

Midwestern Criminal Justice Association

49th Annual Meeting



*Will the Center Hold?: Evidence-Based Practice and Community Trust
in an Era of Shifting Truths*

September 24th & 25th, 2026
Aloft Chicago Mag Mile

[MCJA.org](https://www.mcja.org)

**Midwestern Criminal Justice Association
2025 – 2026 Executive Board**

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Midwestern Criminal Justice Association

Past Presidents

2024 – 2025	Catherine Pape	2000 – 2001	Dean Champion
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2008 – 2009	Daniel Dahlgren	1984 – 1985	Jeffrey Schrink
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2006 – 2007	Charles Corley	1982 – 1983	Bill Wakefield
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2004 – 2005	Thomas Castellano	1980 – 1981	Jack Greene
2003 – 2004	James Frank	1979 – 1980	Gary Tucker
2002 – 2003	Michael Leiber	1978 – 1979	G.L. Kuchel
2001 – 2002	Kevin Bryant	1977 – 1978	Bob Parsons

The Journal of Crime & Justice

Call for Papers

The *Journal of Crime & Justice*, the official journal of the Midwestern Criminal Justice Association, is a peer-reviewed journal featuring original scholarly work in the areas of crime and criminal justice. Published five times a year, *JC&J* welcomes quantitative and qualitative articles as well as theoretical commentaries. Special topic issues are also welcomed.

<https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/rjci>

Dr Jennifer H. Peck, University of Central Florida, Editor



Interested in submitting? Need Inspiration?

...Find out what others have been writing about:

Recent Most Read Articles:

Cassandra Cross & Thomas J. Holt: "Beyond fraud and identity theft: assessing the impact of data breaches on individual victims"

Michael T. Rossler & Charles Scheer: "Explaining Police Officer Intentions to Leave Their Career Field"

Recent Special Topic Issue:

Michael D. Niño, Grant Drawve & Kayla Allison: "Intersections of Crime and Health: Structural Inequalities, Spatial Dynamics, and Policy"

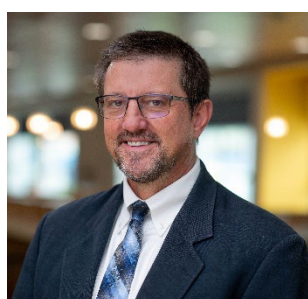
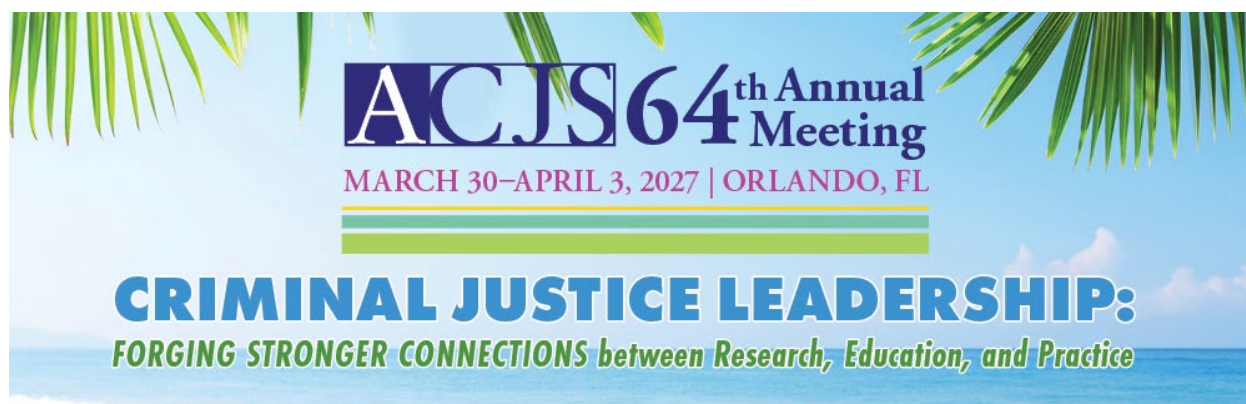
Recent Rapid Communications:

James A. Densley & Jillian K. Peterson: "Murder in a time of crisis: a qualitative exploration of the 2020 homicide spike through offender interviews"

James Tuttle: "The age-crime curve is dead, long live the age-crime curve! An examination of the FBI's 2024 arrest data"

Submit your article online here:
<https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/rjci>

www.tandfonline.com/rjci



Join ACJS President Dr. David Myers and a distinguished community of scholars, practitioners, and emerging leaders in criminal justice for the **ACJS 64th Annual Meeting, March 30 – April 3, 2027, in Orlando, Florida**. This premier gathering fosters rigorous scholarly exchange, professional development, and meaningful collaboration across research, policy, and practice.

Why Attend?

-  Engage with cutting-edge research and evidence-based practices
-  Connect with over 1,500 academic and industry professionals
-  Participate in dynamic panels, roundtables, and networking events
-  Support the next generation of scholars and practitioners

Opportunities to Participate

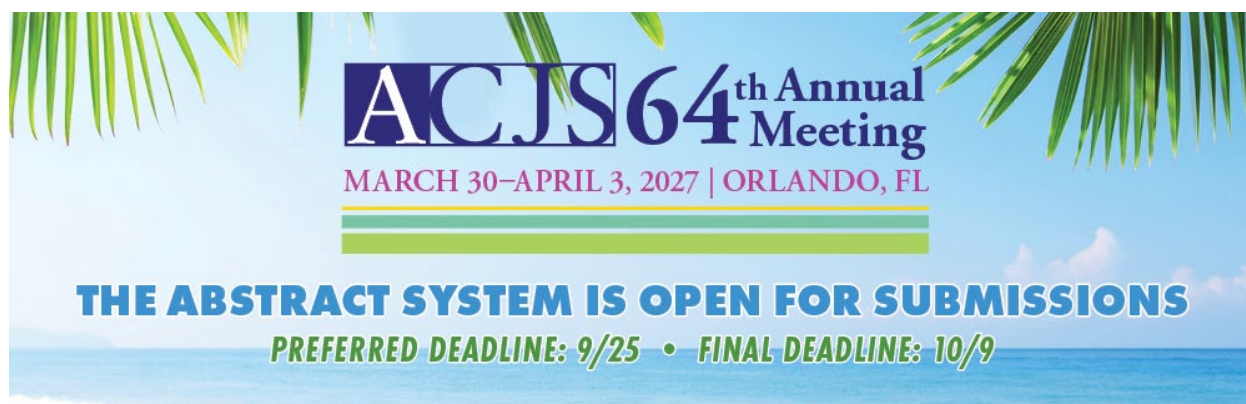
Faculty, practitioners, and graduate students are encouraged to contribute to this vibrant intellectual forum. Share your research, present innovative practices, and engage in discussions that shape the future of criminal justice and criminology.

SAVE, SAVE, SAVE!

Early Bird Registration is available through February 12, 2027.
Visit, <https://s5.goeshow.com/acjs/annual/2027/registration2027.cfm>.

Abstract Submission Deadline (September 26, preferred; October 9, final):
<https://s5.goeshow.com/acjs/annual/2027/abstractsubmission.cfm>

Hotel & Travel Information (Gaylord Palms):
https://s5.goeshow.com/acjs/annual/2027/hotel_travel.cfm



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION DEADLINE APPROACHING!

Criminal justice education and research are vital. At the Annual Meeting, ACJS offers researchers and practitioners a valuable forum to share their work with national and international audiences.

The 2027 Program Committee invites strong, timely, and relevant abstract submissions across a range of topics for the ACJS 64th Annual Meeting, March 30–April 3, 2027, in Orlando, FL. Presenting at the Annual Meeting is an excellent opportunity to share research, data, studies, and outcomes with colleagues in the field.

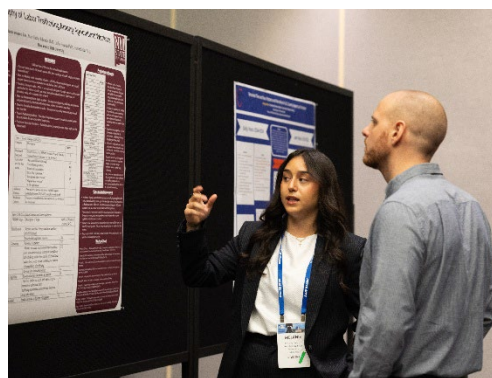
Please review the **Call for Presentations** webpage at <https://s5.goeshow.com/acjs/annual/2027/abstractsubmission.cfm> for details and submit your abstract before the deadline, September 25, preferred; October 9, final.

SPECIAL ALERT!

STUDENTS:

Students are encouraged to participate in the program through presentation opportunities designed specifically to include graduate students such as:

- Student Complete Panel
- Paper Presentation
- Research Pictorial Showcase (Research Poster).



Whether you are a seasoned academic professional, practitioner, or student do not miss your opportunity to join an outstanding program already in development. Submit your abstract and register at <https://s5.goeshow.com/acjs/annual/2027/registration2027.cfm> today.



Advance your career. Shape the future of justice.

We invite you to explore your graduate career options at the **#2 ranked CCJ doctoral program**, where our community-engaged research is charting a path forward in the dynamic field of criminology and criminal justice. The School of Criminology and Criminal Justice is recruiting graduate students for our research-focused MS and PhD programs. We are also recruiting for our new Doctor of Criminal Justice (DCJ) degree. The DCJ is offered via ASU Sync (weekly meetings via Zoom). ASU is proud to be a Hispanic-Serving Institution and continues to be **ranked #1 in innovation** by U.S. News & World Report. Join us to engage in community-embedded research and work closely with top-ranked faculty who are impacting all areas of the criminal justice system.

Criminology and Criminal Justice, MS

Gain advanced training in research, policy and data analysis to prepare for careers in criminal justice agencies, research organizations and policy institutions. Students are also well-prepared for continued study as doctoral students. No GRE required.

Criminology and Criminal Justice, PhD

Join a top-ranked doctoral program designed for students pursuing academic or research-intensive careers. Direct admission is available for exceptional undergraduates. Competitive funding packages include tuition support and health insurance. GRE optional.

Doctor of Criminal Justice, DCJ

The DCJ is a professional doctoral degree program designed for practitioners in the criminal justice professions who aspire to be experts, combining practical and academic knowledge to solve complex justice issues. Offered via ASU Sync, students will meet live once a week via Zoom.

For application or enrollment information, visit:

PhD Program: bit.ly/ccjphd

DCJ Program: bit.ly/3ZMTkKy

Master's Program: bit.ly/44xTkAB

Questions? Email: sccjgrad@asu.edu



Congratulations!



Jacob Young
Promoted to Professor



Abigail Henson
Promoted to Associate
Professor

**Join us in
welcoming our
new faculty:**



Caroline Waisn
Assistant Teaching
Professor

**Learn more about
our top-ranked
graduate programs:**





Prepare for the
evolution of the
**JUSTICE
SYSTEM.**



Earn your **Master of Arts in Justice Administration** from AU and learn how to build public trust, leverage data, use strategic communication, and lead effectively through any situation.



FUTURE-FOCUSED

Develop a futurist mindset by exploring emerging technologies like AI and biometrics.



FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE

Balance your studies with your personal and professional responsibilities.



EXPERT FACULTY

Learn from expert faculty members who have real-world experience.



Apply at **aurora.edu/onlineapp**.

AURORA UNIVERSITY

630-947-8955 | AUadmission@aurora.edu | aurora.edu/graduate



Transform your future in **CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

***Online* BACHELOR'S AND MASTER'S PROGRAMS**

Bowling Green State University offers the ideal degree programs for working professionals looking to advance their careers and become leaders in the criminal justice field. You will go further faster with our accelerated MSCJ programs.

- 100% online
- Study at your own pace
- 7-week classes

WHY BGSU?

Strong reputation. The BGSU criminal justice program is one of the oldest in the nation and one of the best in Ohio.

Level up your degree. Build on your associate degree to earn your bachelor's or prepare for management positions with a master's degree.

Proven results. We are known for educating future criminal justice leaders who:

- Identify and propose solutions to problems confronting the criminal justice system
- Critically evaluate crime policies and practices
- Equip students with the skills to be leaders and change-makers in their communities

Expert faculty. Our faculty bring a wealth of experience in law enforcement, corrections, juvenile justice and the criminal justice system with the majority of faculty actively engaged in research or practice.

READY TO LEARN MORE?

Undergraduate programs
Catherine Pape
criminaljustice@bgsu.edu

Graduate programs
Eric Cooke
mscj@bgsu.edu

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Earn a degree in just two years.

Online degree-completion program. Designed for those with an associate degree or similar undergraduate credit in criminal justice or a related field who are working in criminal justice, social services or the military.

A career builder. Having a bachelor's degree typically leads to pay increases. Most larger agencies prefer employees to have four-year degrees and almost always require one for promotions.

Credit for experience. Your current employment or previous training may translate to internship credit.

Earn your master's in one extra year. Save money and time in our accelerated bachelor's to master's degree program. Take up to three graduate courses (9 graduate credit hours) that count toward both degrees.

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Earn a degree in as little as 18 months.

Nationally ranked program. Our online criminal justice master's program is one of the top programs in Ohio and is ranked 15th in the U.S.

Convenient and flexible.

- 6 start dates
- 7-week semesters
- Log in to class when it works for you

In-demand skills. Courses integrate theory, research and the practical experience that will prepare you to tackle today's criminal justice challenges. Learn how to:

- Lead and manage in criminal justice departments and programs
- Critically evaluate policies and programs
- Uphold and promote ethical standards
- Communicate effectively in dynamic environments

Professional growth. The master's program prepares you to advance to leadership positions in criminal justice and federal law enforcement such as chief of police, chief probation officer, prison warden, juvenile justice corrections officer, criminal justice analyst and community corrections specialist.





Boise State University's Criminal Justice program offers an exceptional experience driven by a faculty dedicated to scholarship, research, and quality instruction. This commitment translates into state-of-the-art graduate courses, unique opportunities for impactful faculty-student research collaborations, and community partnerships that offer meaningful service potential directly tied to the discipline, preparing students to be leaders and innovators in criminal justice.

Dr. William King, Graduate Coordinator

Professor and Program Lead: Policing, forensic organizations, CJ systems.



Dr. Lucas Alward, Assistant Professor: Probation /parole, procedural justice, legitimacy, reentry, evidence-best corrections.

