UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ARKANSAS
ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT PLAN
Requirements, Template, and Example

Requirements

1. *Submit with New Program Proposal*
    a. *Programs are encouraged to consult with the Office of University Assessment.*
    b. *Contact information assessment@uca.edu*
2. *Send copy of Assessment Plan to the Office of University Assessment, Wingo 215.*
3. *Update the Program Assessment Plan based upon EAPR or Accreditation Cycles.*

Basic Information

Program Name: Criminology

College: Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Department: Sociology, Criminology, and Anthropology

Program Level (check all that apply)

- ☐ Associate's
- X Bachelor's
- ☐ Undergraduate Certificate
- ☐ Master's
- ☐ Doctoral
- ☐ Graduate Certificate

Date Plan Submitted: 9/26/2025

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Department Chairperson & email: Edward Powers (epowers@uca.edu)
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1. **Introduction** (identify college, unit, and degree programs)

- The Criminology program is housed in the Department of Sociology, Criminology, and Anthropology within the College of Arts, Humanities, & Social Sciences. UCA offers a single degree in criminology: the Bachelor of Science degree.

  The Criminology program provides students opportunities to learn numerous conceptual and analytical strategies necessary for a deeper understanding of crime, criminal offending, criminal victimization, and justice systems. Students pursuing degrees in criminology develop an understanding of the logic and techniques used to scientifically examine crime trends, criminal behavior, legal systems, and justice practices. Criminology courses are designed to build knowledge about criminal law, crime, victimization, justice systems, and justice policies. Criminology courses are focused on scientific methodology and the skills

necessary to collect, organize, and analyze data related to crime, justice procedures, and justice outcomes. The required and elective courses associated with the criminology degree build an educational foundation for careers in fields such as criminological research, criminal law, public safety, and numerous other fields related to the comprehension and management of criminal behavior. For more information see **CRIM BS Checklist**.

- The mission of the Department of Sociology, Criminology, and Anthropology is to provide students opportunities to learn the conceptual perspectives and analytical tools necessary for understanding critical patterns of human behavior past, present, and in comparative perspective. The academic disciplines housed in this unit emphasize scholarly objectivity, theoretical knowledge, empirical skills, and communication practices related to the scientific investigation, evaluation, and management of human concerns.

2. Student Outcomes

- Statistical literacy: 100% of students will complete an introductory statistics course. Benchmark: 85% of students will earn a "C" or better in SOC 2321 (Social Statistics) indicating basic proficiency in the skillset.
- Methodological competence: 100% of students will complete a research methods course. Benchmark: 85% of students will earn "C" or better in research methodology (SOC 3320: Social Research Methods).
- Theory knowledge: 100% will complete a criminological theory course and 85% of students will earn a "C" or better in a social theory course (CRIM 3370: Criminology)
- Research performance: 100% of students will complete a senior research thesis paper and a research presentation. Benchmark: 85% of students will demonstrate at least basic proficiency in relation to methods, data analysis, results interpretation, and presentation sections of the thesis project produced in CRIM 4360 (Senior Seminar).

3. Assessment Cycle*

- Assessment Cycle will be determined with assistance from the Office of Assessment

4. Curriculum Map*

- Office of Assessment will provide examples and consultative services to meet this requirement.

5. Assessment Methods and Measures (Formative and Summative recommended)

- **Statistical literacy**
  - Statistical literacy outcomes will be assessed based on student performance distribution in SOC 2321 (Social Statistics) where the grade is comprised of exams that measure proficiency in key components of statistics (See Rubric 1 for details about the coordination between exams and components of statistical literacy).
  - Please note that criminology students are encouraged to take SOC 2321 to meet their statistics requirement, but other introductory statistics courses are sometimes substituted for this degree requirement.

- **Methodological competence**
  - Methodological competency outcomes will be assessed based on the student performance distribution in SOC 3320 (Research Methods). The grade for SOC 3320 is based on exam performance and a project. (See Rubric 2 for details about the

coordination between exams/projects and components of methodological competency).
    - Please note that criminology and sociology share methods, so SOC 3320 is an appropriate methods course for the criminology degree.

