” or “2” (Unacceptable or Marginal); six (75%) received a score of “3” Competent; and two (25%) received a score of “4” Exceptional. Thus, all artifacts sampled were deemed at least competent and no students were unacceptable. Less than 30% scored as exceptional, however.
Justice Studies Program Assessment
2012-2013 Assessment Cycle

b. Artifacts from CRJU 3631: Of the ten papers scored, three (30%) were considered “Unacceptable,” three (30%) were considered “Marginal,” and four (40%) were considered “Competent.”

c. Regarding LO5: Taken together, the findings from CRJU 3331 and CRJU 3631 indicate that approximately 17% (3) of the papers assessed were “Unacceptable,” 17% (3) were considered “Marginal,” 56% (10) were considered “Competent,” and 11% (2) were considered “Exceptional.”

d. The mean score for question 8 on the senior exit exam, “The Justice Studies Program enabled me to evaluate the effectiveness of criminal justice policies,” was 4.7 on a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being strongly agree).

3) LO6: Demonstrate an understanding of the research process by both conducting original research and analyzing existing data.

a. Artifacts from CRJU 4231: A total of 14 papers were assessed. Of these, four (28.6%) were considered “Unacceptable” by the reviewers, four (28.6%) were given a score of 2 (Marginal), and six papers were given a score of 4 (Exceptional) (42.9%). No papers were scored as a “3” indicating “Competent.”

b. The mean for question 3 on the senior exit exam, “The Justice Studies Program taught me to conduct basic social science research, evaluate the evidence, and synthesize the results,” was 4.26 on a scale of 1-5 (with five being strongly agree).

Although the rest of the results of the senior exit survey do not directly relate to the three student learning outcomes assessed in this report, we present all the results from the survey as supplement information to inform the department how our students evaluate our program and department. Thus, the department can discuss the results of the survey and make modifications to the program based off survey results that are not directly connected to learning outcomes.

When asked questions about the quality of the Justice Studies program, students were overwhelmingly positive about each area of the program. Mean scores indicate that students agree or strongly agree that the program has helped them understand key criminal justice issues, concepts, and policies. Further students agreed that the courses offered by the program are relevant to their career goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Justice Studies Program:</th>
<th>High Score</th>
<th>Low Score</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Helped me to recognize and understand important criminal justice concepts, issues, and events.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Enabled me to evaluate competing theoretical perspectives used to explain the nature of crime.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Taught me to conduct basic social science research, evaluate the evidence, and synthesize the results.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Equipped me to be able to apply ethical principles to the criminal justice system.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When asked about the Criminal Justice and Criminology Department, mean scores reveal that most students believe the department provides opportunities for club involvement. However, results from questions pertaining to graduate programs/employment opportunities and opportunities for research involvement were slightly lower, indicating that some students felt neutral about these areas. Lastly, most students strongly agreed that faculty in the department are positive and supportive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Criminal Justice and Criminology Department:</th>
<th>High Score</th>
<th>Low Score</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. Provided enough opportunities to get involved with criminal justice related clubs and associations.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Helped me evaluate possible graduate programs and/or employment opportunities.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Offered me opportunities to conduct my own research.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Is comprised of faculty with positive and supportive attitude toward students.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With regard to advising and mentoring, most students agreed or strongly agreed that justice studies advisors were helpful, provided advice about their future, and faculty were willing to act as mentors. Lastly, when asked to rate the overall quality of the program, the majority of students strongly agreed that the justice studies program is of excellent quality.
Advising and Mentoring:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High Score</th>
<th>Low Score</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14. My justice studies advisor was helpful and available when needed.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. My justice studies advisor provided advice on using my degree in my future career.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. The justice studies faculty were willing to act as mentors.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall Rating:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High Score</th>
<th>Low Score</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. The quality of the justice studies program is excellent</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked what they believed were the most positive and/or helpful aspects of the program, students stated the following:

- “The professors. Every professor I have had has cared about me and helped me to do well.”
- “Positives were the program brought new and fresh classes to offer variety.”
- “The professors are all positive/helpful and different emails about career fairs, guest speakers, and jobs available in the areas!”
- “The internship that is required. Helps you to see how different agencies actually work.”
- “The justice studies program offered classes that covered various aspects of the criminal justice system.”

