

***Columbus State University  
Department of Criminal Justice***

***2006-07  
Comprehensive Program Review  
Self-Study***

**Respectfully Submitted  
By  
Dr. Dorinda L. Dowis  
Department Chair**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR THE ASSOCIATE AND BACHELOR DEGREES IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

### **Columbus State University Department of Criminal Justice Degree Programs and Requirements**

The Columbus State University Department of Criminal Justice offers two degree programs, the Applied Associate of Criminal Justice and the Bachelor of Science. The Applied Associate degree is structured in a way that allows for the easy transition of all required courses for the degree to then be merged into the continued study for a Bachelor of Science. See **Appendix A** of this report.

The requirements for the Applied Associate degree in Criminal Justice are found in **Appendix B** of this report.

The requirements for the Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice are found in **Appendix C** of this report as well.

### **Major Findings of the Program's Quality and Productivity**

The Columbus State University criminal justice program is very strong in both quality and productivity. Sheer numbers alone justify the existence of such a popular program. Diversified rates of enrollment, graduation, and employment further justify the significance of this program. Criminal justice majors participate in extra curricular activities and honors programs that are recognized nationally. Students also enjoy the opportunities to begin the creation of networks in criminal justice areas that will care them far upon graduation. The majority of practitioners in criminal justice agencies in this community alone are either direct or indirect products of the criminal justice program at Columbus State University. All have been served well by their preparatory education provided through Columbus State and the criminal justice program.

### **List of Recommendations for Improving Program Quality**

The Columbus State University criminal justice program is in dire need of more full-time faculty with specialized areas of expertise in the specific fields of criminal law, criminal and deviant behaviors, community policing, forensic investigation, homeland security, fire science, and cyber crime. These particular topics require support in the forms of both qualified personnel and appropriate curriculum offerings. Interactive instruction and on-line course offerings are also areas that have been identified as future improvements needed for an increase in program quality.

### **List of Recommendations for Improving Program Productivity**

Having students enroll in the Columbus State University criminal justice program and providing each with an exceptional education in criminal justice are not major issues.

These steps to furthering one's education are easy. Having students succeed in the CSU criminal justice programs and graduate in the end is not difficult either as the raw numbers bear out this factual occurrence. The graduating and graduate students in criminal justice and justice administration are eager to find employment in their field of study in hopes of using their degree however, entry level pay in every area of criminal justice is low and disheartening, particularly in the south. Indicators are that CSU criminal justice graduates are still loyal to their degree of study and work for low entry-level pay with a belief that they will be able to network effectively and rise to the top of their field creating a career for themselves rather than simply holding down a job. The CSU criminal justice program will continue to work diligently toward creating this belief and fostering the skills needed to produce this continued success.

### **Conclusion about the Program's Viability at CSU**

The Columbus State University criminal justice programs enroll some 400 to 500 students annually. The programs graduate approximately 50% of their majors annually. The majority of criminal justice majors find employment in some area of criminal justice and many graduates continue their education through Master degree programs and some through terminal degree programs. The viability of such a program as the CSU program is not difficult to justify or prove. The raw numbers and averages tell the story without much interpretation required.

### **Program Improvement Plan**

There is so much that can be done to improve (enhance) the Columbus State University criminal justice program, bringing the curriculum and discipline into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, only small improvements are possible at this time until more full-time personnel can be added. Once the manpower is added, the primary goal is to provide on-line courses and distance learning opportunities to expand the criminal justice program both regionally and statewide.

The second goal for the criminal justice program would be to provide more interactive opportunities for students to learn first-hand and to acquire skills through practical experience that will add to the classroom education they receive in preparation for employment in criminal justice.

The third goal of the CSU criminal justice program is to attempt and instill, or awaken, in each criminal justice major a sense of professionalism that will serve and benefit each one in the future, regardless of their choice of employment.

### **Summary Recommendation and Supporting Rationale**

It is the recommendation of the faculty in the CSU criminal justice program that the current program be maintained and enhanced/expanded. The current program is very strong and is in high demand. The faculty is committed to adding to the program as resources become available in order to enhance and strengthen the curriculum and the

individual student as each completes his/her course of study in all aspects of criminal justice.

### **Enhance or Expand the Program**

This is the goal of the Columbus State University criminal justice program. The program is already very strong and only requires efforts to enhance and expand the program that is already deeply rooted in a solid foundation of high educational quality and productivity.

## **I. Brief Program Overview**

The Columbus State University Department of Criminal Justice paves the way for students to a diverse range of career opportunities. Graduates of the CSU criminal justice program are armed with current and accurate knowledge in criminal justice that allows them to secure jobs with local, state, and federal government agencies such as city and state police and sheriffs' departments, probation and parole departments, the FBI, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, drug enforcement agencies, the Secret Service, correctional institutions, juvenile justice agencies, and loss prevention and security programs. Career opportunities are found in both the public and private sectors.

The United States Department of Justice continues to recognize the Columbus State University criminal justice program as a primary source for career recruitment.