Dr. Linsey Belisle, Assistant Professor: Adult & juvenile corrections. Gender-responsive approaches.

Dr. Lisa Growette Bostaph, Professor: Domestic /sexual violence, discretionary decision-making, criminal justice education.

Dr. Jacqueline Lee, Associate Professor: Courts, sentencing, courtroom workgroups.

Dr. Cody Jorgensen, Associate Professor: Gun violence, drug policy, biosocial criminology.

Dr. Laura King, Professor: Sexual violence, victimology, gender and crime.

Dr. Jessica Wells, Associate Professor: Trauma sources & response, substance use, psychological traits.

Dr. Andrew Giacomazzi, Professor and Associate Dean of the School of Public Service.

Boise State University's Master of Arts degree in criminal justice is designed to provide a foundation in applied research and theory by offering seminars in substantive areas of criminal justice, and focused scholarship on issues of importance in a variety of fields.

Explore our program and begin your application today!



Graduate Coordinator Dr. William King: billking@boisestate.edu

Application Deadlines

FALL: April 1, priority January 15

SPRING: September 15

Welcome to the 2026 Midwestern Criminal Justice Association Conference!

On behalf of the Midwestern Criminal Justice Association (MCJA) Executive Board and membership, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the 49th annual MCJA conference. I am certain this will serve as a wonderful opportunity for all attendees to share, learn, network, and foster meaningful collaborations that can lead to advancements in the field of Criminology and Criminal Justice. We appreciate your continual support and participation, which undoubtedly makes our annual meeting so successful.

This year's conference features a variety of sessions that provide many opportunities for learning and engagement. A few notable sessions are listed below.

- **Keynote Address (Thursday, 4:30pm, Warhol 1 & 2)**
Dr. Christopher Sullivan will present *Applied Criminology and the Common Good: Can Thoughtful Scholarship and Active Citizenship Coexist?*
- **Student Poster Session (Friday, 5:30pm, Escher & Mondrian)**
To be considered for the *Student Poster Competition* awards, attendance at both the judging and open poster sessions is mandatory
- **Business Meeting & Award Ceremony (Friday, 4:15, Warhol 1 & 2)**
The MCJA Business Meeting and Award Ceremony is open to all meeting attendees. Highlights include association updates, thank you/recognitions, and the announcement of the 2026-2027 Executive Board. Additionally, recipients for the following awards will be recognized:
 - *Journal of Crime and Justice* Outstanding Paper Award
 - Practitioner Award; Tom Castellano Award
 - Student Travel Awards; Student Paper Awards; Student Poster Awards
- **Receptions & Lunch**
 - *Coffee & Breakfast Snacks* – Thursday & Friday morning from 8:00 am to 10:30 am (co-sponsored by ACJS)
 - *Welcome Reception* featuring Chicago food classics – Thursday at 6:00 pm (co-sponsored by Routledge)
 - *Lunch Buffet* – Friday afternoon at 11:45 am
 - *Presidential Reception* – Friday evening at 5:30 pm

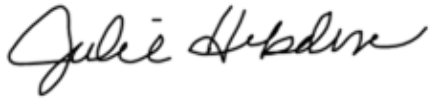
Additionally, I would like to extend our gratitude to everyone who helped make this conference a success. First and foremost, this annual meeting would not be possible without the generous support of our sponsors/partners and advertisers as well as Ashley Sola and the team at Aloft Chicago Mag Mile. Thank you to the many colleagues who have provided service to MCJA in the form of the Student Affairs Committee (Mackenzie Grace, Melissa Burek, Lisa Growette Bostaph, Sara Lucak, Catherine Pape, Jen Peck, and Joseph Scafer) as well as the judges of the Student Paper Competition (Catherine Pape, Eric Lamber and David White) and Student Poster Competition (Lisa Growette Bostaph, Brice Terpstra, Eric Grommon, Tri Keah Henry, Cory Haberman, Lane Gillespie, and Omeed Ilchi). A very special thank you to Melissa Burek, Catherine Pape, and the Bowling Green State University (BGSU) students for organizing and staffing conference registration.

To the 2025 – 2026 MCJA Executive Board (Mike Vecchio, Eric Grommon, Eric Cooke, Audrey Hickert, & Catherine Pape), as well as Matt Matusiak (Membership Chair) and Breanne Pleggenkuhle (Webmaster) - thank you for all your hard work this past year. Thanks to the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS), including David Myer (ACJS President) and Dena Carson (ACJS Region 3–Midwest Trustee) as well as Jen Peck (Editor) and her editorial staff (Sara Lucak & Editorial Board members) at the *Journal of Crime and Justice*.

Finally, thank you to all our members and meeting participants for your support, attendance, and engagement. The opportunities and successes of MCJA would not be possible without you.

We hope you enjoy your time here at the conference and we look forward to seeing you again in September 2027!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Julie Hibdon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Julie Hibdon

1st Vice President & Program Chair (2025-2026)

Associate Professor & Director, Criminal & Justice Studies

University of Missouri

jhibdon@health.missouri.edu



DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

Criminology

Analyze evidence
Question assumptions
Advance justice

Bachelor of Arts:
In person or Online

Contact us at criminology@depaul.edu

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

School of Criminal Justice



Master of Science in Criminal Justice Administration

Ready to Move Forward

As you advance in your career, you've probably realized that a master's degree would help you develop and enhance the administrative skills you need to move up through the ranks of your agency. In addition to giving you the skills and credentials needed for promotion, this degree is designed to meet the theoretical and analytical needs of people continuing on with doctoral or law studies.

Questions about admissions and curriculum should be directed to the School of Criminal Justice in Big Rapids.

Online – this format enables working professionals to balance career demands with graduate-level learning through flexible, accessible, and high-quality instruction.

Required Core (15 credit hours)

Administration (9 credit hours)

Culminating Experience (6 credit hours)



If you have any questions please contact the Graduate Coordinator at masterofcriminaljustice@ferris.edu.

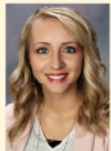


Criminal Justice Faculty



Tamara J. Lynn, Ph.D. (Kansas State University), Professor.

Specialties: Research generalist, social movement organizations, police response to protest, de-escalation training for law enforcement, pedagogies, policy development, and grant writing.



April N. Terry, Ph.D. (Kansas State University), Professor.

Specialties: Juvenile justice, gender and crime, rural criminology and gender-based violence.



Morgan Steele, Ph.D. (University of Cincinnati), Associate Professor.

Specialties: Police decision-making and strategy, community criminology, quantitative methods, experiment design, and use of forensic evidence.



Ziwei Qi, Ph.D. (University of North Dakota), Associate Professor.

Specialties: Rural victimology, health equity, and economic justice for survivors of gender-based violence.



Troy Terry, M.L.S. (Fort Hays State University), Instructor.

Specialties: Policy evaluation, implementation, and improvement across the criminal justice system.





- ▶ Research, internships, and student employment opportunities in the program's two centers
- ▶ Center for Empowering Victims of Gender-based Violence, which is a regional hub of collaborative research and service.
- ▶ Central Region of the National De-escalation Training Center, which trains law enforcement in the only level 3 de-escalation training available across the globe.

The Criminal Justice Program has secured more than \$3.55 million dollars from the Office of Community Policing Services and Bureau of Justice Assistance to deliver this training to law enforcement and support personnel across the U.S.

PROGRAMS

Bachelor of Arts or Science in Criminal Justice:

- Programs can be completed on campus and online
- Internships available working with agencies or organizations at the local, state, regional, and national levels
- Students can earn one or more interdisciplinary certificates

Master of Professional Studies, Criminal Justice Concentration:

- Prepares students for doctoral study
- Prepares students for administrative positions in a range of criminal justice careers
- High achieving students can apply to the accelerated program to complete the masters in one year following the bachelors degree

Bachelor of Science in Criminalistics:

- Interdisciplinary Program
- Program core includes criminal justice and chemistry focus
- Students will select a concentration in biology, chemistry, or geosciences

Financial Forensics and Fraud Investigation:

- Interdisciplinary Program
- Program core includes criminal justice and chemistry focus
- Prepares graduates for the Certified Fraud Examiner credential

Classes taught by award-winning faculty

Courses include experiential-learning projects such as service-learning, problem-based research, job shadowing, and other high impact practices to engage students in the community and career field

The award-winning Criminal Justice Club engages members in career specific service, educational activities, and travels to regional and national conferences of the American Criminal Justice Association





Master in Public Administration with Criminal Justice Concentration

The Master of Science (M.S.) in Public Administration (Criminal Justice Concentration) uniquely prepares students for an advanced career in public service. Accredited by [The Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration](#), the MPA-CJ degree provides students with a comprehensive understanding of public and human services and their real-world application to the criminal justice system. Designed for individuals aiming to advance in public administration and/or criminal justice, the program cultivates well-rounded professionals ready to make a meaningful impact in their communities.

Why study at GVSU?

- Relevant coursework in Criminal Justice Systems, Public Service Leadership, Legal & Ethical Issues, etc., as well as access to local internships in related fields.
- Hybrid course schedule, with flexible course offerings targeted at working adults.
- Small class sizes which allow for personalized attention and mentorship opportunities.
- Access to Graduate Scholarships and Graduate Assistantship Positions.
- Located in downtown Grand Rapids, Michigan – the second largest city in the state.
- Want more information? Email: cjdept@gvsu.edu

Admission Requirements:

- Personal essay on career and educational objectives (250-750 words) that demonstrates commitment to community and public service
- Three letters of recommendation
- Undergraduate GPA of at least a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale
 - GRE scores are NOT required but may be requested in cases where GPA is lower than a 3.0.

APPLY NOW (\$0 application fees): <https://www.gvsu.edu/admissions/>





DEPARTMENT OF
CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Indiana University Bloomington

Our faculty continues the interdisciplinary study of crime and justice, holding degrees in criminal justice, law, psychology, history, and sociology.

Katherine Barrus (Criminal Justice)
Indiana University

Molly Block (Criminal Justice)
University of Louisville

Rachel Bowman (Criminology and Criminal Justice)
Arizona State University

Jonathan Brauer (Sociology)
North Carolina State University

Katharine Brown (Criminology and Criminal Justice)
Arizona State University

Fiona Chan (Criminal Justice)
Michigan State University

Bonnie Ernst (American History)
Northwestern University

Adam Ghazi-Tehrani (Criminology, Law and Society)
University of California, Irvine

Tri Keah Henry (Criminal Justice & Criminology)
Sam Houston State University

Natalie Hipple (Criminal Justice)
Indiana University

Roger J. R. Levesque (Psychology, J.D.)
University of Chicago, Columbia University

Miriam Northcutt Bohmert (Criminal Justice)
Michigan State University

Jennifer O'Neill (Criminology & Criminal Justice)
University of Missouri-St. Louis

Bruce Sales (Psycholinguistics, J.D.)
University of Rochester, Northwestern University

Marla Sandys (Social Psychology)
University of Kentucky

Arvind Verma (Criminology)
Simon Fraser University

Pioneers of the IUB Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice include:

Sociologist Edwin H. Sutherland defined the notion of white-collar crime. He is widely regarded as one of the most influential criminologists of the 20th century, and his work continues to shape many areas of the field.

Law Professor Jerome Hall was an early advocate for the use of scientific methods to understand the practice of law. Author of "Theft, Law, and Society," he is known for his ground-breaking empirical analysis of law.

Dr. Robert F. Borkenstein is the inventor of the Breathalyzer. Dr. Borkenstein was a driving force in moving the department beyond a police training curriculum to one of discussing crime causation from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Dr. Coramae Richey Mann was an early and influential voice in the field of gender, inequality, and race. Her work empowered and informed students and scholars to question racial inequality in the justice system.



THE JOURNAL OF CRIME AND JUSTICE

The Journal of Crime & Justice, the official journal of the Midwestern Criminal Justice Association, aims to reflect the current concerns and latest research of Criminology and Criminal Justice scholars and advance discussion of these issues.

Empirical quantitative and qualitative articles that address issues in criminology, criminal justice, and related social issues are welcomed. Special topic issues are also considered.



AT A GLANCE

IMPACT FACTOR

- One year: 1.1
- Five year: 1.5

CITESCORE

- Scopus: 3.1

PUBLISHING

- Submission to first decision: 3 days
- Submission to first post review decision: 63 days

GET TO KNOW THE EDITORIAL TEAM!



EDITOR IN CHIEF

Jennifer Peck, Ph.D.
University of Central Florida



MANAGING EDITOR (OUTGOING)

Sara Lucak, M.S.
University of Central Florida

DID YOU KNOW?

1. Rapid Communication

The Journal of Crime and Justice is now accepting manuscripts for rapid communication. Check out the website for more information.

2. Special Issues

The Journal of Crime and Justice is open to accepting ideas for special issues. If interested in heading a special issue, please reach out to the editorial team.

Visit the Journal of Crime and Justice for more information.

THE JOURNAL OF CRIME AND JUSTICE

JC
&J

About Us

The Journal of Crime and Justice, the official journal of the Midwestern Criminal Justice Association, is a peer-reviewed journal featuring original scholarly work in the areas of crime and criminal justice. Published five times a year, JC&J welcomes quantitative and qualitative articles as well as theoretical commentaries. Special topics issue are also welcomed.



Impact Factor (2025)

One Year: 1.1
Five Year: 1.5



Rapid Communication

Research articles that are published swiftly to bring attention to the author(s) findings.



Special Issues

Compilation of articles that focus on current research trends or a specific topic of interest.



More Information

Be sure to check out the JC&J for more information.

Meet the Editorial Team!



EDITOR IN CHIEF

Jennifer Peck, PhD
University of Central Florida



MANAGING EDITOR (OUTGOING)

Sara Lucak, MS
University of Central Florida

Interested in submitting?

If you are interested in submitting to the [Journal of Crime and Justice](#) but don't know where to start, please take a look at what other authors have recently been submitting.

Visit the [website](#) for more information.