When asked what areas of the justice studies program need improvement, many students did not have suggestions for improvement. However, some students stated the following:

- “I wish they offered more CRJU classes. Some I wanted to take weren't offered here.”
- “More hands on classes such as Criminal Investigations.”
- “They need to have more classes in the same area. Hopefully you will get more teachers that have specializations and can teach different classes in the field.”
- “The justice studies program should try to bring in officers of different agencies to explain their profession and the importance of their job and agency.”
- “More outside learning.”
B) Interpretation of results

Since we do not have previous benchmarks with which to compare this year’s findings, as last year’s assessment examined the other three learning outcomes, we are not able to make any conclusions regarding changes in the quality of the Justice Studies Program or the ability of our students to better obtain the student learning outcomes. We therefore simply interpreted the findings in a cross-sectional manner in order to understand where we currently are and to create benchmarks for the following cycle.

1) LO3: Explain the criminal justice process, the role of discretion among criminal justice actors, and evaluate best practices.

Regarding Learning Outcome 3, the findings indicated the program met its proposed targets. All students met the learning outcome at least competently and 75% were deemed exceptional. In addition, the committee viewed the comprehensive report written by the class as extra evidence that the students at least competently met this student learning outcome. The student surveys also present strong indirect evidence that the students felt that the program helped them meet this learning outcome.

The committee notes that this is a challenging learning outcome to assess because courses in our program typically do not examine the entire process. Students are introduced to the criminal justice system in its entirety in CRJU 1100 Intro to Criminal Justice but then go into more depth on specific components of the criminal justice system in various upper-level required and elective courses. Thus, collecting artifacts in any one course will usually only provide information on the student’s understanding of that one component and not the system. The Department should thus discuss whether CRJU 4632 Senior Seminar should act partially as a capstone course that helps students connect the information they learned throughout their program.

2) LO5: Evaluate the historical, political, and social contexts and empirical support for a particular criminal justice policy area.

Regarding Learning Outcome 5, the findings indicated that from the two courses that were used to assess this outcome, taken together, approximately 17% (3) of the papers assessed were “Unacceptable,” 17% (3) were considered “Marginal,” 56% (10) were considered “Competent,” and 11% (2) were considered “Exceptional.” Neither the target of 100% competent nor 75% exceptional were met. This clearly indicates there is large room for improvement. The student surveys, however, indicated that they had met this learning outcome (mean = 4.7).

It should be pointed out, however, that the assignments given to the students did not specifically ask students to discuss the historical context and the empirical support of the policies. It would have been logical for the students to provide some information on these two issues, but they were not directly asked to address those two issues. Thus, many students received lower scores on the assessment because they did not address the issue. It was not because their responses were wrong.

It should also be noted that 100% of the artifacts from CRJU 3331, which was taught in person in the spring 2013 semester, were scored as competent or exceptional, while the course CRJU 3631 which was taught online spring 2013 had much more variation in scores, and provided no artifacts that were ranked at the exceptional level. This indicates that perhaps the Justice Studies program would benefit
from taking steps to ensure that courses taught in person and online had some similar assignments in which to compare the quality of delivery.

3) LO6: Demonstrate an understanding of the research process by both conducting original research and analyzing existing data.

Regarding Learning Outcome 6, the findings indicated that almost half (42.9%) of the papers assessed were given a score of exceptional. 57.2% of the papers were scored as marginal or unacceptable. Neither target was met. There is room for improvement in the instruction of Research Methods. The students’ responses in the senior exit survey indicated that they had met this student learning outcome (mean = 4.26), but this was at a lower agreement level than the other questions.

Of the in-person courses, 100% of the artifacts scored “exceptional.” The instructors asked students in these courses to complete a full research project that included statistical analyses. These papers thus all had the potential to score a four. The evidence indicates that faculty members are quite successful in helping students meet this student learning outcome when they assign this project and teach in person. The research proposals assessed in the online course, however, did not have any analysis component and thus could only be scored at best as “competent.” If the online instructor had submitted a content analysis or field observation assignment, these papers could have had the same opportunity to assess as highly. At the same time, however, the scores indicated that the students were not competent in writing a research proposal when being taught online. In addition, the course was taught by a temporary faculty member. It would be premature to make rash decisions on the effectiveness of online education for this course based on one assessment cycle. The committee will carefully monitor this issue over the next two years.

VI. ACTION PLAN

The following action plan was created by the program assessment committee based on the findings of the current assessment cycle. In this section, we first discuss the implementation of the previous year’s action plan. We then provide the Justice Studies Program’s Action Plan for the following year that focuses on both student learning and assessment plan changes.

Implementation of Previous Action Plan (AY 2011-2012)

Action Item 1: Create a Program Assessment Committee

Rationale: Program assessment is vital to program improvement in meeting student needs. A program assessment committee is important for continuity from year to year.