**The Columbus State University Department of Criminal Justice provides students with the opportunity to receive a two-year Applied Associate degree in Criminal Justice and then the opportunity to continue their higher education with a Bachelor of Science degree. The Applied Associate degree provides the student with the appropriate degree for employment by the majority of law enforcement, correctional, court, and governmental agencies associated directly with the field of criminal justice. Also, the Applied Associate degree in Criminal Justice is structured in such a way that allows the student to proceed, at any chosen time, to continue their higher education by merging ALL courses taken for the Applied Associate degree into the degree progress structure of the Bachelor of Science degree. Since the field of criminal justice is pro-education and encourages the continuance of higher education and training, the majority of criminal justice students attending Columbus State University for an Applied Associate degree in Criminal Justice do chose to continue their higher education toward the acquisition of the Bachelor of Science.**

**The departmental learning objectives and course specific learning objectives of each criminal justice course remain the same in both degree areas. Also, the ultimate goals of graduation and then successful employment remain the same in both degree areas.**

Columbus State University criminal justice degrees continually prove to be highly employable to their graduates.

## **II. Summary Findings of the Program's Overall Quality**

### **Program Quality: Very Strong**

This program, including degree requirements for both the Applied Associate degree as well as the Bachelor of Science degree, is currently extremely strong and deeply rooted in the foundation of Columbus State University. Criminal justice is a very popular program among students and has proven to be highly employable for students who graduate. Faculty and staff strive continuously to provide exciting and enlightening material to criminal justice majors that are both current and accurate and reflect the changes that take place regularly in society and that permeate the public view through various media outlets. The CSU criminal justice program is dedicated to staying abreast of all aspects that relate both directly and indirectly to the function, operation, and administration of criminal justice.

## **II A. The Quality of Teaching Supporting the Program**

### **Rating: Very Strong**

The Columbus State University criminal justice program is supported by a faculty of three (3) full-time faculty members: one tenured, two with terminal degrees, one Associate Professor and two Assistant Professors, all former practitioners in a specific field of criminal justice. The program also utilizes the specific expertise of 14 adjunct instructors who hold varying Master's degrees related to their fields of expertise and who are current long-term practitioners in criminal justice. Teaching practices are assessed and rewarded based on student evaluations, instructor evaluations, department chair evaluations, and continuous verbal feedback from the criminal justice student body. There is a large demand for criminal justice courses and these courses are provided based on the expertise and successful teaching practices of the current faculty and staff. The program also continues to receive resumes and curriculum vitae from criminal justice experts who wish to teach on a part-time basis.

**The three (3) full-time criminal justice faculty teach a full load of courses each semester, as allowed, plus at least one (1) additional course, as allowed. All part-time faculty are utilized to the maximum allowed annually. As the criminal justice student body continues to grow weekly, the demand for criminal justice courses each semester also increases. However, the provision of criminal justice courses to meet this demand is beginning to suffer due to the restrictions placed upon the use of both full-time and part-time faculty. The faculty members, due to their extreme professionalism, do not, however, allow the quality of the criminal justice education provided to suffer. See Appendix M of this report for example.**

Advising procedures are strategically specified within CSU Department of Criminal Justice policy. Advising of criminal justice students is generally required and due to the large number of criminal justice students and the lack of adequate full-time faculty to assist in this important area, the criminal justice department began making immediate use of the CSU Academic Advising Center upon its earliest inception. All freshman and sophomore criminal justice students are advised through the CSU Academic Advising Center. All junior and senior criminal justice students are advised in the department and are assigned a specific advisor who is a full-time faculty member. No part-time adjuncts are used for advising purposes.

Criminal justice full-time faculty is readily available to assist students with both advising and tutoring services. Each professor maintains specified office hours. Part-time adjunct instructors also provide contact information and are readily available as well, to assist students. Interaction between faculty and students is high outside of the classroom. Field trips are common as part of criminal justice course work.

Since criminal justice is not considered a core course in Areas A-E, any tutoring opportunities available to criminal justice students take place within the department and are addressed by criminal justice faculty and staff with the student in separate sessions outside of the classroom.

Student internships are not required of criminal justice majors but are strongly encouraged. Students must be seniors in order to be eligible for an internship and internship opportunities are numerous and varied. Internships provide a beneficial breeding ground for networking and most internships result in permanent placements in some area of criminal justice. Students in criminal justice are routinely encouraged to participate in programs initiated by the CSU Career Center and to attend the annual Career Expo sponsored by the Career Center. The Criminal Justice Department does not hesitate to call upon and include the CSU Career Center in each semester's functions.

Program improvements continue to be considered for immediate implementation in the following categories in order to modernize the existing program:

1. Full-time faculty recruitment (in process)
2. Teaching and advising assessments (in process)
3. Program interaction (in process)

## **II B. The Quality of the Curriculum Supporting the Program**

**Rating: Very Strong**

**The Columbus State University Department of Criminal Justice provides two degree options for students. The Applied Associate degree in Criminal Justice is a two-year degree that is the educational standard for employment required by the majority of criminal justice and governmental agencies directly associated with the criminal justice field. The courses required for the Applied Associate degree merge directly into the Bachelor of Science degree for criminal justice to allow an easy transition from the two-year degree into the four-year degree.**

**Departmental learning objectives and course specific learning objectives for criminal justice courses remain the same for both the Applied Associate degree in Criminal Justice and the Bachelor of Science degree for criminal justice majors. The departmental learning objectives were derived from specified requirements indicated by the criminal justice system itself, based upon individual skills necessary for employment upon receipt of a college degree.**

The curriculum provided by the CSU Criminal Justice Department is comprehensive, specific and taught by experts in each subject area. The learning outcomes for each course are specific to that course and in line with the learning outcomes of the department. The learning outcomes of the department are specified according to employment hiring practices and performance assessment and promotion requirements



outlined within the various agencies in criminal justice administration. Departmental learning objectives include the following:

1. Reading comprehension
2. Critical thinking abilities
3. Writing skills
4. Research skills
5. Oral Communication skills
6. Professionalism and a high ethical standard

All of these learning outcomes require technological skill and are required for employment in all areas of criminal justice. Students are encouraged to include multidisciplinary studies in the form of general and upper division electives that will aid them in their chosen fields of employment.