Recent Articles:

[Leverso, J., Schwager, D., Sitney, M., Ravindren, K., & Roark, J. \(2026\). The Risks of Exposure: The Impact of Social Circles on Youth Gang Involvement and Criminal Behavior in Adulthood.](#)

[Miller, O. Bruenig, D., & Shakespeare-Finch J. \(2026\). High Risk, Low Reward: A Mixed Method Exploration of Correctional Officer Mental Health and Perceptions of Prison Work.](#)

Past Special Issues:

"Intersections of Crime and Health: Structural Inequalities Spatial Dynamics, and Policy" with Michael D. Niño (University of Arkansas), Grant Drawve (CAP Index, Inc.), & Kayla Allison (University of Arkansas)

"Broadening our understanding of cybercrime and its evolution" with Benoît Dupont (Université de Montréal), Francis Fortina (Université de Montréal), & Rutger Leukfeldt (The Hague University of Applied Sciences).

Upcoming Topic Issues:

"We Scrape Together Pennies: Fairness and Effectiveness of Monetary Sanctions" with Ebony Ruhland (Rutgers University)

"Regional Contexts, National Questions: Criminal Justice Research in the Flyover States" with Dena Carson (Indiana University Indianapolis) and Breanne Pleggenkühle (Southern Illinois University Carbondale)

[Submit Your Article Online](#)

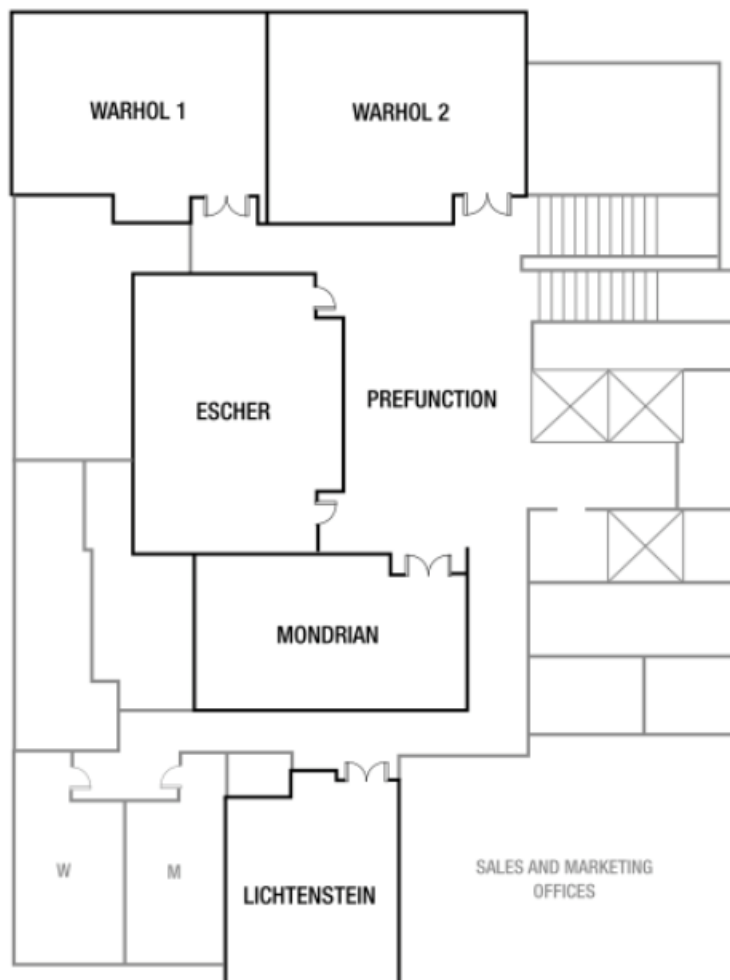
Midwestern Criminal Justice Association 49th Annual Meeting

A Note for Panel Chairs & Presenters

All panel chairs are responsible for providing – or making sure panelists have – a laptop for the presentations. Provided projectors as well as 'HDMI to USB-C' and 'USB-C to USB-A' adapters **must** remain in the conference rooms. Please be sure to keep presentations and panels to their scheduled times to allow the next group ample set up time. With four presenters, each presenter is allotted 15 minutes for their paper with 15 minutes remaining for questions; with five presenters, each presenter is allotted 13 minutes with 10 minutes for questions; with three presenters, each presenter is allotted 20 minutes with 15 minutes for questions.

The **Marck** room is located on the 19th floor. This is the location of the *Student Poster Judging Session* on Thursday (1:15 pm to 2:30 pm) – restricted to judges and student presenters only.

Conference Map



Midwestern Criminal Justice Association

Will the Center Hold?: Evidence-Based Practice and Community Trust in an Era of Shifting Truths

2026 Annual Meeting
Thursday, September 24th – Friday, September 25th
Aloft Chicago Mag Mile

Schedule at a Glance

Thursday, September 24th

8:00 am – 4:00 pm	Registration
8:00 am – 10:30 am	Coffee & Breakfast Snacks (sponsored by MCJA & ACJS)
9:00 am – 10:15 am	Panels
10:30 am – 1:00 pm	Set-up for Student Poster Judging Session [Marck, 19 th floor]
10:30 am – 11:45 am	Panels
11:45 am – 1:00 pm	Lunch Break
1:15 pm – 2:30 pm	Panels
	Student Poster Judging Session [Marck, 19 th floor]
2:45 pm – 4:00 pm	Panels
	Executive Board Meeting
4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	Break
4:30 pm – 5:45 pm	ACJS Update – Dr. David Meyer (ACJS President) <u>Keynote Address</u> – Dr. Christopher Sullivan
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Welcome Reception [featuring Chicago food classics] (sponsored by MCJA & Routledge)

Friday, September 25th

8:00 am – 3:00 pm	Registration
8:00 am – 10:30 am	Coffee & Breakfast Snacks (sponsored by MCJA)
9:00 am – 10:15 am	Panels
10:30 am – 11:45 am	Panels
11:45 am – 1:00 pm	Lunch Buffet (sponsored by MCJA)
1:15 pm – 2:30 pm	Panels
2:45 pm – 4:00 pm	Panels
4:00 pm – 4:15 pm	Break
	Set-up for Student Poster Session
4:15 pm – 5:15 pm	<u>General Business Meeting & Awards Ceremony</u>
5:30 pm – 6:30 pm	Student Poster Session
5:30 pm – 7:30 pm	Presidential Reception (sponsored by MCJA)

Registration

Thursday, September 24th

8:00 am – 4:00 pm

Pre-Function Space

Coffee & Breakfast Snacks

8:00 am – 10:30 am

Pre-Function Space

Panel 01

Thursday, September 24th

9:00 am – 10:15 am

Warhol 1

Vulnerability and Risk: Explaining Victimization Across Contexts

Chair

Lisa Growette Bostaph

Boise State University

Child Nonfatal Strangulation: Prevalence, Risk Factors, and Impact of Screening in Forensic Interviews

Sophia Hannauer

Wisconsin Department of Justice

Lynn Cook

Wisconsin Department of Justice

Nonfatal strangulation (NFS) is a recognized component of adult domestic violence (DV), and there is also an established pattern of cooccurring DV and child maltreatment. However, there is little understanding of the relationship between the NFS of children and their exposure to DV. This study of data gathered from forensic interviews (FIs) at child advocacy centers in Wisconsin examines prevalence and risk factors for child NFS and assesses the impact of screening for strangulation during the FI. Other household-member strangulation, physical abuse, and teen dating violence were associated with increased risk to children. Screening for strangulation increased the likelihood that a child would disclose during an FI.

Fear and Academic Achievement for College Students across the United States

Maxwell Manz

University of Cincinnati

The current study utilized data from the Healthy Minds Study (HMS) to assess how students feel while on campus as it relates to their academic progress. The HMS is a study that examines adolescents' and young adults' achievements in educational institutions. The results of multivariable regression analyses indicated that students who reported feeling unsafe (both during the day and during the night) were less likely to make satisfactory academic achievement towards their degree. These findings suggest that universities should take steps to improve feelings of safety while on campus to help students succeed in making satisfactory progress towards their degree.

A Year of Risk: A One-Year Analysis of Increased Dangerousness and Lethality Risk in a Population of Domestic Violence Cases

Lisa Growette Bostaph

Boise State University

Chanse Eaton

University of Louisville

Laura King

Boise State University

Risk of increasing dangerousness or lethality in domestic violence (DV) relationships is not static; it is a dynamic aspect that may ebb and flow as the relationship itself does. Yet, cases coming to the attention of policing agencies offer an opportunity for point-of-contact assessment of risk. Many U.S. policing agencies incorporate such an assessment as part of their DV response, which is now considered a recommended best practice. However, in-depth case analyses examining risk are relatively limited. Using the population of domestic violence reports for a single year from a policing agency in the Western U.S., the authors provide an in-depth examination of risk, including case characteristics, officer response, and criminal justice outcomes.

The Routine Activities Theory of Crime: How Does it Explain Cyber Harassment Against Women Politicians in Bangladesh?

Khandaker Farzana Rahman
University of Illinois at Chicago

Routine activities theory (RAT) offers a powerful framework for understanding online attacks on women politicians in Bangladesh. RAT explains how gendered and partisan cyberviolence develops from everyday online and political activities. It focuses on three key factors: the presence of motivated offenders, the existence of suitable targets, and the lack of effective guardianship to prevent harm. Motivated offenders, through slurs, anonymous trolls, and ideologically driven offensive comments, weaponize misogyny and polarization to deploy sexualized harassment, disinformation, and threats against women in public office and candidacy. Women politicians become "suitable targets" because their roles often require them to maintain online visibility. However, patriarchal norms make women's reputations especially vulnerable to attacks on their morality, respectability, and their national or religious identities. At the same time, weak legal protection, inconsistent monitoring of online platforms, and uneven support from political parties or the state create an environment where violence may occur without accountability and starts to feel accepted. Using qualitative content analysis on technology-facilitated bullying and online attacks against politically engaged women, the application of RAT to Bangladesh not only illuminates how digital spaces are weaponized to police women's political participation but also points toward multi-level interventions, i.e., legal, institutional, platform-based, and justice-driven, which aim at reshaping the conditions that make cyberviolence a rational tool of political exclusion. The article argues that while RAT helps clarify opportunities and patterns over time, it needs to be combined with feminist perspectives and the concept of intersectionality to better address issues such as patriarchy, authoritarianism, and structural inequality embedded inherently in society, which help lead to online attacks against women politicians, which RAT does not address.

The Role of Childhood Adversity in Victimization and Incarceration Among Transgender and Cisgender Individuals

Champ Champenstein
University of Nebraska at Omaha
Sam Clinkinbeard
University of Nebraska at Omaha
Lane Gillespie
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are linked to later victimization and incarceration, but these relationships may differ by gender identity. Using the TransPop survey and survey-weighted data, this study examines whether ACEs predict adult victimization and incarceration differently for transgender and cisgender adults. Transgender respondents reported higher overall ACE exposure and more experiences of victimization and incarceration than cisgender respondents. ACEs were positively associated with victimization and incarceration, but this relationship varied by gender identity. These findings indicate that childhood adversity shapes later harm across groups, though the pathways may differ for transgender and cisgender adults.

Panel 02

Thursday, September 24th
9:00 am – 10:15 am
Warhol 2

Thematic Panel:

Understanding Public Safety Personnel: Examining Workplace Experiences

Chair
Joseph Schafer
Arizona State University
Discussant
Julie Hibdon
University of Missouri

The Effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences on Law Enforcement Leaders' Professional Quality of Life

David White
Ferris State University
Joseph Schafer
Arizona State University

The current study examines the associations between law enforcement leaders' adverse childhood experiences (ACE) and their experiences with compassion fatigue (burnout and secondary trauma stress), and compassion satisfaction. Using data from a survey of leaders who were attending a leadership development course in 2026, the results demonstrate increased ACEs are associated with significantly higher compassion fatigue and negatively associated with compassion satisfaction. Higher rates of compassion fatigue are associated with significantly higher depressive symptoms, and depression symptoms were negatively associated with compassion satisfaction, even when controlling other factors. Study implications will be discussed.

Long-Lasting Scars: Detention Officers' Experiences with Injuries in their Role & How this Harm Leads to Organizational Challenges

Kara Forrai

Arizona State University

Beth Huebner

Arizona State University

Joseph Schafer

Arizona State University

Shannon Portillo

Arizona State University

In American jails, detention officers face numerous challenges that complicate their professional roles. Rarely are detention officers asked to describe the mental and physical injuries they received while working in a jail, and how this may affect attitudes towards their organization. This study aims to understand the harms that detention officers experience and how these lead to organizational-level challenges. Using in-depth interviews conducted with former and current detention officers from a southwestern state, this paper explores the mental and physical harm they experienced, how this affected their attitudes towards their institution, and the consequences of harm for detention centers.

The Mental Strains of the Pains of Employment: How Correctional Staff Navigate the Mental Challenges of Prison Work

Konstadina

Spanoudakis

*University of Missouri –
St. Louis*

Radicalization into extremist groups has changed over the years due to the prevalence of such groups online. Terrorists and other extremists utilize the ease and availability of the Internet for recruitment, fundraising and propaganda. This paper examines if traditional subculture theory perspectives can be applied to this new age of radicalization.

Turnover Intentions and Workplace Experiences of Sworn and Non-Sworn Personnel: Results from a National Survey

Joseph Schafer

Arizona State University

Julie Hibdon

University of Missouri

David White

Ferris State University

Sabrina Williamson

Arizona State University

Completed attacks on public event venues, such as the Hamas' October 7th attack on the Nova Music Festival and the January 1st ISIS-inspired attack in New Orleans, highlight the security challenges—and the cost of security failures—for public events. Yet, some terrorist plots against public event venues fail or are foiled. How are completed versus failed or foiled attacks on event venues similar and how are they different? To better understand why plots may have these different outcomes, we compared 42 plots against public event venues in the United States from 1970 to 2024.

Panel 03

Thursday, September 24th

9:00 am – 10:15 am

Mondrian

Reintegration in Practice: Evaluating Interventions, Experiences, and Barriers

Chair

Audrey Hickert

University of Cincinnati

Sport Entrepreneurship: Public Opinion About Personal Trainers with Prison Records

Audrey Hickert

University of Cincinnati

Luzi Shi

*University of Rhode
Island*

People leaving prison often consider entrepreneurship to support themselves upon reentry. While potentially circumventing hiring discrimination, starting a business still requires public buy-in. Using a conjoint experiment embedded in a survey administered to 1,100 U.S. adults in 2025, we test factors that may shape choices for personal trainers, including credentials and references, mode of instruction (in-person vs. online), price, and trainer race- and whether these factors operate differently when the trainer is presented as having a prison record. Results suggest a preference for trainers without prison records, but some factors that may improve the marketability of trainers with prison records.

