

CRIMINOLOGY AREA EXAMINATION
GENERAL STATEMENT AND GUIDELINES
(Revised April, 2006)

I. Purpose

The Criminology Area Examination provides the criminology faculty an opportunity to assess the level of mastery doctoral students have achieved in the area of sociological criminology. As outlined in the Department of Sociology's "Doctoral Program" document, the purpose of area examinations is to determine whether students have attained a level of mastery that is sufficient for becoming a viable professional in the sociological discipline.

The Criminology Area Examination should be viewed as an opportunity to develop as a scholar in the field of criminology. Preparing for the examination will lead students to synthesize criminological knowledge and to develop their own understanding of the discipline. Sustained reflection and study of criminological theory and research, both classic and contemporary, will provide students with a firm foundation for organizing their own research program which should yield conference presentations and publications. Moreover, systematic scrutiny of the state of criminological knowledge will also leave students in a favorable position to develop courses in their future teaching endeavors. Finally, acquiring and studying the books and articles central to the criminological discipline will assist students in the development of a library which will serve them well in their professional roles of researcher and teacher.

Doctoral students who wish to claim expertise in the field of criminology are expected to demonstrate both depth and breadth in their general and integrative knowledge of theories of crime and delinquency and criminological methods. They should be able to evidence a solid understanding of the standard criminological theories, to discuss classic and contemporary research and empirical evidence with respect to each of these theories, to demonstrate competency with respect to the manifold research methods employed in criminological investigations, and to apply critical thinking skills to these theories and methods. Students must also demonstrate a familiarity with the current issues and debates that surround these theories and use of methods in the field.

II. Format

The Criminology Area Examination will consist of a written portion and an oral portion.

- A. *Written Portion of the Examination.* The written portion of the examination will be completed as a "take home" examination, and will allow for students to use notes and sources for their written portion. Students will be given the test questions at 8:00 AM on a Monday and have until 5:00 P.M. the following Friday to complete the exam, which should be stored on a portable diskette for purposes of distribution. There will

be three questions administered. Students will be expected to keep their answers to a 20 page maximum *per question*.

For the first question, students will be asked to select one question from at least two options that deal with criminological theories and research that tests these theories. These questions are designed to allow students to demonstrate both the depth and breadth in their general and integrative knowledge of criminological theories and their empirical status. Answers to these questions should be both succinct and comprehensive.

For the second question, students will be asked to select one question from at least two options that deal with criminological research methods. These questions are designed to allow students to demonstrate their knowledge of data collection techniques (both qualitative and quantitative) and statistical methods used in the field of criminology. Answers to these questions should be both succinct and comprehensive.

The third question will offer a choice between at least two alternatives, and will cover criminological theories, research methods, or a combination of theories and methods. These questions are designed to allow students to demonstrate both the depth and breadth in their general and integrative knowledge of criminological theories and/or research methods.

- B. *Oral Portion of the Examination.* Within three weeks of the completion of the written examination, an oral examination shall be held on a date scheduled by the Chair in consultation with the student and the Criminology Area Examination Committee. The oral examination will provide students an opportunity to revisit each question addressed on the written examination in order to extend and clarify their responses. Faculty members will ask questions that allow students to further demonstrate their mastery of the field of criminology. Faculty questions may focus on the written responses, questions from the written examination that were not selected, or any other relevant criminological topic.

III. Composition of the Criminology Area Examination Committee

The Criminology Area Examination Committee for any particular examination will consist of the standing Chair and two criminology faculty members selected by the criminology faculty. The standing Chair will serve a one year term from January to December while the other two members will rotate each semester. In 2005, the standing Chair will be Professor Carlson.

IV. Declaring an Intention to Take the Criminology Area Examination

Students who would like to sit for the Criminology Area Examination must attend an orientation session that will be held approximately six months prior to the administration of the Fall examination (i.e., an orientation session in April) and Spring examination (i.e., an orientation session in September). Attendance at the orientation session serves as a formal declaration of one's intention to sit for the Criminology Area Examination at its next administration. Students may formally declare their intention to take the Criminology Area Examination and later decide not to sit for the examination once, with a second occurrence resulting in a failure on the examination.

V. Preparation

A [general reading list](#) of books, edited volumes, and articles in criminology, which the criminology faculty consider to be core knowledge in the discipline, is provided to guide students in their preparations for the Criminology Area Examination. In preparing for the examination, students should develop a capacity to think in terms of the central theoretical perspectives, methodological approaches, and key empirical tests represented by this general reading list. The reading list also contains a list of the most important journals in the field of criminology. Students should consult these journals for empirical tests of the theories that appear on the general reading list. This general reading list will be revised by the criminology faculty every two years.