All criminal justice agencies and administrations today are diversity, multicultural, and internationally sensitive. Therefore, every criminal justice course includes components that relate to and prepare the student to address these issues that continue to grow in society and criminal justice operations as well.

Program and curriculum improvements continue to be considered and implemented regularly in order to maintain standards established by the field of criminal justice itself.

1. Selected topics courses are created each semester in order address current issues in criminal justice and to provide for knowledge of the rapid changes of society that directly affect the criminal justice field.
2. Faculty continues to foster students in the departmental learning objectives in order to train each in preparation to meet the high expectations for hiring they will encounter upon graduation.

See **Appendixes A, B, C, and D** of this report.

## **II C. Selectivity, Academic Achievement, and Satisfaction of Students in the Program**

### **Rating: Above Average**

Declared criminal justice undergraduates average approximately 300 in raw figures, per school year. The average GPA for declared criminal justice undergraduates is 2.68. This equates to a high "C." The majority of declared criminal justice undergraduates tend to make B's, C's, and D's in their assigned coursework. However, as of fall semester, 2006, all declared criminal justice undergraduates are required to make a "C" or better in their criminal justice courses in order to receive credit. Therefore, there should be a marked increase in the average GPA in the future. This policy was implemented in order to raise the standard of knowledge and character in the average criminal justice major prior to graduation and their attempts to find employment in the

criminal justice field as the field itself continues to raise hiring expectations. Criminal justice graduates average approximately 66 in raw figures per school year. Not only does the retention rate of criminal justice majors remain high, the transfer and change of majors from other institutions and degrees continues to increase weekly and by semester.

Faculty and staff members in criminal justice continue to focus on student learning, satisfaction, and the successful meeting of all course and departmental learning objectives. It is also a separate departmental goal to assist all criminal justice graduates in the pursuit of gainful and successful employment. We continue to be successful in this goal as well.

Program improvements in this area are concentrated on providing appropriate and uniform assessment measuring tools for each course and for the department and in the implementation of a Senior Capstone Course to be initiated as soon as Spring 2008.

## **II D. The Quality of Faculty Supporting the Program**

### **Rating: Very Strong**

The criminal justice faculty, both full and part-time, is all current or former practitioners in the criminal justice field in various areas of expertise. Each is employed by CSU for the direct purpose of utilizing their specific expertise. Each has no less than a Master's degree and all have extensive practical experience. Of the three (3) full-time faculty, two (2) have doctoral degrees and the third is in the process of pursuing a terminal degree. Other part-time adjuncts have recently indicated their intentions of pursuing terminal doctoral degrees as well.

All criminal justice faculty, both full and part-time, are encouraged to maintain and continue to pursue personal and professional growth and development that will add to the foundation of the criminal justice faculty base. Part-timers tend to pursue these opportunities on their own or through their professional agency. Full-time faculty are encouraged to participate annually in some form of personal and professional growth and development, either through a general professional participation in criminal justice advancement or through their own professional expert field of advancement. All criminal justice faculty tend to comply willingly. The continuing gain of expert professional knowledge by criminal justice faculty is essential to the continued growth of the department and its degree areas.

The CSU criminal justice faculty is diverse in numerous ways. The full-time faculty is made up of two gender minorities (women) and one ethnic minority (African-American). The part-time faculty is made up of four women and ten men, and two African-Americans. All have one Master's degree, at the very least and all, except one, have years of practical, professional experience. The one without practical, professional experience in criminal justice is part of the CSU administration and an alumnus of the CSU criminal justice undergraduate program and MPA program in justice administration.

Part-time faculty is completely integrated into the program faculty and are included in all departmental faculty meetings and carbon-copied on all departmental memos and policy changes and implementations.

Program improvement concerning faculty revolves around the urgent need for two full-time faculty members in order to meet the needs of a growing student body. Included in this increase is the need for more minorities who are qualified candidates for both full-time and part-time positions. Also, increased funding for continued faculty development is always an issue and of high priority.

## **II E. The Quality of Facilities and Equipment Supporting the Program**

### **Rating: Satisfactory**

As the overall number of CSU students has increased, and the overall number of criminal justice students has increased, the lack of parking space and classroom space has greatly affected the efficiency rating in the provision of a quality education to our students. Also, the conditions of the existing facilities falls far short of the professional appearance of facilities at other like institutions. The CSU criminal justice program, though highly sought after by many students, is not considered a core or essential discipline and therefore gets little attention and little funding consideration, despite the fact that it is the third largest program on campus, by student body count. The quality of facilities and equipment supporting the program is satisfactory but not befitting of a program of its reputation and size.

The library is highly supportive of the criminal justice program at CSU as are many in the infrastructure of the administration.

Program improvement here rests primarily with the institution and the funding for improvement of facilities and equipment necessary campus wide.

## **II F. The Quality of Research and Scholarship Supporting the Program**

### **Rating: Above Average**

Keeping in mind that one of the six departmental learning objectives in criminal justice is to develop the student's research skills, most every course offering requires some type of research initiative. Faculty members include varying types of research opportunities for students from research papers to research projects to assignments that require search and research activities.