Addressing Trauma in Incarcerated Women: A Multi-State Evaluation of Dance to be Free

Timbre Wulf

University at Albany

Julie Campbel

*University of Nebraska at
Kearney*

Suzanne Maughan

*University of Nebraska at
Kearney*

Physical, emotional, and sexual abuse histories are common among imprisoned women (DeHart, 2008; Drapalski et al., 2009; Komarovskaya, et al., 2011, Van Voorhis, 2012; Belknap, et al., 2016; Scott, et al., 2016; Owen et al., 2017). This trauma manifests itself emotionally, physically, socially, and behaviorally within the walls of correctional institutions. It may also jeopardize attempts at reentry (DeHart, 2008; Kennedy & Mennicke, 2018). The current study evaluates Dance to be Free, a movement-based trauma intervention for incarcerated women, across two states. Results indicate the program has a significant impact on emotional well-being and behavior within the facility.

Beyond Completion: Does Program Dosage Predict CBCF Success?

Aiden Kelly

*Bowling Green State
University*

Ella Strum

*Bowling Green State
University*

Melissa Burek

*Bowling Green State
University*

Catherine Pape

*Bowling Green State
University*

Adam Watkins

*Bowling Green State
University*

This study examines the relationship between program participation and resident success among individuals who engaged in programming at Midwestern Community Based Correctional Facility (CBCF). Using secondary data, this study analyzes records of male residents from fiscal years 2023-2025. Specifically, it explores whether program dosage hours are associated with successful program completion, whether this relationship varies by participant characteristics, and the extent to which dosage hours predict community reintegration outcomes such as employment and housing following the completion of the program and successful community adjustment.

Realigning Reentry Practice Through Qualitative Narrative: Using the Voices of Returning Citizens

Jennifer Fritz

*Eastern Michigan
University*

Barbara Walters

*Eastern Michigan
University*

Bonnie Miller

*Eastern Michigan
University*

Traditional reentry programs often treat returning citizens as passive recipients rather than active contributors. This qualitative study utilizes semi-structured interviews with ten individuals recruited via reentry agencies and "college-in-prison" programs to prioritize narrative as primary data. By synthesizing social work's person-in-environment (PIE) framework with criminal justice reform, the paper argues for integrating lived experience into service development and evaluation. This participatory approach should represent a best-practice standard, so that programs are culturally appropriate and logistically sound, ultimately reducing recidivism and optimizing long-term success through collaborative voice.

*Justice in Practice***Chair**

David Olson

Loyola University Chicago

Procedural Presence, Substantive Absence: Women's Silencing in Zimbabwe's Traditional Courts**Pious Maedzenge***University of Missouri –
St. Louis*

Zimbabwe's traditional courts remain important customary forums for resolving gendered family, sexual, and domestic disputes, yet these forums are overwhelmingly male-led. Drawing on qualitative content analysis of 113 public Shona-language video recordings, this paper examines how women's participation is organized under unequal institutional conditions. I argue that women are procedurally present but substantively absent: they enter court, speak, and sometimes prevail, yet their authority remains constrained by ritual ordering, kinship-mediated dependency, and gendered standards of proof and victimhood. The paper shows that silencing operates less through overt exclusion than through the gendered organization of participation.

The Impact of Abolishing Cash Bail in Illinois (and other Pretrial Reforms)**David Olson***Loyola University Chicago***Don Stemen***Loyola University Chicago***Patrick Griffin***Loyola University Chicago*

This presentation will summarize findings from a long-term process and impact evaluation of Illinois' Pretrial Fairness Act, which was implemented September 18, 2023. Specifically, the impact of the law on pretrial jail populations and length of stay, pretrial supervision, pretrial court processes, rates of pretrial detention, rates of failure to appear, rates of new criminal activity, and community crime rates will be discussed. The discussion will highlight how the implementation and impact of the law varied across the state and over time.

Mapping Injustice: An Ecological Study of Wrongful Convictions in Cook County, Illinois**Tracy G. Crump***Elmhurst University*

Cook County, Illinois had the most wrongful convictions of any county in the country between 1989 and 2024. These wrongful convictions resulted not from a few rogue actors who made isolated mistakes but from systemic ecological patterns that operated across multiple branches of the criminal justice system, and despite legal reforms, heightened public scrutiny, and adoption of institutional oversight policies. This theory-driven single-case embedded case study explored the factors contributing to 475 wrongful convictions in Cook County over the period of interest. The patterns highlight the relationship between multiple criminal justice stakeholders.

Set-up for Student Poster Judging SessionThursday, September 24th

10:30 am – 1:00 pm

Marck [19th floor]

For students participating in the *Student Poster Competition* (i.e., undergraduate, master's, & doctoral level), the room is available for poster **set-up** between **10:30 am and 1:00 pm** – MCJA volunteers on-site. The judging session begins promptly at 1:15 pm.

To be considered for a *Student Poster Award*, attendance at **both** the judging session (Thursday, 1:15 pm – 2:30 pm) and the open poster session (Friday, 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm) is mandatory.

Rights, Risk, and Representation**Chair**

Tom Hughes

University of Louisville

Chatrie v. United States (2026), Location History, and Geofence Warrants: For a While I've Been Watching you Steady**Tom Hughes***University of Louisville***Justin Lewis***University of Louisville*

A geofence warrant is an investigatory tool that allows law enforcement to obtain the identities of mobile devices in the vicinity of a particular location at a particular time. In *Chatrie v. United States* (2026), law enforcement obtained, and served on Google, a geofence warrant seeking anonymized location data for every device within 150 meters of the location of a credit union robbery within one hour of the crime. The Supreme Court granted review to determine whether the execution of the geofence warrant issued violated the Fourth Amendment. This paper will review the opinion and relevant policy implications will be discussed.

The Second Amendment and "Assault Weapon" Legislation**David Jones***University of Oshkosh*

One result of recent U. S. Supreme Court decisions concerning the Second Amendment is that it has led to many challenges to various types of gun control legislation. This includes legislation concerning the regulation of "assault weapons" and "large capacity magazines." This paper will examine the current state of these developments.

The Client is the Cause? Interrogating Attorney Activism- Cause Lawyering in the 21st Century**Maya Barak***University of Michigan -
Dearborn*

Cause lawyers are drawn to the field by progressive desires to transform law and society--or are there? Discussions of cause lawyering typically center representation of the poor, disadvantaged, or marginalized, and public interest law in areas like animal rights, criminal defense, civil rights, disability rights, family law, housing rights, and pay equity. Yet, determining just what constitutes cause lawyering in the 21st century is a difficult task. Drawing on interviews with capital defense and immigration attorneys I argue for a conceptualization of cause lawyering that includes client-centered work and conservative causes. Implications for the future of justice reforms are discussed.

Adolescent to Adulthood: Evidence on Youth Welfare and System Contact**Chair**

Justin Patchin

*University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire***Conversational AI Chatbot Use and Adolescent Well-Being: Mental Health and Real-Life Relationship Outcomes Among US Adolescents****Justin W. Patchin***University of Wisconsin-
Eau Claire***Sameer Hinduja***Florida Atlantic University***Lily Boyd***University of Wisconsin-
Eau Claire***Makina Larson***University of Wisconsin-
Eau Claire*

The public conversation surrounding adolescents and conversational artificial intelligence chatbots has tended to portray these tools as either harmful or helpful. More likely, the same technology improves well-being for some youth while eroding it for others, and upon which side a youth may fall is not random. Drawing on a national sample of 3,466 US adolescents aged 13 to 17 surveyed in 2025, this study examined whether respondent's mental health and real-life relationships had worsened or improved since they began using chatbots.

Understanding Life Course Patterns of Attitudes Toward the Police Using Panel Data from Adolescence to Early Adulthood**Alex Stoll***Michigan State University***Chris Melde***Michigan State University***Dena Carson***Indiana University
Indianapolis***Steven Wu-Chaves***Michigan State University*

Adolescent attitudes toward the police (ATP) can shape long-term perceptions of law enforcement. This study examines the stability of these attitudes from adolescence into adulthood and whether early perceptions predict adult evaluations of police legitimacy. This paper also examines whether long-term changes in ATP are similar across demographic groups. Analyses use data from the long-term follow-up of the National Evaluation of the G.R.E.A.T. program, which began in 2006 when respondents were approximately 11.5 years old. In 2025 and early 2026, approximately 30% of participants completed a survey that included identical items on ATP along with items on police legitimacy.

Disconnected and at Risk: Social Isolation and the Victim-Offender Overlap Among Justice-Involved Youth**Abigail Moore***Bowling Green State
University***Kaitlyn Louy***Bowling Green State
University***Samantha Kopf***Bowling Green State
University*

Delinquent youth often experience social isolation through weak social relationships, school disengagement, and limited community support. This study examines what dimensions of social isolation (peer, family, community) have the strongest relationship with the victim offender overlap among justice-involved youth. Using data from the Pathways to Desistance study we run a series of sex stratified multilevel negative binomial models to assess the relationship between domains of social isolation and the victim-offender overlap. Findings will contribute to research on the victim offender overlap by looking at the impact that different social isolation domains have on high-risk youth, better informing support adjudicated youth need.

Examining the Impact of Justice System Involvement on Young Adults' Goals of Securing Meaningful Work

Elias Nader

Kent State University

Maia Ferry

Kent State University

Madeline Steward

Kent State University

Employment has long been recognized as an important turning point for facilitating desistance among young people along the binary of either having or not having a job. A growing body of interdisciplinary evidence now argues that a generational shift exists in the role work plays, offering youth a chance to engage in identity development, seek enjoyment and fulfillment, and mark their transition into adulthood. Yet, justice-involved young people often face barriers in accessing this type of meaningful work. The current study uses national survey data (N=600) to examine how justice system involvement affects outcomes of meaningful employment among young adults.

Panel 07

Thursday, September 24th

10:30 am – 11:45 am

Mondrian

Thematic Panel:

When Evidence Becomes Harm: Coerced Confessions, Institutional Betrayal, and Community Trust After Police Torture

Chair

Brent In

Chicago State University

Discussant

Mutlu Koseli

Chicago State University

Manufactured Truth, Broken Trust: Coerced Confessions, Institutional Betrayal, and the Limits of Evidence-Based Practice After Police Torture

Nate Gilham

Chicago State University

Thomas Kenemore

Loyola University

Chicago

Evidence-based criminal justice depends on the reliability of the evidence used to justify arrest, prosecution, conviction, and punishment — and on public confidence that this evidence reflects truth rather than institutional self-preservation. Coerced confession cases expose the collapse of both assumptions. This paper follows the full arc of that collapse in the lives of men who were tortured during police interrogation, forced into self-incriminating statements, convicted on torture-tainted evidence, incarcerated for years or decades, and eventually released into communities that the same institutions claim to serve. Drawing on phenomenological interviews and prior qualitative work with survivors of Chicago police torture, the paper analyzes coercion as a truth-producing mechanism within criminal justice institutions: how violence was converted into official evidence, how survivors' denials were disbelieved, and how those manufactured records shaped every subsequent institutional encounter. The analysis then shows that the harm does not end at conviction. The same institutional betrayal follows survivors through incarceration and into reentry, where they must seek housing, employment, and services from systems connected to the institutions that harmed and disbelieved them. Participants describe an ongoing reentry problem that ordinary programming cannot solve: trust does not return with release. The paper argues that these two harms — manufactured truth and broken trust — must be understood as a single process. Evidence obtained through coercion and betrayal cannot serve as the foundation for evidence-based practice, nor can it support community trust, no matter how far official truth is shifted. Confession evidence must therefore be evaluated legally, sociologically, and through a trauma-informed lens, and reentry practice for survivors of state-inflicted harm must become survivor-centered and explicitly attentive to institutional betrayal, addressing recognition, dignity, trust, and repair rather than risk reduction alone.

Will the Center Hold? Coercive Policing, Accountability Failure, and Community Trust in Comparative Perspective

Mutlu Koseli

Chicago State University

Mohammad Salahuddin

Chicago State University

Police torture is often treated as an exceptional failure of individual officers, but comparative evidence suggests that coercive policing emerges from broader institutional and political conditions. This paper examines police torture and coerced confession as problems of institutional trust, accountability failure, and contested truth. Drawing from the Chicago police torture cases and selected international examples, the paper analyzes how coercive practices become normalized when criminal justice organizations reward results over rights, protect officers from accountability, and delegitimize survivor accounts. The analysis focuses on three dimensions: organizational incentives that encourage coercive interrogation; legal and political mechanisms that delay accountability; and public narratives that transform survivors from victims of state harm into unreliable or suspect witnesses. The paper connects comparative criminal justice scholarship to MCJA's theme by asking whether evidence-based practice can survive when official records are produced through coercion and later protected by institutions. It argues that community trust depends not only on better policies, but also on the ability of institutions to acknowledge past harm, correct false records, and treat survivor knowledge as a necessary source of evidence.

Truth After Torture: Survivor Knowledge, Community Trust, and What Justice Requires

Nate Gilham

Chicago State University

Alicia Bradford

*Loyola University
Chicago*

Academic research can examine coerced confession, police accountability, and reentry, but survivors carry knowledge that cannot be fully captured through official records or legal documents. This presentation centers the voices of individuals who experienced police torture, coerced confession, incarceration, and eventual return to the community. Survivors will reflect on what it meant to be disbelieved, to have coerced statements treated as truth, and to live with the consequences of torture-tainted evidence after release. Their reflections will address trauma, institutional distrust, family and community relationships, recognition, healing, and the kinds of reforms they believe are necessary to prevent future harm.

Panel 08

Thursday, September 24th

10:30 am – 11:45 am

Lichtenstein

Roundtable:

*Teaching Without Easy Answers: Helping Students Think
Through Controversial Issues in Criminal Justice*

Moderator

Meg Crusciel

Bowling Green State University

Meg Crusciel

*Bowling Green State
University*

Aubri MacDonald

*University of Wisconsin-
Parkside*

Criminal justice classrooms are full of difficult conversations. Students arrive with strong opinions shaped by personal experience, media, and politics, making meaningful dialogue both essential and challenging. This roundtable explores how instructors can help students move beyond defending positions toward asking better questions, evaluating evidence, and engaging with competing perspectives. Panelists will share assignments, discussion strategies, and classroom practices that foster intellectual curiosity and move conversations beyond debate toward inquiry. Participants will contribute their own experiences and leave with practical ideas for creating classrooms where students learn to engage with complexity rather than avoid it.