In order to qualify for a seat at the Criminology Area Examination, students must earn a grade of "B" or better in SOC660 (Seminar on Theories of Crime), SOC665 (Research Issues in Criminology), and in at least one other criminology seminar such as SOC560 (Corporate and Governmental Crime), SOC561 (Violence and U.S. Society), SOC562 (Victimology), SOC563 (Gender and Justice), SOC568 (Race, Ethnicity, and Justice), SOC578 (Sociology of Law), SOC590 (Surveillance and Society), SOC590 (Media and Crime), SOC610 (Deviance and Social Problems Theory), SOC661 (Seminar on Current Issues in Criminology), SOC663 (Comparative Criminology), and SOC664 (Studies in Criminology -- Variable Topics).

[Questions from previous administrations](#) of the Criminology Area Examination are available for students to inspect and study. Students should also meet individually with criminology faculty for further guidance on preparing for the written and oral portions of the examination.

VI. Examination Schedule

The Criminology Area Examination will be administered twice a year, once during the Spring Semester (February) and once during the Fall Semester (October). In Fall 2005, the examination will be given on October 21. Please note that examinations are not given during the Summer Sessions.

VI. Assessment

At the conclusion of the oral portion of the examination, faculty members on the Criminology Area Examination Committee will confer amongst themselves for purposes of arriving at a formal assessment of a student's performance on both portions of the examination. The committee will determine with a unanimous vote whether a student has passed or failed the examination. When the committee is unable to reach unanimity, they may award an incomplete and request additional written work and/or a second oral examination before making their final decision. An incomplete can be given, however, only if the committee agrees that a student has passed on two out of three questions. If a student is given an incomplete by the committee, the standing Chair will provide a written statement to the student and her/his doctoral advisor that specifies the required additional work. A final decision of pass or fail must be made by the committee within six weeks of the date of the assignment of the incomplete. Students who fail the Criminology Area Examination will be permitted to take the examination one more time.

- VII. You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the policies and procedures in the Graduate Catalog that pertain to academic integrity. These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity and computer misuse. If it is determined that you have been involved in academic dishonesty in the area examination, this will result in your failing the examination. You will also be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. You will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s). If you believe you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. Please consult with the chair of the Areas Exam Committee if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of this exam.

VIII. Record

The standing Chair of the Criminology Area Examination Committee will prepare a written record of a student's performance on the Criminology Area Examination that shall be placed in the student's academic file.

IX. Criminology Faculty

Faculty Member	Research Interests
Susan Caringella-MacDonald	Gender and Crime, Political Economy and Crime, Popular Culture, Media, and Crime, Punishment and Crime, Race/Ethnicity and Crime, and Social Class and Crime

Susan M. Carlson (Standing Chair, 2005)	Political Economy of Crime and Social Control, Research Methods in Criminology, Public Policy and Crime Control, and Social Disorganization Models of Community Crime Control
Susan L. Caulfield	Juvenile Delinquency, Measurement of Crime, Public Policy and Crime Control, Restorative Justice, Violence, and White-Collar, Corporate, and State Crime
Charles E. Crawford	Crime Prevention, Drugs and Crime, Law Enforcement, Political Economy and Crime, Popular Culture, Media, and Crime, Punishment and Social Control, Race/Ethnicity and Crime, Social Class and Crime, and Violence
Barry Goetz	Crime Prevention, Drugs and Crime, Regulatory Process, Law Enforcement, Political Economy and Crime, Public Policy and Crime Control, Punishment and Social Control, Restorative Justice, and White-Collar, Corporate, and State Crime
Gregory J. Howard	Comparative Criminology, Developmental Criminology, Evolutionary Theory and Crime, Punishment and Social Control, and Surveillance
Ronald Kramer	Political Economy and Crime, Public Policy and Crime Control, White-Collar, Corporate, and State Crime
Angela M. Moe	Gender and Crime, Juvenile Delinquency, Race/Ethnicity and Crime, Victimology, and Violence against Women
Zoann K. Snyder	Gender and Crime, Popular Culture, Media, and Crime, Public Policy and Crime Control, Race/Ethnicity and Crime, and Sociology of Law
Rachel Bridges Whaley	Comparative Criminology, Developmental Criminology, Gender and Crime, Juvenile Delinquency, Measurement of Crime, Race/Ethnicity and Crime, Social Class and Crime, and Violence.