Faculty members, both part-time and full-time, participate in personal research on a regular basis, as professionals, in order to remain current in the material each uses in his and/or her specific class lectures and presentations. Issues and topics in the field of criminal justice change quite frequently. Therefore, the instructor has to make sure that

he and/or she is as current and accurate in their own knowledge of the subject matter as is possible to assure that the student is also up to date in each subject as is possible.

Criminal justice faculty, as practicing professionals, continue to indicate their willingness to serve as mentors to criminal justice students in preparing them for employment in criminal justice. Also, as practicing and former practicing professionals, all criminal justice faculty maintain professional memberships and certification that aid in their mentoring of students for future employment. Part-time faculty members participate in such memberships and programs through their individual fields of expertise and agencies. Full-time faculty participate in many of the same memberships and programs as well as professional academic memberships and programs that provide further resources for the criminal justice educator in particular.

Full-time criminal justice faculty in particular, are encouraged to present papers at professional conferences and conventions annually, to participate in public lectureships and speaking engagements upon request, and to continue to work toward topics and research that may eventually provide publication opportunities. All full-time faculty have been involved to-date in book reviews and research assistance.

See **Appendixes E, F, and G** of this report.

Program improvement in this area continues to focus on faculty development, subject research, and publication preparedness and opportunities.

## **II G. The Quality of Service Supporting the Program**

### **Rating: Above Average**

The CSU criminal justice program, faculty, and students continue to participate in the majority of college, institutional, community, state, regional, and national activities and projects that serve to promote and develop the criminal justice degrees offered through Columbus State University. Full-time criminal justice faculty attends visitation days and all orientation and advising sessions. The criminal justice department has recently implemented a freshman; sophomore and transfer student orientation offered by faculty and recognized senior criminal justice majors on a regular semester basis in order to aid new criminal justice students in understanding policies and expectations for degree completion. Also, the department has recently implemented a senior graduation orientation seminar that is offered annually and includes members of the registrar's office to answer questions and provide assistance to seniors preparing for graduation.

The recognition of certain "senior associates" by departmental faculty has also created a senior leadership cadre that serves to promote an accelerated standard of behavior, professionalism, and knowledge that will hopefully provide examples of the type of graduate the criminal justice program wishes to promote and to ultimately add to the criminal justice workforce.

The CSU criminal justice department also offers both an active chapter of the national criminal justice professional fraternity, the American Criminal Justice Association-Lambda Alpha Epsilon, and the national criminal justice honor society, Alpha Phi Sigma. Criminal justice students are strongly encouraged to join and actively participate in both of these organizations on campus, in the community, and in the criminal justice community locally, statewide, regionally, and nationally. Faculty members, as chapter advisors, also participate in these organizations and their scheduled conferences, conventions, and activities.

Program improvements include plans to form active partnerships with criminal justice agencies and programs in the community in support of the criminal justice system and to promote leadership programs and initiatives in criminal justice in order to fortify both the professional knowledge and professional behavior of its proposed graduates as they seek employment in the criminal justice system.

## **II H. Program Honors and Awards**

### **Rating: Very Strong**

The CSU criminal justice program continues to maintain a high reputation and regard in the criminal justice community locally, statewide, and nationally. The Lambda Alpha Epsilon professional fraternity has always received high honors in various competitions regionally and nationally, with the exception of the last two years in which the chapter voluntarily went inactive to correct inconsistencies within its constitution and by-laws. The chapter is currently active and is preparing to begin participation in regional and national competitions again soon.

Each year, one student is recognized at the CSU Honors Convocation as the criminal justice student of the year. It is unfortunate that this department, with such a large student body and with so many outstanding students, does not have the option to recognize more than one student as a student of the year. As academic, behavioral, and professional standards among our students continue to rise, more and more criminal justice majors are eligible for honors recognition.

Many criminal justice majors are also students representing other student organizations and entities on campus. As they excel in criminal justice, they also excel in academics, talent, and leadership in ROTC, athletics, science, sociology, music, art, theater, political science, math, business, and CSU student activities. The criminal justice department tries continuously to keep up with all of the achievements of its students and works hard to make sure the student knows that the department is aware of their successes, as are their fellow students.

The CSU criminal justice department maintains its professional accreditation according to the academic standards established by the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. Full-time faculty members maintain continuous professional membership in

the ACJS and try to attend the annual ACJS conference at least once every two years, pursuant upon available funding.

See **Appendixes E, F, and G** of this report.

Program improvements include attempts to establish more scholarly recognition for its students, encouraging more students to attend and participate in local, state, regional, and national criminal justice conventions and competitions, and to encourage students to work more closely with local criminal justice entities to shore up their foundations within the community, as needed.

## **II I. Exceptional Achievements & Honors of the Program's Students, Graduates, & Faculty**

### **Rating: Very Strong**

The majority of graduates from the CSU criminal justice program are currently working (successfully) in the criminal justice system, from the local level of government to state government and at the national level of government and criminal justice. Also, the majority of graduates from this program find successful employment in both the public and private sectors relating to criminal justice.

**The ultimate achievements for all criminal justice majors are successful graduation from one or both of the existing degree programs and the acquisition of successful employment. There is no other agenda that could assess the achievement and success of criminal justice graduates.**

Current students in the criminal justice program take the initiative to begin working toward employment opportunities in their junior year of study. As a result, many graduates are already employed or are set to accept employment at the time they matriculate from Columbus State University. Faculty members continue to hear regularly from former students who have graduated and are working actively in the criminal justice system.