Lunch Break

Thursday, September 24th

11:45 am – 1:00 pm

Student Poster Judging Session

Thursday, September 24th

1:15 pm – 2:30 pm

Marck [19th floor]

Attendance is restricted to judges and students participating in the *Student Poster Competition* (i.e., undergraduate, master's, & doctoral level). The room is available for poster set-up between **10:30 am and 1:00 pm** – MCJA volunteers on-site. The Judging session begins promptly at 1:15 pm.

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Panel 09

Thursday, September 24th

1:15 pm – 2:30 am

Warhol 2

Improving Workforce Health in Criminal Justice: Addressing Harm and Culture

Chair

Monica Solinas-Saunders
Indiana University Northwest

It Hurts to Be a Cop: How Occupational Exposure to Critical Incidents Results in Severe Multisite Pain and Suicidality

Timothy Brown
*University of California,
Berkley*

Yunyu Xiao
Weill Cornell Medical

Peizen Wu
Boston University

We examined whether non-injurious critical incident exposure among law enforcement officers (LEOs)-witnessing violence or experiencing non-violent attacks (e.g., lawsuits) without physical injury- causes nociplastic pain and suicidal thoughts and behavior (STB). Using a quasi-experimental instrumental-variables design with LEO Safety and Wellness Study data (2017-2020), we instrumented stress (PC-PTSD, PSS-10) with quasi-random variation in non-injurious incidents, controlling for injurious ones. Per SD increase in PC-PTSD, multisite pain rose 10.7%, STB 8.1%, and suicidal ideation 7.6%; per SD increase in PSS-10, increases were 17.0%, 12.9%, and 10.9%. Non-injurious incidents can cause nociplastic pain and STB; affected LEOs need prevention and treatment.

Impacts of Procedural Justice Training on Jail Climate

Rachel Johnston
CNA

CNA, in collaboration with a Massachusetts Sheriff's Office, implemented procedural justice training for uniformed jail officers and supervisors. The research is based on the hypothesis that comprehensive procedural justice training for jail officers and supervisors will (a) improve their knowledge, perceptions, and beliefs about procedural justice, (b) positively affect their behavior and interactions with incarcerated individuals, and (c) contribute to a more positive jail climate. This presentation will provide insights into the early phases data analysis and focus on the researcher-practitioner collaboration to deliver the training, collect survey data, and develop findings and recommendations.

Justice and A Good Life for Community Corrections Officers

Monica Solinas-Saunders
*Indiana University
Northwest*

Eric Lambert
*Indiana University
Northwest*

Matthew Leone
**University of Nevada
Reno**

Stacy Haynes
*Mississippi State
University*

David May
*Eastern Kentucky
University*

Life satisfaction is a major part of the well-being for a person. There has been little research on the life satisfaction of community corrections officers. In addition, organizational justice is a major factor in the work life of criminal justice workers, including community corrections officers. The current study explored how the major dimensions of organizational justice in terms of distributive justice, procedural justice, informational justice, and interpersonal justice among U.S. community corrections officers. The results will be presented and discussed.

Lessons Learned in the Carceral Classroom: Mitigating the Trauma of Teaching Behind Bars

Barbara Walters
Eastern Michigan University
Jenny Fritz
Eastern Michigan University
Bonnie Miller
Eastern Michigan University

Educational attainment is recognized as an effective barrier against recidivism. Research indicates a plethora of findings about the benefits of prison-based education to incarcerated individuals, carceral institutions, and society as a whole. However, fewer studies explore the impact of carceral education on those who implement these vital programs. Using semi-structured interviews with staff and instructors engaged in a midwestern university's college in prison program, this exploratory phenomenological study examines lived experiences of compassion fatigue and vicarious traumatization. Qualitative findings explore thematic strategies for mitigating the impact of trauma on educational personnel while promoting resilience in the prison-based educational setting.

Staff Perspectives of Workplace Climate in a Southern Prison System: Results from Focus Group Interviews

Robert Lytle
University of Arkansas at Little Rock
Molly Smith
University of Arkansas at Little Rock
Mary Parker
University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Research examining correctional employee's experiences, perceptions, and needs plays a vital role in informing agency responses to these issues. Building upon a large statewide study of correctional work environments in a Southern state, this presentation overviews four predominant themes identified in focus group interviews with correctional staff from each of the state's correctional facilities: Respect and Work Identity, Safety through Professionalization, Motivations to Return, and Sources of Stress. We conclude with a discussion of how these findings provide context to earlier quantitative work on correctional work environments and its implications for future research.

Panel 10

Thursday, September 24^h
1:15 pm – 2:30 pm
Mondrian

Advancing Crime Prevention: Law, Research and Spatial Interventions

Chair
Taylor Tolls
University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Examining the Application of Indiana's Red Flag Law in Marion County

Isaiah Farrell
Indiana University Bloomington
Natalie Hipple
Indiana University Bloomington

This exploratory study examines the application of Indiana's Red Flag Law (Jake Laird Law) in Marion County, Indiana. Red Flag laws allow law enforcement or related parties to petition for the temporary removal of firearms from individuals deemed a risk to themselves or others. Drawing on 515 police incident reports, we analyze how the law is used in practice by examining incident and offense characteristics, mental health concerns, substance use, intimate partner conflict, and family violence. We also assess individual's demographic characteristics, prior system contact, and incident outcomes to identify factors associated with Red Flag Law invocation and implementation.

Going Beyond Enforcement: Leveraging Academic Partnerships to Reduce Crime and Improve Public Safety

Chenelle Jones
Franklin University
LaShanna Potts
Columbus Division of Police

In 2025, Columbus, Ohio recorded a 33% reduction in homicides, the city's lowest rate since 2007. This success resulted from a coordinated, multi-sector strategy-- not traditional enforcement alone-- integrating research partnerships, training, proactive policing, and public engagement. This paper provides a practical roadmap for building effective justice/academic partnerships to reduce violent crime. Attendees will explore key initiatives and learn how collaboration enhances legitimacy, strengthens intelligence sharing, and aligns community trust with enforcement efforts. Implications for policy and practice will also be discussed.

When Fear Goes Viral: School Threats, Social Media Panic, and the Need for Evidence-Based Threat Assessment

Michelle Kilburn

*Southeast Missouri State
University*

School threats increasingly unfold in an environment where social media posts, rumors, screenshots, and community fear can spread faster than verified information. This presentation examines the need for structured, evidence-based threat assessment when schools and law enforcement face pressure to respond quickly and visibly. Effective threat assessment requires careful evaluation of behavior, context, intent, capacity, and warning signs rather than fear-driven reactions. The presentation explores how schools, police, and community partners can balance safety, student rights, public communication, and community trust. In an era of shifting truths, threat assessment must be calm, consistent, and grounded in careful inquiry.

A Spatial Analysis of the Impact of Art Murals on Crime: A Busy Streets Approach

Taylor Tolles

*University of Arkansas at
Little Rock*

Rick Lewis

*University of Arkansas at
Little Rock*

Busy Streets Theory, posits that targeted interventions can empower communities to bolster collective efficacy, which in turn, influences crime rates. While prior studies using this framework has focused on greening vacant spaces, few studies have examined the influence of art murals on crime. The current study utilized geocoded longitudinal CAD data, as well as geocoded locations of sanctioned art murals to examine the potential "cooling" temporal effect of art murals on rates of violent and property crime in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Panel 11

Thursday, September 24th

1:15 pm – 2:30 pm

Lichtenstein

Roundtable:

***Understanding the Process of Authoring and Editing Academic
Books***

Moderator

Joseph Schafer

Arizona State University

Joseph Schafer

Arizona State University

Breanne Pleggenkuhle

Southern Illinois

University Carbondale

Dena Carson

Indiana University

Indianapolis

Brandon Kooi

Aurora University

Justin Patchin

University of Wisconsin-

Eau Claire

This roundtable explores the process of authoring and editing academic books. Participants have recently published original-authored and edited works with various academic publishers, and some have experience as editors for academic book series. The focus of the discussion will be on the value of book-length academic projects, with an eye for the opportunities and challenges that book authors and editors encounter.

Developments in Police Strategies & Initiatives**Chair**

Cory Haberman

University of Cincinnati

A Randomized Control Trial of Micro-Time Hot Spots Policing**Cory Haberman***University of Cincinnati***Bradley O'Guinn***Florida International
University*

This study evaluates a micro-time hot spots policing strategy. The implementing police department identified property crime micro-time hot spots daily, which were randomly assigned to a treatment or control condition using trickle flow randomization. Treatment micro-time hot spots received heightened police patrols and investigative focus that was managed using regular accountability meetings. The initiative's results and their implications will be discussed during the presentation.

Testing Established Correlates of Case Clearance: Evidence from the Manchester (NH) Smart Policing Initiative**Matthew McGrath***University of Cincinnati***Cory Haberman***University of Cincinnati***Bradley O'Guinn***Florida International
University*

Prior research has identified numerous correlates of case clearance, though much of this work focuses on homicide and factors beyond police control. As part of the Manchester (NH) Smart Policing Initiative, this study examines whether established investigative practices are associated with arrest outcomes across aggravated assault, burglary, and domestic violence cases. Investigative actions documented in 807 systematically coded case files were analyzed using logistic regression. Obtaining suspect statements, collecting video evidence, recovering weapons, and securing witness statements were positively associated with arrest likelihood. These findings informed the development of patrol investigative checklists designed to promote consistent, evidence-based investigative practices.

Inside Co-Responder Programs: The Experiences of Qualified Mental Health Professionals**Haley Moon***University of Arkansas at
Little Rock***Mark Plassmeyer***University of Arkansas***Steven Jennings***University of Arkansas***Melissa Gute***Fayetteville Police
Department*

The purpose of this study is to examine the experiences of qualified mental health professionals (QMHPs) who serve as co-responders alongside police during mental and behavioral health crisis calls. Despite the growing adoption of co-responder programs, little research has examined the perspectives of QMHPs working within these models. This study surveys QMHPs employed as co-responder across the U.S. to provide an overview of agency and program characteristics, QMHP responsibilities, therapeutic skills used during crisis response, and perceived operational barriers as well as support. Findings suggest a wide scope of responsibilities among QMHPs as well as significant barriers affecting the overall satisfaction and retention of these frontline responders.

From Atrocity to Accountability: Historical Lessons for Criminal Justice**Chair**

Renatto Carr

*Southern Illinois University**Edwardsville*

Federal Power and Racial Violence: The FBI and the Lynching of James Edward Person**Renatto Carr***Southern Illinois**University Edwardsville*

My proposal examines the 1942 lynching of James Edward Person in Edgar County, Illinois. Born in 1909 in Somerville, Tennessee, Person was an honorably discharged African American World War II veteran. Person had set out for Chicago and he never made it. As one of the earliest twentieth-century lynchings to result in federal officials indicting and convicting whites for violating the civil rights of a Black victim, his killing warrants scholarly attention. My research is anchored in the FBI report and one of the earliest FBI investigations, to my knowledge, to result in both the indictment and conviction of white perpetrators.

Reparations and Truth-Telling after the Holocaust: Historical Lessons and Applications to Post-Conflict Societies**Bassey Kooffreh***Fisk University*

This paper examines reparations and truth-telling initiatives after the Holocaust and their relevance to post-conflict societies. Drawing from transitional justice theory and Holocaust studies, the paper explores how reparations, memorialization, survivor testimony, and public acknowledgment contributed to reconciliation, accountability, and historical memory after mass atrocity. It further analyzes how Holocaust justice frameworks influenced contemporary approaches to transitional justice in societies emerging from conflict, genocide, and political violence. Through a comparative perspective, the study identifies patterns, challenges, and lessons associated with reparative justice mechanisms and argues that Holocaust-era responses continue to shape modern efforts toward healing, reconciliation, and institutional trust.

Why Did Criminologists Largely Abandon the Study of Lynching? A Case Study of the 1942 Lynching of James Edward Person in Edgar County, IL**Renatto Carr***Southern Illinois**University Edwardsville*

It is well established that historians and sociologists have devoted considerable scholarly attention to the study of lynching. Less attention has been given to why criminologists have largely abandoned this area of inquiry. Using the 1942 lynching of James Person as a case study, this proposal asks why the study of lynching has largely disappeared from contemporary criminological scholarship. Person's case was among the earliest twentieth-century lynchings to result in the indictment and conviction of Whites in federal court for violating a Black persons civil rights. Therefore, Person's case warrants scholarly attention, not only from historians and sociologists, but also from criminologists.

Panel 14**Thursday, September 24th****2:45 pm – 4:00 pm**

Lichtenstein

Roundtable:***"War Stories" as a Teaching Tool*****Moderator**

Robert Hanson

*Northern Michigan University***Robert Hanson***Northern Michigan
University, Emeritus***David Kalinich***Florida Atlantic
University, Emeritus***Stan Stojkovic***University of Wisconsin-
Milwaukee, Emeritus***William Wakefield***University of Nebraska at
Omaha*

"War stories" are experiences acquired from field work as practitioners, consultants, or conducting field research. War stories are often used as part of our classroom lectures. The stories can be entertaining and instructive. We are asking participants to come prepared with one of their favorite war stories to present to the group and to explain how it facilitates teaching. Each participant will be given a chance to present their favorite story and how they applied it to the classroom. Participants should limit their presentations to 5 minutes. It is hoped that all participants have an opportunity to share their favorite war story.

Executive Board Meeting**Thursday, September 24th****2:45 pm – 4:00 pm**Marck [19th floor]

Attendance is restricted to Executive Board members

Break**Thursday, September 24th****4:00 pm – 4:30 pm**

ACJS Update – Dr. David Myers (ACJS President)**Thursday, September 24th****4:30 pm – 4:45 pm**

Warhol 1 & 2

Keynote Address – Dr. Christopher Sullivan**Thursday, September 24th*****Applied Criminology and the Common Good: Can
Thoughtful Scholarship and Active Citizenship Coexist?*****4:45 pm – 5:45 pm**Warhol 1 & 2

Evidence from both inside and outside of academia suggests that the practice of scholarship is at an inflection point. This includes criminology and criminal justice. Often this argument pits conceptions of rigorous social science against perceptions of political activism. I contend that this argument presents a false dichotomy and thoughtful criminology and sensible activism (in line with democratic citizenship) can co-exist. I arrive at this answer by offering empirical examples from my Midwestern juvenile justice and delinquency research as well as some personal experiences in academic leadership and editorial roles. I also consider these themes through the work of scholars, like Howard Becker, Charles Ragin, and Carol Weiss, that have been instrumental in shaping my understanding of social science research and its uses. I conclude with thoughts about how scholars at different career stages might manage this inherent tension to generate productive discussion about this important topic for the remaining time of the session (and perhaps beyond).



