



Master of Science in Criminal Justice *Frequently Asked Questions*

GENERAL INFORMATION

For general information visit:

Master of Science in Criminal Justice at <http://www.ecu.edu/che/just/graduate.html>

ECU catalog at <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/grcat/programJUST.cfm>

ECU Graduate School (admissions and policies) at <http://www.ecu.edu/gradschool/>

For other questions write us at:

MSCJ@ecu.edu

APPLICATION

For more application information visit the ECU Graduate School website at <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/gradschool/applicationinfo.cfm>

Are there deadlines for submitting my application?

Yes, both the ECU Graduate School and the MSCJ program have application deadline schedules. More information on the Graduate School can be found at the link above.

The MSCJ schedule is:

Fall Admission- April 1

Spring Admission- October 1

Note that applications for the MSCJ distance education (online) program are being accepted during a special period of April 1-July 15, 2011 for Fall 2011 admissions only (eligibility conditions apply).

ADMISSIONS

ECU GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Does ECU have minimum admission requirements for graduate study?

*Yes, the East Carolina University Graduate School has specific admission requirements for **all** graduate programs. The basic requirements are:*

- 1) Completed application form, application fee;
- 2) Official transcripts for all colleges/universities attended;

- 3) Three (3) letters of recommendation;
- 4) Statement of Intent; and
- 5) GRE scores (ECU's GRE code is 5180)

Do I have to take the GRE test?

*Yes, the East Carolina University Graduate School requires **all** applicants to graduate programs to take the GRE or equivalent standardized test depending on the discipline. The MSCJ requires the GRE test and will not accept other standardized test types. For more information on the GRE visit www.ets.org/gre.*

Is there a minimum score on the GRE test required for admission?

The East Carolina University Graduate School requires at or above 30 percentile averaged verbal and quantitative GRE score for regular admission. Their policy states:

“To qualify for regular admission to a degree program, an applicant must have a standardized test score at or above the 30th percentile and either an overall GPA of 2.7 on a 4.0 scale on all undergraduate work or a graduate GPA of 3.0. For the GRE, the verbal and quantitative percentiles are averaged.”

However, the Master of Science in Criminal Justice (MSCJ) Admissions Committee may recommend to the Graduate School that an applicant be admitted “by exception,” or with “stipulated conditions,” if they deem that the applicant’s GRE deficiency is somewhat offset by other factors such as GPA. It’s important to note, however, that this is determined on a case by case basis and other factors do not automatically compensate for an unsatisfactory GRE score.

Should I study or prepare before taking the GRE test?

Yes, there are several commercial study and practice guides available for persons preparing for the GRE test. For many, it’s ill-advised to take the test without preparation, practice, and review of material in subject areas of weakness. For more information check with a bookstore and/or visit www.ets.org/gre.

Is there a minimum GPA required for admission?

Yes, the applicant must have a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution of higher education with an overall GPA of at least a 2.7 on a 4.0 scale. Again, the Graduate School policy states:

“To qualify for regular admission to a degree program, an applicant must have a standardized test score at or above the 30th percentile and either an overall GPA of 2.7 on a 4.0 scale on all undergraduate work or a graduate GPA of 3.0. For the GRE, the verbal and quantitative percentiles are averaged.”

MSCJ ADMISSIONS

Does the MSCJ program have other admission requirements?

Yes, see below.

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited academic institution with a minimum overall undergraduate grade point average of 2.7 on a 4.0 scale is required. Transfer credit must be established at the time of admittance.
- **Resident admissions** - Applicants must submit 1) satisfactory entrance examination scores on the GRE or TOEFL as established by the Graduate School, 2) official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate work since graduating high school, 3) three current letters of reference , 4) a statement of purpose that describes the applicant's relevant work experience, short- and long-term goals, and specific interests in the master's of criminal justice program (500-750 words, single spaced, typewritten), and 5) a personal interview may be requested.
- **Distance education (DE) admissions** - All requirements for resident admissions apply to DE admissions. DE applicants must also be employed as a criminal justice practitioner or practitioner in a closely related field and have a minimum of five years of full-time (paid) employment experience in such positions. Written employment verification is required on official agency letterhead and it must be signed by an agency administrator.

Is there more than one admission classification for the MSCJ?

Yes, students can be admitted into the MSCJ program as 1) resident or 2) distance education

Are both classifications available to applicants or students?

No, only criminal justice practitioners with a minimum of five years of full-time paid employment are eligible for the "distance education" admission.

Does an eligible criminal justice practitioner have to provide official verification of their work experience?

Yes, a letter on official agency letterhead, that bears an original signature of the top agency administrator (i.e., Chief, Sheriff, Commissioner, or Director), affirming that the applicant meets the employment requirements must be submitted with the application packet.

Can I change from one admission classification to another, such as resident admission to distance education, once I am admitted into the MSCJ program?

Students can only change admission classification if they satisfy these requirements 1) change to distance education admission classification must meet the eligibility requirements; 2) submit

a completed departmental admission transfer request form along with required documentary verification, if applicable; and 3) obtain prior written departmental approval.

OTHER PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESSES

How do I know which courses to take?

The official MSCJ degree requirements are listed in the ECU Graduate Catalog as well as shown on the Department of Criminal Justice website. Both links are included above. It's important to note, however, that each semester may have different course offerings based upon factors such as curriculum, faculty, and student needs. Students should review the semester course offering on the ECU web each semester prior to or during the pre-registration period to make course selections.

How do I register for courses once I'm admitted into the MSCJ program?

Students will be contacted by the MSCJ coordinator, or designee, to determine the best courses for them to take in the upcoming semester. The coordinator will register the student in the course(s) once that is determined. This procedure is used to ensure that each student is enrolled in the correct course(s).

Do I have to take a comprehensive examination to complete the MSCJ?

*Yes, **all** students must successfully pass the multi-question comprehensive examination to fulfill the program requirements for the degree. After satisfactory completion of at least 27 semester hours of MSCJ course work, including all core courses, students can register with the MSCJ coordinator, or designee, to take the examination next time it's offered. Typically, the comprehensive examination is offered each fall and spring semester during the academic year.*

Can I take the comprehensive examination more than once?

*Yes, students are allowed a maximum of **two** attempts to successfully pass the comprehensive examination. The ECU Graduate catalog states "A comprehensive examination is required for completion of the master's degree in criminal justice and can be taken after the completion of 27 semester hours (s.h.) and all core courses. Students are allowed a maximum of two attempts to successfully pass the examination."*

Can I obtain a Graduate Certificate in Security Studies at the same time as the Master of Science in Criminal Justice?

Yes, the MSCJ program requires 15 semester hours of elective courses which can include those offered in the Graduate Certificate in Security Studies program in the Department of Political Science. The policy states

“...up to 15 s.h. of courses required for the Graduate Certificate in Security Studies can be transferred as electives for the Master of Science in Criminal Justice. See Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Political Science” at

<http://www.ecu.edu/polsci/sec/gc.html>

Who can I speak with if I have other questions?

Students can contact the departmental graduate coordinator, or designee, if they have other questions. The contact information is available in the above web links or

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