CSU criminal justice graduates have, and continue to serve as mayor's, council members, city managers, state and federal legislators, police chiefs, elected sheriffs, lawyers, judges, prosecutors, public defenders, wardens, probations officers (local, state, and federal), parole officers (local, state, and federal), social workers, law enforcement officers, GBI and FBI agents, U.S. marshals, investigators, criminalists, military officers, customs and treasury agents, secret service agents, and are generally found throughout government and criminal justice agencies in the community, around the state, and nationwide. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, the stellar reputation of the CSU criminal justice degree and graduate precedes them into their application for employment. Many law enforcement and correctional officers from the CSU criminal justice program have been recognized as "officers of the quarter and or year" in the respective local, state, and federal agencies. Criminal justice graduates of Columbus

State University are instilled with an overwhelming desire to work in fields related to their courses of study, many times accepting positions at low, entry levels of compensation. However, they continue to strive toward more acceptable levels of comfortable compensation because they are committed to their work in the criminal justice system.

Current criminal justice majors continue to participate in campus activities and honor programs that supplement their criminal justice studies and help to promote the CSU criminal justice program. Students participate in Servant Leadership and national honor societies, receive honors from the U.S. military through the CSU ROTC program, and are continually recognized through student social organizations as homecoming queens, Greek leaders, orientation leaders, SGA presidents, senators, officers, and representatives, Miss Columbus State contestants, Miss Georgia contestants, etc.

CSU criminal justice faculty, both part-time and full-time also continue to participate and receive professional recognition as well as academic recognition for their continued professional and academic performances. Two full-time faculty members have been recognized several times as nominees for CSU Educators of the Year and can be found in numerous additions of Who's Who editions of College and Universities Educators and Professional Business Men and Women. All CSU criminal justice faculty are continually recognized for their participation on a wide variety of community and state advisory and working committees that focus on the positive growth of respective agencies, the community and the state. These honors and recognition continue to place Columbus State University and its autonomous criminal justice program in the forefront of University System of Georgia programs of similar nature.

See **Appendix E, F, G, and H** of this report.

## **II J. General Success of the Program's Graduates**

### **Rating: Very Strong**

Aside from the general employment and recognition successes of the CSU criminal justice program's graduates mentioned in the previous section, the continued **acceptance** and **successful completion** of baccalaureate students into post-baccalaureate and graduate programs is very high. It is beneficial, naturally, to have successful programs for continued study located on the Columbus State University campus. A high majority of CSU criminal justice graduates continue study in either the traditional Master of Public Administration degree program or the professional Justice Administration program of the Georgia Law Enforcement Command College. Numerous criminal justice graduates also chose to pursue juries doctorate degrees in premier law schools throughout the nation.

See **Appendix I** of this report.

## **II K. Stakeholder Satisfaction with the Program**

### **Rating: Very Strong**

As is directed each semester, students in every course are given a faculty/course evaluation. When the results are returned to the department, the department chair maintains a copy of each evaluation for each course and each faculty member, both full-time and part-time. These evaluations and continuous feedback from current students allows the department chair to gage the state of the program and to make appropriate adjustments to the curriculum. Also, graduation rates, graduate hiring rates in criminal justice fields, and continuous contact with employed graduates provide the department chair with the same measurements for gauging.

Community partners continue to contact the CSU criminal justice program for volunteers, interns, and future graduates for potential hiring. Also, graduates who have immigrated outside of the community into other communities and/or states do not hesitate to contact the CSU criminal justice program for assistance. Again, the CSU criminal justice department goal is to protect a stellar reputation that has been established over the years and continues to justify itself as a premier program in the University System of Georgia.

Though the CSU criminal justice program has not established a real need to create a community advisory board, numerous faculty, students, and alumni of the program are asked repeatedly to serve as active members of other community advisory boards. Should the need arise for the CSU criminal justice program to create a community advisory board, it is guaranteed that such a board could be easily comprised of willing individuals who have relied upon members of the Columbus State criminal justice community to aid the community in their own efforts help Columbus grow and prosper.

**There is no current process of measuring this component. The CSU Criminal Justice Department is in the process of creating an assessment tool for this purpose.**

## **II L. Program's Responsiveness to Change & Improvement**

### **Rating: Very Strong**

Numerous changes have been made within the Columbus State University criminal justice program over the past several years for the purpose of positive change and improvement in order to keep up with changes in society and the effects of those changes on the criminal justice system.

New expert full-time and part-time faculty have been added. New curriculum that reflects changes in society and criminal justice has been added. New programs have been added and are slated for the future to aid in the expansion of the criminal justice program and its ability to meet the demands being requested by agencies statewide. New policies and procedures have been added to assist the criminal justice student body in raising their



standard of education and ethical behavior in preparation for employment in criminal justice. New departmental learning objectives and course learning objectives have been created that are degree and course specific so that students realize what is expected from each of them. Courses and faculty are continuing to work toward making curriculum more interactive in order to allow students to more accurately experience the workings of the criminal justice system prior to their placement for employment. Added to these additions is the re-activation of the criminal justice fraternity, LAE, and efforts to re-charge the on-campus chapter of the criminal justice national honor society, Alpha Phi Sigma. Also, an accurate upgrade of the criminal justice website is currently in the works in order to assure that all program information is at the student and potential student's fingertips through the Internet.