- **Theory knowledge**
    - Theory knowledge competency outcomes will be assessed based on the student performance distribution in CRIM 3370 (Criminology) where the grade is comprised of exams that align with theory competency outcomes. (See Rubric 3 for details about the components of theory knowledge).

- **Research performance**
    - Research performance competency outcomes will be assessed based on the student performance on a final thesis paper and a final research presentation in the program's capstone course: Senior Seminar (CRIM 4360). (See Rubric 4 for details about the components of research performance).

- **Overall performance**
    - The distribution of competence across the five areas (statistics, methods, theory, research, communication) will be recorded every semester where these courses are taught and compiled every academic year at the end of the spring semester.
    - Cohort performance will be tracked for each graduating class via Research Performance on final thesis projects produced in CRIM 4360.

6. Data Collection and Review

- *When will data be collected for each outcome?* Data will be collected at the close of every semester. Copies of final thesis papers and presentation slideshows will be retained for tracking cohort performance.
- *How will data be collected for each outcome?* Instructor of record will review student performance and report on performance after submitting final grades.
- *What will be the benchmark/target for each outcome?* (See Student Outcomes.)
- *What individuals/groups will be responsible for data collection?* Completed performance reports for SOC 2321, SOC 3320, CRIM 3370, and CRIM 4360 will be submitted to department chair for summarization and tracking. Final thesis projects will be reviewed by a group comprised of all faculty who teach CRIM 4360 and a summary report of strengths and weaknesses of student performance will be shared with the department chair.

7. Participation in Assessment Process

- Who will participate in carrying out the assessment plan? Faculty teaching required courses in statistics, research methods, social theory, and the capstone course will all participate in data collection. Faculty engaged in independent study with students, internships, service learning, experiential learning, and club/honor society activities will also contribute to the data collection by reporting selected activities.
- The department chair with assistance from the department's Administrative Specialist will be responsible for collating data submitted by faculty every semester and summarizing that data on an annual basis.
- The department chair will ensure that all data are stored properly and will ensure that all stored data and reports based on data comply with FERPA regulations.

8. Data Analysis

- Assessment data summaries will be made available to the faculty every year in the department's annual report.
- Every Spring, results will be discussed with program faculty in relation to benchmarks.
- If supplemental analyses are needed, a subcommittee of program faculty will be assembled to conduct additional analyses.

9. Plan for Using Assessment Results to Improve Program

How will you use the results to improve your program? Results will be summarized and analyzed after the first full year of implementation. Efforts will be made to track the relationship between concept performance at lower levels of the scaffold and capstone/career outcomes. Annual Spring meetings with program faculty will review outcomes and recommend necessary changes for the following academic year. Results will be compiled over time for use in Existing Academic Program Reviews.

10. What are the plans to evaluate students' post-graduate success?

Alums will be surveyed about career progress once a year after the first full year of implementation. Alums will be asked about career status, post-graduate applications of knowledge gained in the academic program, and post-graduate application of skills gained in the academic program. Post-UCA contact information will be collected from students as part of the senior capstone course (see Senior Exit Survey).

11. What are the plans to evaluate teaching effectiveness?

Teaching effectiveness will continue to be evaluated by the department chair on an annual basis using customary approaches that include review of syllabi content, review of assignments, review of student outcomes, and review of student evaluations. Untenured faculty, Lecturer I, and adjunct faculty will have an additional layer of review that involves at least one teaching observation every year. Peer-review of teaching will also be invoked at the request of the chair or on a voluntary basis at the request of any faculty member who needs additional support for teaching effectiveness. If concerns about an instructor's performance arise or if student outcomes fall below the desired threshold for two consecutive semesters, the pedagogical approach used in the course will be re-examined by the chair in consultation with the teachers assigned to the courses in question.

12. Appendices-Required….Curriculum Maps by Program, Assessment Tools (examples: Rubrics, Surveys, Tests, etc.), any other important materials/documentation

13. Submit Assessment Plan

- Send completed form electronically to assessment@uca.edu

For questions or concerns please contact:
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