Action: The new Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology wrote its bylaws last year and made the Program Assessment Committee a permanent standing committee within its department. All voting members are eligible for appointment to the Program Assessment committee. The duties and functions are: (1) The committee will conduct and write an annual program assessment; (2) The committee will make recommendation to voting members of the
Department regarding changes to the program assessment strategy, e.g., learning outcomes, targets, and data collection; and (3) The committee will produce to the voting members of the Department a written summary of its recommendations and program assessment. The program assessment committee conducted the 2012-2013 assessment and provided the assessment to the Department for suggestions.

**Ongoing Action (overlap into 2012-2013):** No ongoing action. Action complete.

**Action Item 2: Reassess Student Learning Outcomes**

**Rationale:** The department should always re-evaluate whether the student learning outcomes are appropriate for the mission of the program.

**Action:** The program assessment committee reviewed the student learning outcomes and decided that the student learning outcomes were still appropriate to the basic mission of the program. Thus, it did not make any recommendations to the department to alter the student learning outcomes in general. The committee did improve the wording of the learning outcomes based on workshops attended.

**Ongoing Action:** No ongoing action. Action complete.

**Action Item 3: Revisit the wording of the rubric**

**Rationale:** Many of the faculty members who have assessed artifacts the last two years have had some concerns about some of the wording in the rubric. Sometimes it has been referred to as “splitting hairs” between the categories. The wording needs to be revisited before the next round of assessments.

**Action:** The assessment committee attended several workshops on assessment and rubric creation. The committee improved the rubric from three categories to four categories and greatly improved the wording of the rubric. The committee had no problems in using the newly revised rubric.

**Ongoing Action:** No ongoing action. Action complete.

**Action Item 4: Implement Senior Exit Survey**

**Rationale:** Although they are indirect measures, senior exit surveys could identify from the students’ perspectives what they learned, what they liked most about the program, what they liked least, and what they believe needs to be improved.

**Action:** The assessment committee created a senior exit survey and asked for feedback from the entire department. Several faculty members provided feedback. The revised survey was given to all students in CRJU 4632 Senior Seminar and CRJU 4792 Internships in Spring and Summer 2013. The data were presented in this assessment report.

**Ongoing Action:** No ongoing action. Action complete.

**Action Item 5: Discuss assessing incoming Justice Studies students**

**Rationale:** It is difficult to assess how our program makes an impact if we do not have data regarding the starting points of knowledge among incoming Justice Studies students. During the 2012-2013 academic year, the faculty will discuss the best options. It is possible that we could have the incoming students and graduating seniors take standardized tests. Another possibility would be for the incoming students to write essays that address the learning outcomes.
**Action:** The assessment committee discussed these possibilities during workshops and other meetings. The committee decided that standardized testing did not directly assess the student learning outcomes. It was also discussed that changing assessment strategies every year is not beneficial in that no data is comparable. It was decided to stay with the current assessment strategy for the time being.

**Ongoing Action:** No ongoing action. Action complete.

**Action Item 6: Revisit Assessment Plan**

**Rationale:** Artifacts collected from CRJU 2131, CRJU 4032, and CRJU 4531 are traditionally not going to provide much insight into LO3 (students can describe and explain the elements and components of the criminal justice system) and LO6 (students will be equipped to conduct and analyze research). In addition, depending on the specific assignment submitted from CRJU 4032, either LO1 or LO5 will probably not have enough information to be assessed. Therefore, the faculty will need to revisit the assessment plan. For example, CRJU 4231 Research Methods will need to be added as a data collection point (e.g., research projects) to assess LO6. In addition, instead of assessing all six learning outcomes each year, it will be discussed to assess the learning outcomes on a cycle (2 or 3 learning outcomes each year). Furthermore, all sections of the course that is chosen to be assessed will provide papers. In addition, it will be noted whether the assignments are coming from an in-person or online course. As more courses are being offered online, it is important that the learning outcomes are met through both venues.

**Action:** Based on information from workshops and training sessions, the program assessment committee addressed errors and inconsistencies in data collection strategies from previous cycles. The committee added appropriate courses for data artifacts to be collected to the assessment report. The committee also clarified which learning outcomes should be assessed on a yearly basis. Finally, the assessment committee noted in this assessment whether the data came from in person or online sections of a course.