The reorganization of advising procedures and assignments, the implementation of a freshman/sophomore/transfer student orientation and a senior graduation preparation seminar, and the extension of the criminal justice degree programs to the Ft. Benning campus have all been added recently to bring the CSU criminal justice program into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

All criminal justice faculty and staff are continuously and regularly included in the changes that have and are taking place in the criminal justice department and degree programs. Since all of the criminal justice faculty are experts in specific fields, their input is crucial to the content and provision of current, accurate, and quality information in all areas of the criminal justice field.

### **III. Summary Findings of the Program's Overall Productivity**

#### **Program Productivity: Very Strong**

The numbers speak for themselves. Interest in the CSU criminal justice program is high. Enrollment in criminal justice at CSU is high. Graduation rates from the criminal justice program also remain high. Employment of these graduates in varying fields of criminal justice is also steady and high. This program and its productivity are integral parts of the Columbus State University curriculum. The program successfully stands alone and is more than capable of supporting itself. Students continue to rave that they are learning so much and having fun doing so. Those who have gone on to work in a field of criminal justice have proven to be highly successful. Program faculty have been accused by city leaders of “teaching our students too well” as they graduate and move on to other communities to find employment. The only reason for this is that the Columbus community does not pay as well as other communities. Regardless, the CSU criminal justice students and graduates are most always successful and this fact justifies the programs productivity.

See **Appendixes J and K in Excel** in this report.

### **III A. Enrollment of Students in the Program**

#### **Rating: Very Strong**

The average fall semester enrollments in 3000 level criminal justice courses for the academic years beginning 2003 and ending in the summer of 2006 has been 31.6 percent. These percentages for this particular level of courses over this period of time declined. However, the same enrollment percentages for fall semester enrollments in 4000 level criminal justice courses during the same period of time has been 10.8 percent and has shown a steady increase during the same period of time.

One of the most interesting trends noted in the CSU criminal justice program over the past five (5) years has been the increasing number of major change forms signed weekly from other majors to criminal justice. An average of five (5) major change forms are signed each week.

Note that the criminal justice department provides one (1) of (3) Associate degrees on campus for students. This is due primarily to the fact that many criminal justice agencies have allowed for the hiring of employees with two (2) years of criminal justice academic education and/or the completion of a related Associate degree.

The major change in criminal justice curriculum implemented to help with stabilizing the enrollment percentages of the 3000 course level classes has been the recent addition of 3000 level courses in program elective areas for degree completion. Also, changes in criminal justice hiring practices that tend to require more extensive educational requirements will most certainly initiated an increase in the enrollment of students into 3000 and 4000 level criminal justice courses.

The Columbus State University criminal justice program still maintains, to-date, the third largest student body, according to major declaration, on campus. The continued demand for criminal justice education and degree completion repeatedly justifies the existence of such a program in this regional area of the State of Georgia.

See **Appendixes J and K in Excel** in this report.

### **III B. Annual Degree Productivity of the Program**

#### **Rating: Very Strong**

The number of degrees conferred annual (by fiscal year), to include the AASCJ in criminal justice and the BS in criminal justice has continued to increase. The combined average for the period beginning in the fall of 2002 and ending in the summer of 2006 was approximately 70. The criminal justice program only sees a continued increase in these numbers as the program also continues to grow.

As relates to the number of declared majors in the criminal justice degree program, the average graduation rate reported is a direct correlation and easily justifiable. The number of graduates each year continues to reflect the high number of criminal justice student body members as being among the top five (5) programs campus wide.

Specific program improvements come from knowledge that the demand for criminal justice courses is high. As more students enter the programs, more improvements and expansions are created in order to provide for the demand. More interactive initiatives are provided and more selected topic courses are created and faculty members with networking opportunities continue to provide these same opportunities to criminal justice students.

See **Appendixes J and K in Excel** in this report.

### **III C. Program Completion Efficiency and Graduation Rate**

#### **Rating: Very Strong**

The CSU criminal justice program's graduation rate per fiscal year continually rates between 50 and 70 percent. This is based on an overall student body number of approximately 400 to 500 annually. As addressed in the prior section, this identifies the CSU criminal justice program as one of the top five (5) on campus.

Currently, all program improvements and/or expansions arise from demands created by the criminal justice student body themselves. The program's largest challenge is providing the qualified faculty to supply for the demand. Three (3) full-time faculty members and a mediocre budget, along with a "shared" administrative secretary are barely enough to provide an adequate education. This program provides an above average education, almost a superior education, to its students and could do much more with the appropriate faculty, staff, and funding.

### **III D. Efficiency and Clarity of the Program's Course Requirements**

#### **Rating: Very Strong**

The course requirements for CSU criminal justice certificate, Associate and Bachelor degree students are specifically and concisely spelled out in the CSU catalog, on criminal justice bulletin boards, through freshman/sophomore/transfer student orientations and through thorough, one-on-one contact with individual students. Every faculty and staff person is aware of the degree requirements and when meeting with individual students, works up a manual degree progress sheet that is provide to the student indicating what progress has been achieved and what work is left to be completed. Departmental policy requires that all students meet regularly with an advisor or full-time faculty member so each is (or should be) well aware at all times of exactly what is needed to complete degree work and what all options are for future enrollment.

As students near the completion of their degree requirements, some run into problems scheduling the last courses they may need, for various reasons. The CSU criminal justice program is always amenable and more than flexible and adaptable enough to provide appropriate alternatives and options that allow the student to complete their degree requirements as scheduled. With the continued help of part-time faculty, the Ft. Benning program, and the Justice Administration program as well as the professionalism of full-time faculty, students have the options of taking night classes on campus, night classes at Ft. Benning, weekend classes at the Georgia Law Enforcement Command College, and/or through independent studies in order to complete course requirements for graduation.