Dr. Christopher Sullivan Christopher J. Sullivan, PhD is E. Desmond Lee Endowed Professor of Youth Crime and Violence and Chair of the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL). He was Co-Editor of the Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency from 2017 to 2023. Dr. Sullivan received his doctorate in Criminal Justice from Rutgers University in 2005. He has published numerous articles and book chapters focused mainly on juvenile delinquency, juvenile justice, developmental and life-course criminology, and research and analytic methods. These have often appeared in top journals in the field of criminology (e.g., Criminology, Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, Journal of Quantitative Criminology) or related fields (e.g., American Journal of Public Health, Journal of Youth and Adolescence). He is author of *Taking Juvenile Justice Seriously: Developmental Insights and System Challenges* (Temple University Press, 2019), which was selected as an Outstanding Contribution by the American Society of Criminology's Division of Developmental and Life Course Criminology in 2020. He is co-author of the 2021 book, *Juvenile Risk and*

Needs Assessment: Theory, Research, Policy, and Practice (Routledge). Since 2000, Dr. Sullivan has been data analyst or Principal Investigator (PI) on numerous federally or state-funded evaluations of diversion programs, treatment interventions, and juvenile drug courts. He has led research projects on developmental and life-course criminology and juvenile justice topics which were funded by the State of Ohio, National Institute of Justice, and Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. He is currently PI on a National Institute of Justice-funded study of St. Louis's Community Violence Intervention program and a foundation grant focused on youth legal financial obligations. Dr. Sullivan has been named a 250th Anniversary Fellow at Rutgers University and Fellow of the Graduate School at the University of Cincinnati for his research and has received award recognition for his mentoring and teaching of graduate students and academic service. He was elected as an Executive Counselor for the American Society of Criminology in 2022.

Welcome Reception***Sponsored by MCJA & Routledge*****Thursday, September 24th****6:00 pm – 8:00 pm**Pre-Function Space

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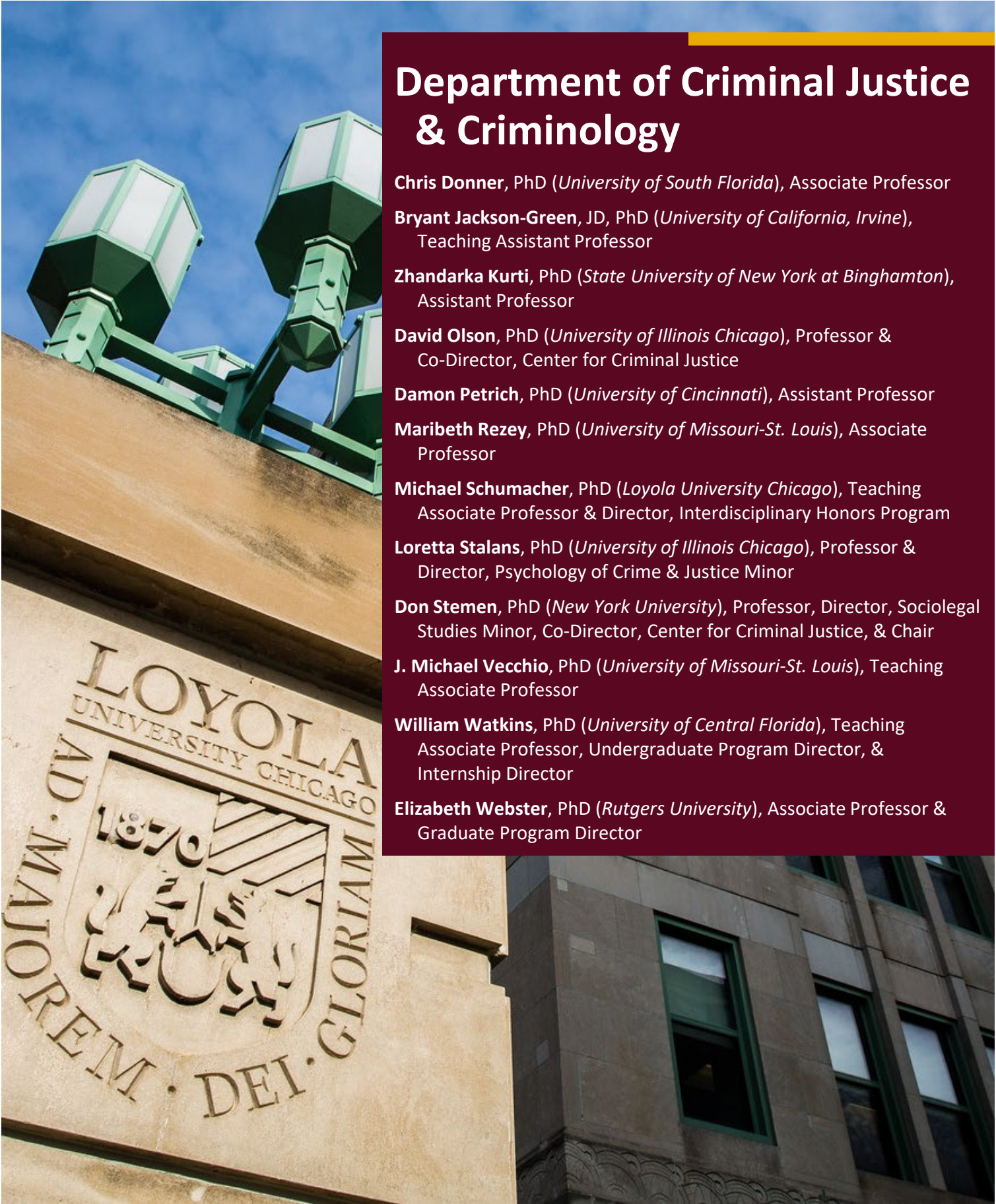


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Registration

Friday, September 25th
8:00 am – 3:00 pm
 Pre-Function Space

Coffee & Breakfast Snacks

8:00 am – 10:30 am
 Pre-Function Space

Panel 15

Friday, September 25th
9:00 am – 10:15 am
 Warhol 2

Innovative Pedagogies and Training Models for Criminal Justice

Chair
 Barbara Walters
 Eastern Michigan University

Simulation Innovation in Crisis Response and Intervention Training: Police Officers' Engagement and Skill Application in Role-Plays

Barbara Walters
 Eastern Michigan University
Jenny Fritz
 Eastern Michigan University
Bonnie Miller
 Eastern Michigan University

This exploratory study investigates the effects of modifying role-play scenarios and utilizing theater students trained in "standardized patient simulation" on police officers' skill-based learning during the role-play portion of Crisis Response and Intervention Training (CRIT). Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study integrates pre- and post-training self-assessments with qualitative interview data. Results demonstrate increased officer confidence in applying CRIT skills following participation. Qualitative findings indicate that the inclusion of modified scenarios and trained actors enhanced simulation realism, thereby encouraging officers' active engagement and application of newly-learned crisis response skills during role-plays. These findings highlight the value of simulation-based training enhancements.

Bridging the Gap After Treatment and Incarceration: An Identity-Based Curriculum Model

Andrew Drasen
 A Vision of Hope Media

This presentation introduces ReturnPath, a structured, identity-based curriculum developed from lived experience with addiction, incarceration, treatment, and long-term recovery. It addresses a persistent gap in criminal justice and behavioral health systems: what happens after stabilization, when individuals are expected to sustain change without sufficient structure for identity reconstruction, self-regulation, and forward planning. Rather than focusing only on behavior cessation, ReturnPath helps participants define who they are becoming and build a practical bridge toward intentional living. The session will examine how lived experience was translated into a facilitator-led, evaluation-ready curriculum and discuss its relevance for reentry, treatment step-down, and community-based recovery settings.

Specification Grading: Student Perceptions

Jennifer Huck
 Carroll University
Aaron Routhe
 Carroll University

Specification grading allows students to see how they can build their grade with a series of assignments. The purpose is for students to demonstrate achievement of learning objectives. This data replicates Yik and colleagues (2024) to see if students perceive differences between traditional and specification grading via student outcomes, motivation to learn, use of feedback, levels of anxiety, and expectations. The undergraduate sample (n=88) was collected over three semesters and demonstrates some positive perceptions while noting for improvement. The presentation explains descriptive and binary results and discusses plans to improve their use of specification grading.

Responses to Drug Trade and Use: Evidence, Access and Outcomes

Chair
Matthew Makarios
University of Northern Iowa

Detering or Escalating? Illicit Drug Trade, Law Enforcement, Market Disruption, and National Homicide Rates

Ali Shodunke

The Pennsylvania State University

Criminological scholarship points to both deterrent and escalatory effects of drug law enforcement. Deterrence theory holds that policing drug markets raises the perceived risk of offending and lowers homicide, whereas Goldstein's (1985) tripartite framework argues that enforcement-driven market disruption incentivizes violence. This relationship remains unresolved cross-nationally. I test these competing hypotheses using panel data for 51 countries over 2011-2023, drawn mainly from the UNODC, WHO, and World Bank. Dynamic panel models estimated by Generalized Method of Moments reveal null average effect, with no moderation by rule of law or GDP per capita, but there is stability across alternative specifications.

Process and Outcome Evaluations of North Dakota's Drug Courts

Matthew Makarios

University of Northern Iowa

Andrew Myer

North Dakota State University

Kaitlyn Bock

University of Nevada Las Vegas

This research looks at the process and effectiveness of 6 Drug Courts that operate in North Dakota. Matched-pairs outcome evaluations were conducted to examine the effectiveness of each drug court in reducing recidivism. To understand why the programs worked (or didn't) process evaluation were undertaken to understand the characteristics of effective drug courts. Furthermore, these evaluation were done at two separate points in time, allowing for an examination of the courts over time.

Identifying Predictors of Drug Court Graduation: Findings from an Evaluation of a Midwestern Adult Drug Treatment Court

Alyssa Sheeran

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Danielle Romain Dagenhardt

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Tina Freiburger

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

The use of drug treatment courts (DTCs) as an alternative to incarceration has spread widely throughout the U.S. Studies consistently show that DTCs outperform traditional criminal justice interventions in terms of program completion rates; however, overall effectiveness still fluctuates between individual DTCs. DTCs vary in their program requirements and the populations they serve, which contributes to differences in graduation rates. Ongoing evaluation of DTCs is crucial to identify which factors drive successful program completion. Utilizing data from a Midwestern DTC (2009-2025), this study examined the association between personal characteristics on the likelihood of drug court graduation.

Expanding Access to Drug Courts: An Evidence-Based Strategy for Reducing Recidivism

Abena Pinamang

Western Michigan University

Studies have shown that drug courts have demonstrated success in reducing recidivism by addressing substance use disorders through treatment rather than incarceration. Despite their proven effectiveness, factors such as restrictive eligibility criteria, inconsistent implementation, and unequal access limit their impact nationwide. Using publicly available national and state data, this study examines how eligibility criteria and variations in program implementation influence access and program outcomes. The findings suggest that expanding evidence-based eligibility criteria and strengthening treatment practices could improve rehabilitation while reducing cost of incarceration. The study also offers policy recommendations for increasing the effectiveness of drug courts and demonstrates how data-driven reforms can lead to long-term reductions in recidivism.

Dynamics in Police Organizations: Trends, Motivations, and Legitimacy**Chair**

Trey Bussey

University of Cincinnati

Two Shocks and Uneven Trends: An Interrupted Time Series Analysis of Police Staffing Levels**Nathan Cronin***Michigan State University***Jeff Rojek***Michigan State University*

Using interrupted time series analysis, this study examines U.S. police staffing trends from 2000 to 2024, with interruption points at the 2014 death of Michael Brown and the 2020 murder of George Floyd. FBI Law Enforcement Employee data are analyzed nationally and by agency size and state. Findings indicate staffing declined immediately before 2014, experienced a short-term disruption and recovery, and entered a sustained downward trend after 2020. Large police agencies accounted for much of the post-2020 decline, while small and medium-sized agencies remained comparatively stable. State-level results also varied substantially, underscoring the need for context-specific staffing strategies and policies.

General Intelligence & Organizational Priorities: An Examination of Police Chiefs in Texas**Cydney Covert***Boise State University***William King***Boise State University*

We explore the relationship between general intelligence and the prioritization of organizational goals with a sample of Texas police chiefs. The study of intelligence in leadership is common among many professions but is rare in policing. We use Cattell-Horn-Carroll's theory of cognitive abilities and the International Cognitive Ability Resource to frame our exploration. Using data collected as part of the Texas Chiefs of Police Panel Project, we explore the general intelligence of Texas police chiefs and examine the relationship between cognitive ability and the prioritization of police organizational goals.

Replicating a Theory of Police Officer Training Motivation and Receptivity**Trey Bussey***University of Cincinnati***Cory Haberman***University of Cincinnati***Bradley O'Guinn***Florida International University*

De-escalation training has diffused widely across policing, yet officer receptivity to it remains poorly understood. Prior work has proposed and tested a theory of officer training motivation and receptivity in which organizational justice, internal locus of control, and self-efficacy predict training motivation, which in turn predicts satisfaction and skill acquisition. This study replicates and extends that model using pre- and post-training surveys from 293 officers who participated in de-escalation training. The findings contribute to a growing evidence base on officer training motivation and receptivity by testing whether the theoretical model extends to a different agency and training program.

Police Legitimacy: Perceptions from the Administration and the Frontline**Arthur Hayden***Kentucky State University*

The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing was established in 2014 by President Barack Obama through an Executive Order. Assembled in the wake of several highly publicized deaths of Black men during encounters with law enforcement, the task force offered recommendations on how agencies can promote effective crime reduction while simultaneously building public trust. Its 59 recommendations were organized into six pillars; this research aligns directly with Pillar One: Building Trust and Legitimacy. Legitimacy is viewed as an individual's subjective judgment regarding the rightfulness of an authority's power (Hurd, 2026). This study examines police legitimacy-- specifically reflected self-legitimacy-- by surveying police administrators and frontline officers regarding their perceptions of public trust and support. A comparative analysis suggests perceptual differences exist between administration and street officers, with administrators reporting more favorable public perceptions compared to street officers. This misalignment impacts the self-legitimacy and external legitimacy of law enforcement.