**Ongoing Action:** No ongoing action. Action complete.

**Action Item 7: Discuss role of CRJU 4632 Senior Seminar**

**Rationale:** Several of the learning outcomes are comprehensive and are not covered in any one specific course. For example, LO3, which focuses on the ability to understand the system as a whole, should be obtained by students taking required courses in corrections, policing, and the judicial process. Similarly, students learn about competing perspectives (LO1) and best practices (LO5) in several different courses. Thus, collecting artifacts in one course is generally not going to allow for an accurate assessment of the learning outcome. Therefore, the faculty need to discuss the role that they want CRJU 4632 Senior Seminar to have in the program. It is possible that the students are learning information in one class but are not combining that information with knowledge learned in other courses. CRJU 4632 Senior Seminar, which was just created in Fall 2010 and offered for the first time in Spring 2011, could be that mechanism that helps students integrate information and better understand how the information is related. It could also then be a good data collection point to assess knowledge and skills gained at the end of the program. This can be accomplished without interfering with professorial discretion and autonomy. For example, the faculty could decide that a specific paper needs to be written in this course that only constitutes 20-25% of the final grade. This specific
paper could ensure that the course fulfills the goals of the program, allows for assessment, but still allows the professor latitude regarding the other 75-80% of the course. Another possibility would be that the faculty could agree that the course could focus on any criminal justice topic, but that the instructor needs to focus on all aspects of the issue, including definitions, statistics, causes, and how the legal, policing, correctional, and political systems have addressed the issue. Either of these options would ensure that all criminal justice seniors are taking similar CRJU 4632 courses, allowing for assessment, and protecting professorial discretion.

**Action:** No action or discussion was taken on this item.

**Ongoing Action:** Due to some concerns that the assessment committee had in assessing the artifacts, the assessment committee would recommend that the department address this topic during the 2013-2014 academic year.

**Action Item 8: Increase number of students in Honors program**

**Rationale:** Although it is an indirect measure of student learning, it is presumed that students in the Honors Program are reaching the learning outcomes at a higher level.

**Action:** The Interim Chair met with the Dean of the Honors College twice to discuss Honors in Justice Studies. The program will start offering honors thesis credits in Spring 2014 for the first time. At the time of the previous assessment, we only had three Honors students. We have six at this time.

**Ongoing Action:** The Interim Chair will continue to work with the Dean of the Honors College and the Department to increase the number of Honors students in our program by identifying possible candidates.

**Action Item 9: Discussion of Academic Records Review**

**Rationale:** It will be discussed whether the faculty believe that a review of academic records of graduating seniors would be beneficial to understand how students are performing in certain courses.

**Action:** The assessment committee discussed this review and believed that at this time that it would not provide extra information. The Dean’s Office already provides information on which courses have high DFW rates. In addition, based on faculty experience, we are familiar with the courses in which students have the most difficulty. Further, the senior exit surveys also provide an opportunity for students to express issues with certain parts of the program.

**Ongoing Action.** No ongoing action. Action complete.

**Action Plan for AY 2013-2014**

**Action Item 1: Create courses which help complement the program’s six student learning outcomes.**

**Rationale:** The department is always re-evaluating the courses that it offers to students to ensure that it is offering appropriate courses that not only help students meet the student learning outcomes but also match current trends in the field. The department has an interest in offering additional courses that focus on specific crime types. These courses will specifically provide more support for LO5. The department submitted the forms to reactivate a course on
gangs and society, add courses on drugs and society and the Inside-Out program, and delete CRJU 3732 Conflict Resolution.

**Timeline:** Fall 2013

**Action Item 2:** Discuss whether additional courses on crime types would be beneficial

**Rationale:** The department has been hiring scholars with expertise in topics that the department currently does not have courses in. The department, however, was interested in adding those areas to the program. The department should thus discuss whether to add courses in: family violence, school violence, and communities and crime. These courses could help support several of the student learning outcomes, but would primarily address LO5 and LO3.

**Timeline:** Fall 2013.

**Action Item 3:** Discuss whether to offer a section of statistics in our program

**Rationale:** Students clearly indicate their problems with statistics. In general, they quite often do not understand how it applies to their major. In addition, faculty members who teach research methods all believe that the students are not coming into the class with the appropriate statistical skill set. The faculty member either needs to omit statistics from the course and only focus on aspects of data collection and research design, reteach statistics, or provide extensive help to students with all statistical aspects. A criminal justice statistics course would help the students understand the applicability of statistics to our discipline. The course could also focus on statistical techniques that are more relevant for our field and better prepare the students for the research methods course. It is believed that this would help the students who typically struggle in statistics. At the same time, it would be beneficial for our program to identify students who excel in the course as possible candidates for the honors program, as well as those students that may want to engage in opportunities to conduct their own research.

**Timeline:** Fall 2013.

**Action Item 4:** Discuss whether to only allow research methods to be taught in our program for our majors

**Rationale:** Students are currently allowed to take research methods courses in the sociology and political science departments to satisfy their research methods requirement for their major. Although the course descriptions sound similar, they are not necessarily taught similarly. Considering that one of our student learning outcomes is research methods, it seems important that students are trained within our program to meet that student learning outcome.