### **III E. Frequency and Sequencing of Course Offerings Required for Program Completion**

#### **Rating: Very Strong**

All Area F required courses are offered every semester, with the exception of summer semester on occasion. Even during the summer, at least 2-3 of these Area F courses is offered. These same courses are usually offered during evening hours as well, in fall and spring semesters and 1-2 times a calendar year at Ft. Benning in the evening.

At least 80% of all Area G Program Requirements are offered during all three semesters. Several, if not all, of these courses are also offered at alternate times during the semester, day and evening, depending on student demand and proximity to graduation. These courses are also offered on occasion at Ft. Benning.

Approximately 70% of Area H(a) Program Electives are offered during all three semesters as well, also during day and evening hours. These courses are also offered on occasion at Ft. Benning.

Alternatively, Area H(b) Program Electives are offered through different program disciplines. These courses are suggested for criminal justice students in order to help bolster their all-around education in preparation for work in a criminal justice field. These alternative disciplines have always been more than cooperative in their offering of courses to include criminal justice students. These courses are all offered at least once a year, if not more often.

Also, JADM 3000 and 4000 courses are accepted as Area H and Area I elective substitutes. These courses are generally offered 2-3 times a semester, all three semesters.

As always, courses are offered based on the demand of the student body. The CSU criminal justice program prepares semester schedules based on graduation ceremonies and the courses that are most required for degree completion. Schedules are also based on ability to fill a class and accommodate for non-traditional students unable to attend school during the day.

### **III F. Enrollment in the Program's Required Courses**

#### **Rating: Very Strong**

The majority of CSU criminal justice courses are 2000 level courses or above. CRJU 1105, Introduction to Criminal Justice, is the only freshman level course in the curriculum and that is due to the BOR's requirement that all CRJU programs in the USG offer this same course uniformly. This is an Area F degree requirement so ALL criminal justice students must take this course. Fall semester enrollment generally runs around 50%.

There are numerous 2000 level criminal justice courses, some required, some not required. The CRJU one-year professional certificate generally requires students to take 30 hours, 10 courses, 1000 or 2000 level only for a program certificate. Until recently, the criminal justice program only offered seven (7) of these lower level courses. Five (5) new 2000 level courses were recently activated specifically for police officers working under a time guideline to complete a prescribed level of education in order to retain employment. Six (6) 2000 level courses of an active eleven (11) are required of all criminal justice students. Average course enrollment in these courses is generally just shy of 50%, approximately 45% each fall.

Numerous upper level courses in CRJU and JADM are offered regularly. Some are required, others are optional. Enough of these courses are offered to allow criminal justice students to pick courses as electives that will be more in line with their preferred employment intentions upon graduation. Enrollment in combined 3000 and 4000 level courses each fall is approximately 42-43%.

Again, CRJU courses offered and when they are offered is all directly related to student demand.

### **III G. Diversity of the Program's Majors and Graduates**

#### **Rating: Very Strong**

The diversity among Columbus State University criminal justice majors is visibly obvious and of high priority to the faculty of the criminal justice program. The same holds true when addressing the diversity of practitioners in the American criminal justice system. CSU criminal justice majors cross all gender, ethnicity, nationality, and age barriers. Criminal justice majors are equally both part-time and full-time. Both enrollment and graduation rates, by ethnic origin, are again, diverse across the board, the majority of students being either black or white. International students, Asian, Hispanic, American Indian and Multi-Racial students are also represented but not to the extent that white and black students are represented. The CSU program does not actively recruit students. There is no need. Students flock to this program and are all allowed an opportunity find their niche in the program and the ability to see themselves employed in

a criminal justice field. The diverse numbers become more pronounced as students begin work on their BS degree.

By gender, male and female students are close to being equally represented across the board. Female students tend to be slightly more represented in the criminal justice program, but not by much, simply a mere quarter of all criminal justice majors.

By age, criminal justice students are represented throughout all described age groups, the highest being those 21-25 years old and the lowest being over 60. Those over 60 have, on a regular basis, been represented by at least one student in the study of criminal justice. The criminal justice program has always enrolled a highly diverse group of both traditional and non-traditional students. Average rates of students, according to age, remain steady at approximately 25% annually.

The CSU criminal justice program is continually successful in graduating its students regardless of gender, ethnicity, nationality, and age, the same as initial enrollment. The students come to us; we provide the education, the student stays with the program and graduates. There is very little that the criminal justice faculty is required to do other than provide advising, education, and direction for finding employment. There are very few times when a student's gender, ethnicity, nationality, or age plays a part in the educational success and graduation of the criminal justice student. The same holds true of their successful employment after graduation or their continuation of education through the CSU Masters degree program in public administration with a justice administration concentration.

### **III H. Cost-Effectiveness of Instructional Delivery in the Program's Home Department**

#### **Rating: Very Strong**

As is the environment of Georgia higher education at this time, the CSU criminal justice department is, as much as any other department expected to do a great deal with very little funding and resources. The bottom line here is: 456 majors, 3 full-time faculty, 10-15 part-time faculty, 20-30 sections offered per semester, 1 administrative staff and a budget that has seen very little change throughout the last 15 years, at least. The department keeps a tight lid on expenditures and when the budget gets tight, many faculty members provide from their own pockets and resource availability. The program remains successful and concerns itself only with what is required to keep the criminal justice program and department operating and producing successfully. Each department on the Columbus State University campus is responsible for their own success and when asked, we continually offer support and assistance to other departments where we can.