Panel 18**Friday, September 25th****9:00 am – 10:15 am**

Lichtenstein

Roundtable:***The Police's Function in a Fascist America: Experiences with Law Enforcement from Queer Perspectives*****Moderator**

Omeed Ilchi

*Purdue University Northwest***Leo Winders***Purdue University
Northwest***Cassandra Vickers***Purdue University
Northwest***Emily Berg***Purdue University
Northwest***Ja'Leah Walker***Purdue University
Northwest***Omeed Ilchi***Purdue University
Northwest*

With the Trump administration rolling back civil rights protections and perpetuating a bigoted society, the LGBTQ+ community is scared, especially when interacting with police. This panel will discuss the mistrust and discrimination the queer community faces at the hands of the police. The prevalence of negative police interactions causes mistrust and fear for their lives, particularly for queer POC and those with intersecting identities. It is crucial to acknowledge the resilience of the LGBTQ+ community and their refusal to be erased. This discussion aims to strengthen LGBTQ+ safety, awareness, and offer meaningful reform.

Panel 19**Friday, September 25th****10:30 am – 11:45 am**

Warhol 2

Thematic Panel:***The Citizen Academy Solution: Earning Trust Through Transparency*****Chair**

Judith Leary

*Franklin University***Judith Leary***Franklin University***Dianna Carmenaty***Park University***Courtney Dean***Ohio Department of
Rehabilitation &
Corrections***Audrey Swavel***Ohio Department of
Rehabilitation &
Corrections***Josephine Abdul-Massi***Cuyahoga County
Community College*

This thematic panel explores how three different types of citizen academies create meaningful connections between justice-related systems and the communities they serve. Presenters addressing law enforcement, medical examiner and corrections citizens' academies will share how hands-on public education programs help people understand the real work these agencies do every day. In these sessions, you'll learn how these programs build trust, clear up misconceptions, and can even help address staffing needs by supporting departmental recruitment. Join us to learn how transparency through citizen education can strengthen relationships, break down barriers, and inspire the next generation of justice professionals.

Vulnerability and Access: Crime, Health and Civic Response**Mapping Vulnerability, Understanding Crime: An Application of the Social Vulnerability Index****Lexi Gill***University of Tampa***Kenneth Novak***CNA*

The CDC's Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), a standardized measure widely used in emergency management, has received limited attention in criminological research. The current study examines associations between the SVI- the overall index and its four subscales- and property and violent crime counts across census tracts using negative binomial regression. Results will identify which dimensions of vulnerability are most strongly associated with crime. As an evidence-based, publicly available measure, the SVI offers a transparent foundation for crime prevention policy- supporting targeted resource allocation in vulnerable communities and reinforcing community trust in data-driven practice.

Barriers to Help-Seeking Following Victimization Among Transgender Individuals: Analyses using Socio-Ecological Model of Health Framework**Brenna Durand***University of Wisconsin-**Milwaukee*

Prior literature suggests transgender individuals experience higher rates of certain victimizations, contributing to negative health outcomes (Flores et al., 2021). There is also evidence that transgender individuals are less likely to engage in forms of help-seeking due to pervasive attitudes against the community (Hereth, 2021). Using 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey data, author examines different formal and informal help-seeking barriers among transgender individuals. Guided by the Socio-Ecological Model of Health framework, results support issues at the societal, community, and relationship levels that impact individuals' help-seeking. Findings will help stakeholders in best practices following victimization experiences.

Help Isn't Everywhere: Identifying Gaps in Harm Reduction Service Access Across U.S. States**Hannah Ridner***Indiana University**Bloomington*

Drug criminalization and harm reduction exist in tension at the center of U.S. drug policy. Harm reduction services, including syringe service programs, naloxone distribution, substance use treatment, and supportive housing, represent evidence-based alternatives to punitive approaches, yet access remains uneven across communities. A central barrier to understanding these gaps is the absence of systematic, usable data on where services exist relative to where need is greatest. Drawing on the risk environment framework, spatial mismatch theory, and social disorganization theory, this study integrates an original harm reduction service dataset across states with county-level need indicators, structural characteristics, and state policies.

Cultivating Civic Skills to Confront Crimes of the Powerful: The Role of Internships**Kimberly L. Barrett***Eastern Michigan**University*

Civic skills represent an important set of tools for students interested in confronting crimes of the powerful. Yet, little is known about how internship programs may cultivate civic skills in students interested in focusing on such crimes. This qualitative study interviews recent participants in an internship program at an environmental organization in the Midwest. Respondents were asked to reflect on their experience in the program, including by sharing skills they developed to hold powerful actors accountable. Results suggest internships at environmental organizations may hold promise for criminology departments seeking ways to educate students in confronting crimes of the powerful.

Panel 21**Friday, September 25th****10:30 am – 11:45 am**

Lichtenstein

Roundtable:***Alcohol Availability as a Policy Tool for Crime Reduction*****Moderator**

Aleksandra Snowden

Marquette University

Aleksandra Snowden
Marquette University

The roundtable discussion explores the value of incorporating “war stories” in lectures to enhance criminal justice education. These stories, drawn from participants' firsthand experience as professionals, researchers, and consultants, serve as powerful tools for connecting theory with real-world practice. Each participant will share a “war story” and reflect on its application in the classroom, fostering a robust conversation about the effectiveness of storytelling as a pedagogical strategy. We anticipate an engaging dialogue on how personal narratives can deepen students' understanding and critical thinking within the field of criminal justice.

Lunch Buffet*Sponsored by MCJA***Friday, September 25th****11:45 am – 1:00 pm**

Pre-Function Space

Panel 22**Friday, September 25th****1:15 pm – 2:30 pm**

Warhol 1 & 2

Thematic Panel:***Before, During, and Beyond: Relationship Safety, Health, and Housing Needs of Justice-Involved Women in Illinois*****Chair**

Amanda Ward

Loyola Chicago Center for Criminal
Justice

From Victimization to Incarceration: Examining Intimate Partner Violence Among Incarcerated Mothers**Amanda Ward**Loyola Chicago Center
for Criminal Justice**Angela Arroyo-Aviles**Loyola Chicago Center
for Criminal Justice**Deanne Benos**

Women's Justice Institute

This paper utilizes the results of a cross-sectional survey of 534 parents incarcerated in Illinois women's prisons to examine how IPV, unmet housing, financial, and mental health needs; and caregiving responsibilities intersect to shape pathways to incarceration. Respondents with histories of abuse were more likely than those without such histories to report fear of partner, financial insecurity, housing instability, and unmet mental health needs as contributing to their current conviction. Findings suggest that holistic solutions are needed to prevent violence and address the caregiving needs of women prior to and during incarceration.

Sources and Consequences of Probable Traumatic Brain Injury among Incarcerated Women**Andrea N. Cimino**

Rogue Scholar Consulting

Amanda WardLoyola Chicago Center
for Criminal Justice**Debbie Mukamal**Stanford Criminal Justice
Center

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is one of the most overlooked yet consequential injuries among criminalized survivors, producing neurological and psychological effects that shape how survivors respond to stress, recall details, and interact with the criminal legal system. This cross-sectional study examines the prevalence of probable-TBI, defined as a head injury that resulted in loss of consciousness or dizziness, and by source (i.e., partner-violence inflicted and non-violent causes) among 1,002 people incarcerated in Illinois women's prisons. It also examines probable-TBI symptoms and whether symptoms occurred during criminal legal system involvement.

Evaluating the Women's Dignity of Choice (WDoC) Pilot: A Comprehensive Reentry Program for Women with Children

David Olson

*Loyola Chicago Center
for Criminal Justice*

Lucy Einstein

*Loyola Chicago Center
for Criminal Justice*

The presentation will highlight preliminary findings from a process and impact evaluation of the Women's Dignity of Choice (WDoC) Pilot Program, an integrated continuum of support providing housing stability, employment, family reunification, childcare, transportation, and behavioral health support to women released from custody (Cook County Jail or Illinois Department of Corrections) who are residing on Chicago's South Side or West Side and who have minor children. The characteristics of the 60+ participants to date, the nature of the services provided, and program matriculation will be described, along with insights for policy and practice from the program's first year of operations.

Panel 23

Friday, September 25th

1:15 pm – 2:30 am

Mondrian

Moderator

Amanda Sharry

University of Arkansas at Little Rock

AI in Criminal Justice Research

Between Help and Harm: Public Perceptions of AI Therapy, Safeguards, and Legal Accountability

Meher Mujtehd Syeda

*University of Arkansas at
Little Rock*

Haley Moon

*University of Arkansas at
Little Rock*

Artificial intelligence (AI) platforms have recently received attention for mental health professionals, with adolescents increasingly turning to these "AI therapists" for support. This study utilized a 2 (safeguards: present vs. absent) × 2 (accountability: accept vs. deny) between-subjects design (N = 207) to examine how system design and corporate communication influence mock jurors' liability judgments after an adolescent user dies by suicide. Findings suggest functional safeguards were the primary driver of company liability, whereas corporate accountability had no impact. These results suggest the public prioritizes safety design over rhetoric, offering critical insights for policymakers and industry leaders regulating AI platforms.

Narrative Patterns in Cryptocurrency Romance Fraud: An AI-Assisted Classification of Victim Reports

Sujung Cho

*Southern Illinois
University Carbondale*

Fatemeh Nazanin

Norouzi

*Southern Illinois
University Carbondale*

This study examines how narrative structures in online scam reports shape victims' financial behaviors, with particular attention to payment mechanisms in cryptocurrency-related romance fraud. Using a dataset that combines two textual components- general event descriptions and victim statements- with structured transactional variables, the study classifies scam narratives into six recurring patterns: pig butchering with fake profits and withdrawal barriers, pig butchering with romance grooming into investment, romance scams involving emergency or rescue requests, long-horizon romance grooming with repeated financial demands, email/device-compromise sextortion bluffs, and live-contact sextortion following chat, image, or video exchange. Building on this typology, the study employs a mixed-method design that integrates large language model-assisted text coding with quantitative analysis to examine how different scam narratives correspond to distinct payment behaviors. The findings indicate that investment-oriented patterns are strongly associated with platform-mediated and cryptocurrency-based transfers, whereas emergency and sextortion patterns more frequently rely on rapid, low-barrier payment methods. In addition, migration from initial contact platforms to private messaging services emerges as a key mechanism enabling more sophisticated financial exploitation. By linking scam narratives to transactional outcomes, this study contributes to the literature on online fraud, social engineering, and digital victimization.

Evaluating Police and Correctional Officers' Self-Reported Perceptions of AI-assisted Body-Worn Cameras: Preliminary Findings Across Three Agencies

David Lapsey
*Indiana University
Southeast*

Body-worn cameras (BWCs) were one of the most rapidly adopted technologies in law enforcement history. Now, artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly being integrated into policing technologies, including BWCs. Despite the growing use of AI-assisted BWCs in policing and corrections, little is known about how officers perceive this new technology. Using a survey experiment and a sample of correctional (n = 112) and police (n = 47) officers from three separate agencies, I examined officers' views regarding the benefits, concerns, and work-related impacts of AI-assisted BWCs and whether those views differed from perceptions of standard BWCs.

Public Perceptions of AI Assisted Police Reporting

Amanda Sharry
*University of Arkansas at
Little Rock*

Zorain Khan Nizamani
*University of Arkansas at
Little Rock*

Large language models have provided law enforcement agencies with software that produces complete drafts of police reports based on body worn camera footage. While an emerging body of literature has explored the efficacy and utility of such technology, public perceptions remain under-examined. This study contributes to this under-examined perspective by utilizing a pre-registered survey research design to explore public awareness, and to understand how pre-existing trust in law enforcement impacts the acceptance of such technological innovation. Results suggest that the public is mostly unaware of AI assisted police reporting. However, older individuals with increased levels of AI literacy, and trust in law enforcement are more likely to accept this new technology in terms of improving police report quality and improving procedural justice.

Regulating the Use of AI in Police Report Writing: The Legislative Gap

Zorain Khan Nizamani
*University of Arkansas at
Little Rock*

Amanda Sharry
*University of Arkansas at
Little Rock*

Although the use of AI for police reporting has prima facie boosted productivity, its use is underregulated through formal legislation, raising questions regarding accountability and privacy. Using data from the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner (BCLP), this paper seeks to understand the scope of legislation regulating the use of AI and law enforcement practices, including how state governing authorities define AI and how its use is regulated through workforce development. Secondly, this paper analysis AI legislation enacted by California, Virginia, and Utah to understand how state governments seek to regulate AI assisted police reporting.

Panel 24

Friday, September 25th
1:15 pm – 2:30 pm
Lichtenstein

Roundtable:

Building Sustainable Researcher-Practitioner Partnerships in Prosecution

Chair

Eric Grommon
Indiana University Indianapolis

Eric Grommon
*Indiana University
Indianapolis*

Tri Keah Henry
*Indiana University
Bloomington*

Erika Oliphant
*Monroe County
Prosecutor's Office*

Beth Hamlin
*Monroe County
Prosecutors Office*

Researcher-practitioner partnerships can strengthen prosecution through collaborative research that informs policy and practice. This roundtable highlights a partnership between researchers and a prosecutor's office that has supported studies on charging, diversion, case processing, and data transparency since 2020. Panelists will discuss lessons learned, challenges encountered, and strategies for balancing the priorities of academic researchers and prosecution professionals. Attendees are encouraged to participate in an interactive discussion about developing, sustaining, and evaluating collaborative partnerships in prosecution.

Patterns and Correlates of Offending and Terrorist Activity**Analyzing Mentally Disordered Inmates in Correctional Facilities**

Taiping Ho
Ball State University

This study examined the mentally disordered offenders in Indiana correctional facilities in terms of post-release recidivism and factors impacted on recidivism. A longitudinal data was employed to analyze the trend of mentally disordered offenders in correctional facilities and its post-related incarceration. The results of this study indicated that recidivism rate among mentally disordered offenders was higher than those offenders without mental disorder.

