

The College of New Jersey
Department of Criminology
Strategic Plan 2014

Over the past decade, the Department of Criminology has undergone fundamental changes to its curriculum and staffing and to the academic preparation of its majors. Principle among these changes were a shift from a pre-law focus to a focus on a criminology/criminal justice curriculum, a move away from faculty with legal educations to a faculty with graduate training in criminology, and an elevation of the academic requirements required of majors to graduate. In fall 2013 the Department underwent an external review. This strategic plan builds on the changes that the Department has already made and on the recommendations made by the Department's external reviewer and outlines short, mid and long-range goals that will continue the Department's evolutionary growth.

It should be noted that the Department has already acted on some of the recommendations made in the Department's fall 2013 external review. The Department has applied for a change in the degree that it grants from a Bachelor of Science to a Bachelor of Arts. Also, the Department conducted a faculty search this year and hired someone with GIS skills who can teach a new Introduction to GIS course. And the Department began this year offering a new required 200 level course as additional preparation for the Department's research methods course.

Short-term strategic goals (to be accomplished within 1-2 years)

1. Advising – the Department has been transitioning from an advising model wherein faculty members advised students at the same level (e.g., freshmen) to a cohort model, where faculty advisors are assigned a freshmen class and stay with that group throughout their tenure at TCNJ. Within the next two years the Department plans to complete this transition and to have a fully implemented cohort advising model. This is consistent with The College of New Jersey’s Strategic goals B and C, which call for The College to “strengthen advising to foster student learning and success.” This is also consistent with the School of Humanities and Sciences’ strategic goal D, which calls for an enhancement to student advising.
2. Post graduate tracking – The Department’s fall 2013 external review recommended that the Department survey graduates about their post-graduate education and/or employment in order to “establish a foundation from where to make better decisions regarding the future direction of the Department.” The Department will work with Alumni Affairs to see if a systematic post-graduate survey can be conducted of the Department’s graduates. Absent the ability of Alumni Affairs to assist, the Department will develop a survey of postgraduates that it will administer itself. This is aligned with The College of New Jersey’s strategic goal B of “strengthen(ing) TCNJ’s intellectual and community and focus(ing) academic programs” and is also aligned with the School of Humanities and Social Sciences’ strategic goal I, of having a relevant and challenging curriculum.

3. GIS training – the Department’s fall 2013 external review noted the centrality of GIS training in the field. The Department will develop a course proposal for an Introduction to GIS course and seek approval from the Curriculum Committee for this course. This is consistent with The College of New Jersey’s strategic goal B of “strengthen(ing) TCNJ’s intellectual and community and focus(ing) academic programs.” This is also consistent with the School of Humanities and Social Sciences’ strategic goal I, “all of our academic programs will teach students to read and think analytically, solve problems creatively, find and assess information carefully and use it judiciously...”.
4. Community Engaged Learning II (CEL II) – the Department piloted a CEL II course in the fall 2013 semester. While many aspects of the pilot were successful, many changes will have to be made in order to make this a course that can be regularly offered. The Department will prepare a proposal for the Dean’s review for a modified CEL II course that could be regularly offered. This is in accordance with The College of New Jersey’s strategic goals B and C, “identify and prioritize signature experiences and foster universal participation,” and also in accordance with the School of Humanities and Social Sciences’ strategic goal B, “increase opportunities for experiential learning,” and goal K, “we will improve our engagement with the larger community.”
5. As part of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences’ planning cycle, the Department will review its current learning outcomes in the 2014-2015

academic year. This is aligned with The College of New Jersey's strategic goals B and C, "use program assessment and prioritization to drive excellence," and with the School of Humanities and Social Sciences' strategic goal C, "we will systematically develop and implement assessment for all of our academic programs."

Mid-term strategic goals (to be accomplished within 3-4 years)

1. Internships – The Department currently has a credit-bearing internship course. The Department's fall 2013 external review noted that internships can "increase the attractiveness of graduating students to graduate programs, as well as increase the hiring of graduating students in local criminal justice agencies." The Department concurs and will look to increase the number of students who serve internships through the Department's credit-bearing course by making a discussion of internships a part of the advising experience. This is consistent with The College of New Jersey's strategic goals B and C, "foster engaged pedagogies and best practices wherever learning occurs," and with the School of Humanities and Social Sciences' strategic goal B, "increase opportunities for experiential learning."
2. Alumni and student affairs – currently the Department co-sponsors a Gene Carte Awards dinner with Alumni Affairs at which a distinguished alumnus and the Department's top graduating students are recognized. Also, the Department holds a separate induction ceremony for students admitted into Alpha Phi Sigma, the national criminal justice honor society. Alumni Affairs has indicated that it is probable that it will not co-sponsor this event in the

future. If necessary, the Department will develop a plan for an alternative ceremony to recognize its top seniors and those students admitted to Alpha Phi Sigma and will work with Alumni Affairs to support a separate alumni event(s). This is accordance with the School of Humanities and Social Sciences' strategic goal J, "improve and deepen our relationships with our alumni."

3. Relationships with criminal justice agencies – The Department will attempt to expand its partnerships with local criminal justice agencies in multiple ways. First, the Department will attempt to increase the number of students serving internships with these agencies. Second, the Department will explore opportunities for students to provide analytic support to criminal justice agencies. Third, the faculty will look to collaborate with these agencies on research that would be mutually beneficial to both the faculty and the agencies. This is aligned with The College of New Jersey's strategic goals B and C, "foster engaged pedagogies and best practices wherever learning occurs," and with the School of Humanities and Social Sciences' strategic goal B, "increase opportunities for experiential learning."

Long-term strategic goals (to be accomplished within 5-10 years)

1. Curriculum – The Department will re-evaluate its curriculum in light of data on the post graduate plans of graduates and in light of changes in the field of criminology. The Department will make changes that are necessary to better prepare its graduates for post-graduate education and/or employment. This

process has already begun with the Department's new Data Management and Analysis course and with the upcoming addition of an Introduction to GIS course. The Department will build on these changes in an evolutionary manner when it benefits our students to do so. This is consistent with The College of New Jersey's strategic goals B and C, "use program assessment and prioritization to drive excellence." This is also consistent with the School of Humanities and Social Sciences' strategic goal C(7), "we will assess and enhance the ways in which our curricula support student development during and after college."