The criminal justice program continues to be cost-effective despite the lack of funding and resource availability. The program would definitely benefit from a revision and increase in its budget but until that time, the program will continue to be successful with what little is available. The three (3) primary resource improvements that would benefit

this program are: more full-time faculty, more operating funds, and much better teaching facilities.

### **III I. Program's Responsiveness to State Needs and Employer Demand for Program Graduates**

#### **Rating: Very Strong**

Criminal justice employers, who are searching for help, whether it is full-time or part-time employment, internships, and/or volunteers, continually contact the Columbus State University criminal justice department. The program is continually successful in providing students to all of those programs who make requests. The program rarely has a problem providing students for employment, internships, and/or volunteerism. The criminal justice program at CSU is highly successful in this capacity. A criminal justice degree from Columbus State University is a highly employable degree and the outstanding reputation of the department is far-reaching, from the federal government level down to the local government level.

### **III J. Position of the Program's Annual Degree Productivity among Comparable USG Programs**

#### **Rating: Very Strong**

Many are not aware that the Columbus State University criminal justice program is the only autonomous criminal justice program in the University System of Georgia. All other criminal justice programs are housed collaboratively with other disciplines such as sociology, political science, psychology, anthropology, etc. On the Columbus State campus, the criminal justice department shares a departmental suite with political science but is not a part of the political science department. The autonomy maintained by the criminal justice program at CSU has proven to be essential to its successful productivity. This same autonomy is what has made the CSU criminal justice program recognized and respected nationwide. Any attempt to combine this degree program with any other would only serve to destroy this successful productivity and high national reputation.

**Considering the fact that the CSU Criminal Justice Department is the only one of its kind in the University System of Georgia, it is difficult to compare with other similar programs within the USG. As previously mentioned, the CSU Criminal Justice Department is autonomous from all other disciplines and degrees. This is not the case at other USG institutions. All other criminal justice offerings in the USG are conjoined with other disciplines and/or degrees such as political science, sociology, psychology, anthropology, etc. Any statistics available for possible comparison would be skewed and irrelevant as no other program in the USG is comparable to that offered at Columbus State University. Should want wish to research possible comparisons, Clayton State University, Armstrong Atlantic State University, North Georgia College, and Georgia College and State University would be the closest for possible comparison.**



### **III K. This Program's Contribution to Achieving CSU's Mission**

#### **Rating: Very Strong**

The criminal justice department at Columbus State University was originally founded and accredited based on the standards for such a program provided by the national Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. There have only been three (3) department chairs to this program. With the most recent change in department chairs, program revisions and expansion have been made that began with consideration of the Columbus State University mission statement. The criminal justice program feels fortunate to be an autonomous discipline at Columbus State University and continuously keeps in mind the mission of the institution as a whole and adapts as needed to follow the University's mission statement first, and the departmental mission second. The criminal justice department maintains its own mission statement, learning objectives, and standard operation policies and procedures that are discipline-specific. The criminal justice degree program remains loyal to the existence and mission of Columbus State University and is proud to do so.

See **Appendixes A and L** of this report.

### **III IV. Conclusion about the Program's Viability at CSU**

The criminal justice program at Columbus State University is not only viable but also essential, to the institution, community, region, state, and nation. The American criminal justice system is a constant. As a constant, the system requires individual, highly educated and trained people to maintain its very operation. The CSU program of criminal justice provides these graduates to the criminal justice system, at all levels. The majority of criminal justice graduates leave CSU with an overwhelming desire to put their degree to actual use within the system. This majority is able to find employment easily. They then thoroughly enjoy their work and are successful to the extreme and on all levels. These students are not recruited; they come to the criminal justice department themselves, on their own, searching for an education that will provide them with success in the workforce. They find it at Columbus State University in criminal justice and justice administration.

### **III V. Program Improvement Plan**

The Columbus State University criminal justice program does not intend on "standing still" and becoming complacent in status quo. As society changes, whether behaviorally, structurally, or culturally, and as more factions of the population get caught up in deviant and criminal behavior, the CSU criminal justice program will adapt and change to provide the student with the current and accurate knowledge he or she needs to compete successfully for employment in criminal justice. Crime will always exist in society; all aspects of the criminal justice system are required to deal with this one element of society that will not go away and that will continue to draw more and more citizens into its dysfunctional web. More and more individuals, educated in the field of criminal justice,

will be needed to protect the rest of society from the miscreants. This program will continue to adapt and format to the conditions of society, as required. This program will continue to pride itself in the effective productivity of qualified criminal justice practitioners.

**The three (3) most immediate improvements, as listed in the Executive Summary are 1) that addition on on-line courses for distance learning; 2) further inclusion of more interactive components for students that relate directly to the criminal justice system; and 3) the continued increase of professionalism on the part of, and within the character of criminal justice students prior to graduation and future employment.**

### **III VI. Summary Recommendation and Supporting Rationale**

**Recommendation: Continue to move the program forward and provide adaptability that parallels the current workings of the American criminal justice system**

As the Columbus State University criminal justice program continues to grow in number, the program will also grow and expand to accommodate the number of students finding their way to criminal justice at Columbus State. Qualified personnel will be added, curriculum will be activated and deactivated that is current, accurate and relevant to society today, and the program will continue to make itself more and more student friendly and interactive for the benefit of its student body. The next step, specifically, will be to add on-line courses and expand into distance learning as more resources are added.

**Further Supplemental and Support Materials Available Upon Request**