**Timeline:** Fall 2013.

VII. Index of Appendices.

A. Justice Studies rubric
B. Senior Exit Survey
Upon completion of the Justice Studies Program, students should be able to meet the following student learning outcomes:

**LO1:** Evaluate the merits of competing theoretical perspectives used to explain the nature of crime and demonstrate an ability to apply criminological theories to specific types of crime.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unacceptable (1)</th>
<th>Marginal (2)</th>
<th>Competent (3)</th>
<th>Exceptional (4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inability to describe different theoretical perspectives.</td>
<td>Able to describe various theoretical perspectives.</td>
<td>Able to describe criminological theories and apply them to different types of crime.</td>
<td>Able to describe criminological theories, apply them to different types of crime, compare and contrast them, and evaluate their philosophical underpinnings and empirical support.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LO2:** Demonstrate an ability to apply ethical principles to criminal justice issues, policies, and practices and evaluate their implications.

| Inability to describe different ethical principles. | Able to describe ethical principles. | Able to describe ethical principles and apply them to a case study. | Able to describe ethical principles, apply them to major components or aspects of the criminal justice system, and evaluate the ethical implications of criminal justice issues, policies, and practices. |
| LO3: Explain the criminal justice process, the role of discretion among criminal justice actors, and evaluate best practices. | Inability to describe the steps in the criminal justice process and possible case outcomes. | Able to explain the progression of cases through the criminal justice system. | Assess the role of discretion among law enforcement, the courtroom workgroup, and/or correctional professionals in the progression of cases through the criminal justice system. | Based on the knowledge of how a case progresses and how discretion impacts each step, critique the role of discretion and provide evidence-based suggestions for improvements to one component of the system. |
| LO4: Compare and contrast the United States criminal justice system with that of other nations with an understanding of historical and cultural contexts. | Inability to describe any criminal justice system outside of the U.S. | Can describe and summarize various international justice systems. | Compare and contrast the U.S. criminal justice system with that of other systems. | Compare and contrast the U.S. criminal justice system with that of other systems with an appraisal of the nations’ historical and cultural context. |
| LO5: Evaluate the historical, political, and social contexts and empirical support for a particular criminal justice policy area. | Inability to describe various criminal justice policies. | Able to describe and summarize various criminal justice policies. | Able to either evaluate the empirical support of a criminal justice policy or assess how the historical, political, and/or social contexts affected the end result of a criminal justice policy. | Able to evaluate the empirical evidence regarding a particular policy area and its implications within the historical, political, and/or social context of the process that has led to |
| LO6: Demonstrate an understanding of the research process by both conducting original research and analyzing existing data. | Inability to define and describe basic components of the research process. | Able to describe the research process and define basic concepts such as variables, hypotheses, and levels of measurement. | Able to describe the research process, define basic concepts, and choose an appropriate method to examine a research question (e.g., research proposal). | Able to successfully implement a research protocol and conduct basic analyses to examine an original research question using original or secondary data. |
B. Senior Exit Survey

Expected Date of Graduation
Spring _____ Summer _____ Fall _____ Other (specify): ____________________

Please circle the number that best describes your experience as a Justice Studies major at Georgia Southern University.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Justice Studies Program:</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Helped me to recognize and understand important criminal justice concepts, issues, and events.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Enabled me to evaluate competing theoretical perspectives used to explain the nature of crime.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Taught me to conduct basic social science research, evaluate the evidence, and synthesize the results.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Equipped me to be able to apply ethical principles to the criminal justice system.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Improved my understanding of criminal justice institutions, procedures, and processes.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Taught me to compare and contrast the United States criminal justice system with those of other nations, with an understanding of historical and cultural contexts.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Improved my ability to communicate more clearly and persuasively.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Enabled me to evaluate the effectiveness of criminal justice policies.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Offered courses that were relevant to my career goals.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Criminal Justice and Criminology Department:</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. Provided enough opportunities to get involved with criminal justice related clubs and associations.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Rating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Helped me evaluate possible graduate programs and/or employment opportunities.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Offered me opportunities to conduct my own research.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Is comprised of faculty with positive and supportive attitude toward students.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advising and Mentoring:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. My justice studies advisor was helpful and available when needed.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. My justice studies advisor provided advice on using my degree in my future career.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. The justice studies faculty were willing to act as mentors.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Rating:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. The quality of the justice studies program is excellent.</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. According to your experience as a justice studies major, what were the most positive and/or helpful aspects of the program?

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

19. Please list and explain any areas of the justice studies program that you think need improvement.

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________