Criminal Legal System Involvement and Fatal Overdose in Wisconsin

Shanon Brickner
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Thomas LeBel
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Criminal legal system involvement is a major structural determinant of overdose mortality. Jail populations and non-Medicaid expansion states remain understudied. We examined criminal legal involvement among overdose decedents in Wisconsin. Using linked death and criminal legal records from 24 Wisconsin counties (2020-2022), we analyzed 2,017 adult overdose decedents with bivariate tests and multivariable logistic regression. Most decedents (74.9%) had criminal legal involvement. Odds were higher among males, decedents aged 30-49, unintentional deaths, and opioid-stimulant co-involvement (aOR = 4.05, 95% CI 2.52-6.52). Criminal legal contact characterizes most fatal overdoses in Wisconsin, supporting interventions across touchpoints.

How the Media Portrays Motives Behind Male-Perpetrated Homicide

Sarah Roper
Northern Illinois University

My study examines how males who commit homicide are presented in the media through a content analysis of the TV shows *Criminal Minds* and *Law & Order: SVU*. I apply the link between Collins' theory of hegemonic masculinity and an increased risk of violence, as well as self-control theory, highlighting the impulsivity of the perpetrators in media representations. I used purposive sampling of 20 episodes and applied inductive and deductive coding in order to reveal the portrayed themes of the potential motivation behind male executed homicides. Media representation of male perpetrators present them as highly impulsive and violent which aligns with theories of hegemonic masculinity and self-control theory.

REACT: Characterizing Emerging Foreign Terrorist Organizations and Transnational Organized Crime Through Open-Source Intelligence

Sophia Detisch
Loyola University Chicago & NCITE

Anjun Dhillon
North Carolina State University & NCITE

Colliin Stigge
University of Nebraska at Lincoln & NCITE

Erin Kearns
University of Nebraska at Lincoln & NCITE

The Research on Emerging Activity of Criminal and Terrorist Groups (REACT) project examines newly designated foreign terrorist organizations (FTOs) and transnational organized crime (TOC) entities operating in or affecting the U.S. homeland. Using publicly available data, the project develops a rigorous dataset and analytic tools to identify behavioral signatures, tactics, targets, pre-incident indicators, geographic hot spots, and reporting gaps. Current case studies examine youth recruitment in MS-13, cartel exploitation of social media to recruit migrants and minors for smuggling operations, and illicit firearms trafficking involving ghost guns and counterfeit weapons. Findings provide an evidence base for both research and practice.

Target Type and Terrorist Attack Success in the United States: A Binary Logistic Regression Analysis of Cases from 2010 to 2020.

Joel Quaye
*Northern Illinois
University*

My research examined determinants of terrorist attack success in the United States from 2010 to 2020. Using incidents from the Global Terrorism Database and a sample of 523, binary logistic regression was used to compare attacks targeting government and civilian targets, testing target type, attack method, and number of perpetrators as predictors of success. Results show that civilian-targeted attacks were significantly more likely to succeed than government-targeted attacks. Explosive-based attacks were significantly less likely to succeed than incendiary or firearm suggesting effective post-9/11 countermeasures against explosives. Perpetrator count was not a predictor. My Findings inform counterterrorism strategies and policy resource allocation.

Panel 26

Friday, September 25th
2:45 pm – 4:00 pm
Mondrian

Police Policy and Reform: Capacity, Compliance and New Directions

Chair
Ermus St. Louis
Northeastern University

Organizational Capacity, Institutional Pressures, and the Deadly-Force Policies in U.S. Police Departments

Hamdi Yesilyurt
*Southern Illinois
University Carbondale*

The present study examines how organizational capacity, professionalization, accountability, community orientation, and geographic context are associated with the accessibility and substantive strength of deadly-force policies among large local police departments in the United States. The study uses LEMAS and policy documents to collect evidence from large local police departments with over 100 or more personnel. The statistical results indicate that police agencies generally demonstrate high levels of policy modernization. Most large police agencies included detailed de-escalation language, feasible-warning requirements, duties to intervene and report, and restrictions on warning shots. The study contributes to research on police administration, policy transparency and organizational variation in explaining police use of force.

Bridging Data and Trust: Stakeholder Engagement as Implementation Infrastructure in Police Reform

Ermus St. Louis
Northeastern University
Catarina Meneses
Northeastern University
Mia Chew
Northeastern University

Evidence-based practices are now a core aspect of police reform, with research emphasizing the necessary interventions. Yet less attention has been paid to the processes that sustain reforms after they are introduced. Using 28 interviews with reform actors involved in the Connecticut Racial Profiling Prohibition Project, we examine stakeholder engagement as implementation infrastructure. Engagement acts as infrastructure that supports reform implementation through credibility-building, interpretive buffering, and adaptive accountability. However, sustainability of the project is threatened by champion dependence, role ambiguity, poor community feedback, and resource constraints. Institutionalizing these relational processes is required for durable police reform.

Police Reform in Action: An Analysis of the Chicago Police Department's Compliance Progress With its Consent Decree

Christopher Donner
*Loyola University
Chicago*

Amid growing calls for police reform, several departments have recently undertaken efforts to address patterns and practices of unconstitutional policing as part of a negotiated consent decree. In Chicago, a consent decree that commenced in 2019 is currently in its seventh year of operation and monitoring. This purpose of this paper is to analyze CPD's compliance progress to date. Overall, they are in preliminary compliance with nearly all of the decree's stipulations, yet they only in full compliance with just over one-quarter of such stipulations. While the larger results show that CPD has made progress in many areas of the consent decree, there is still much more work to be done. Specific findings and implications are discussed.

Beyond the Badge: Rethinking Traffic Enforcement, Racial Equity, and Police Legitimacy

Jada Franklin
Aurora University
Natalie Gomez
Aurora University
Xavier Cabanas
Aurora University

Racial disparities in traffic enforcement remain a significant concern within the American criminal justice system, particularly for Black communities experiencing disproportionate police contact. This presentation examines how discretionary traffic stops contribute to racial disparities and strained police-community relationships. Drawing on research concerning alternative traffic enforcement strategies, the presentation explores civilian traffic agencies, automated technologies, and limiting police involvement in minor traffic violations. These approaches may reduce unnecessary police encounters while maintaining roadway safety. By reducing negative interactions between officers and communities, alternative traffic enforcement may address racial disparities, improve police-community relationships, and potentially strengthen public trust and police legitimacy.

Panel 27

Friday, September 25th
2:45 pm – 4:00 pm
Lichtenstein

Roundtable: *The Importance of the MCJA and Conferencing*

Moderator
Michael Seredycz
University of Cincinnati

Michael Seredycz
MacEwan University
Martin Gottschalk
University of Wisconsin-Parkside
Frank White
University of North Dakota
William Wakefield
University of Nebraska at Omaha
Scott Sasse
University of Nebraska at Omaha
Michael Meyer
University of North Dakota

Having surpassed 50 years of incorporation in 1975, it is essential to reflect on the community established within the Midwest Criminal Justice Association (MCJA). Past presidents Bill Wakefield (1983) and Mike Meyer (1993) offer their insights on the beginnings of the MCJA. Relative newcomers and valued guests can provide additional context on how the MCJA and conferencing have generated new networking opportunities and/or reshaped their perspective on the discipline.

Break

Friday, September 25th
4:00 pm – 4:15 pm

Set-up for Student Poster Session

Friday, September 25th
4:00 pm – 4:15 pm
Escher & Mondrian

For students participating in the Poster Session (i.e., undergraduate, master's, & doctoral level), the rooms are available for poster set-up around 4:00 pm. Please see MCJA volunteers in the Pre-Function Space for assistance.

To be considered for a *Student Poster Award*, attendance at both the judging session (Thursday, 1:15 pm – 2:30 pm) and the open poster session (Friday, 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm) is mandatory.

General Business Meeting & Awards Ceremony

Friday, September 25th

4:15 pm – 5:15 pm

Warhol 1 & 2

Open to all members – please join the Executive Board for updates (e.g., association, journal, 2026 – 2027 Executive Board announcements, sponsor recognition, etc.) and to help guide the future of MCJA.

2026 Awards presentation:

- *Journal of Crime and Justice* Outstanding Paper Award
- Practitioner Award
- Tom Castellano Award
- Student Travel Awards
- Student Paper Awards
- Student Poster Awards (i.e., undergraduate, Master's, & doctoral level)

Presidential Reception

Sponsored by MCJA

Friday, September 25th

5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Pre-Function Space

Student Poster Session

Friday, September 25th

5:30 pm – 6:30 pm

Escher & Mondrian

Can Theater Enhance Teen Dating Violence Prevention? Preliminary Findings from Rural Schools

Alvi Ali

*University of Nebraska
at Omaha*

Tara Richards

*University of Nebraska
at Omaha*

Teen dating violence (TDV) prevention programs are commonly implemented in schools through classroom-based curricula promoting healthy relationships. This study presents preliminary findings from an evaluation of school-based TDV prevention programming in rural Nebraska schools. Students completed pre- and post-test surveys associated with the Safe Dates curriculum. Schools implementing the curriculum alone were compared to schools also implementing Revolution, a theater-based peer-led prevention program. Preliminary analyses examine changes in students' attitudes and knowledge related to healthy relationships and dating violence. Findings offer insight into the potential added value of integrating theater-based programming with traditional curricula, with implications for future prevention research.

A Predictive Modeling Approach to Understanding Outcomes in Treatment Court and Diversion Programs

Deepthasree

Anumolu

*University of
Wisconsin- Madison;
Wisconsin Department
of Justice*

Erica Beckman

*Wisconsin Department
of Justice*

Kaley Horvath

*Wisconsin Department
of Justice*

This project aims to develop a predictive model using data from the Treatment Alternatives and Diversion (TAD/CORE) database, where CORE serves as the statewide system for collecting comprehensive outcome, research, and evaluation data on TAD-funded programs. By analyzing demographic, programmatic, and behavioral variables, the study will identify factors linked to participant success. Because Treatment Court and Diversion programs differ in structure, populations, and levels of risk and need, each will be examined separately. The resulting model will pinpoint key predictors of success and show how predictive analytics can enhance program evaluation and guide improvements in justice-focused interventions.

Bahay-Bahayan Sa Piitan: Female Social Groupings and Their Impact on Prison Governance

Nazarenn Azinar

*Southern Illinois
University Carbondale*

While numerous studies have examined male prison groups, particularly gangs, and their influence on prison governance in the Philippines, relatively little attention has been given to their female counterparts. This study addresses this gap by exploring social groupings at the Correctional Institution for Women (CIW) in Mandaluyong City. Using a qualitative approach, it explored the basis, characteristics, and functions of these groupings and how they differ from those found in male prisons. Semi-structured interviews were used to facilitate questions for the 26 participants with criteria as follows: (1) a Woman Deprived of Liberty (WDL) from the CIW Maximum Security Compound; (2) is part of a social grouping; (3) has been in the facility for more than 1 year but less than 5 years, or has been in the facility for more than 15 years. Some prison officers were also interviewed to provide insights into their existence. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis, which revealed the presence of various types of groups in a women's correctional facility, including pseudo-families, work groups, and reformation groups, all of which contribute to the institution's overall functioning.

Contractual Coercion and the Criminal Justice Dimensions of Exploitation in U.S. H-2A Guestworker Programs

Kyla Bernal

Boston University

Although the United States has developed visa programs to facilitate migrant labor and economic opportunity, these systems can simultaneously restrict worker mobility and reinforce structural dependency. This paper examines how labor exploitation can emerge within legally regulated guestworker programs in the United States, with a focus on the H-2A agricultural visa system. It argues that coercion in migrant labor markets is not limited to overt trafficking or physical force, but can also be produced through legal structures that tie a worker's immigration status to a single employer. Through an analysis of the recently documented H-2A wage theft enforcement case involving agricultural workers in North Carolina, the paper argues that exploitation persists even within formally legal employment relationships. In this case, 99 H-2A workers received a \$305,000 settlement following allegations of unpaid wages and failure to reimburse required expenses. The case is used to examine how employer-dependent visa status interacts with wage violations to shape worker vulnerability and limit meaningful exit options. Although legal protections exist within the H-2A framework, enforcement occurs within a broader system in which reporting abuse or leaving employment may risk loss of housing, income, and legal authorization to remain in the United States. This paper situates H-2A labor exploitation within criminal justice scholarship by examining how coercion is recognized and addressed through enforcement systems rather than criminal prosecution. The study concludes that criminal justice approaches to labor exploitation should broaden their understanding of coercion to include legally structured dependency created through guestworker visa systems, not only discrete illegal acts.

Motion to Compute: A Look at Court Officials Options of Using AI in the Court System

Miranda Bille

*Bowling Green State
University*

Lillian Haines

*Bowling Green State
University*

Piper Vice

*Bowling Green State
University*

Carson Wright

*Bowling Green State
University*

This poster presents findings from a study examining how artificial intelligence (AI) is influencing legal practitioners and decision-making within the criminal justice system. Using qualitative interviews with legal professionals, this study explores the varying perceptions of AI use in the courtroom. In addition, exploring bias, reliability, transparency, and accountability when using AI in the courtroom, and practitioners' views on the future role of AI in judicial processes. By capturing firsthand experiences, opinions, and recommendations, the findings aim to inform the ethical implementation of AI, promote evidence-based policies, and emphasize the continued importance of human oversight in criminal justice decision-making.

Slave Patrols to Modern Policing: The Black American Experience Explained Through Epigenetics

Kelli Blissett

*Purdue University
Northwest*

Omeed Ilchi

*Purdue University
Northwest*

The power dynamic between Black Americans and the institution of policing today has evolved from slave patrols, the first modern police force in the U.S., whose primary goal was to apprehend escaped slaves and deter rebellions. This presentation proposes to survey Black Americans, who are descendants of the enslaved, on their views on the police, with a focus on the potential epigenetic effect from slave patrols to modern policing with their knowledge of previous generations' experiences with the police. Coming to an understanding on the potential root of this dynamic can improve police behaviors toward their communities.

Incarceration, Fentanyl, and the Fourth Wave: Predictors of Overdose Death in Lake County, Indiana

Olivia Choros

*Indiana University
School of Medicine*

Amy Han

*Indiana University
School of Medicine*

Monica Solins-Saunders

*Indiana University
Northwest*

William Forgey

Lake County Jail

Justice-involved individuals face significantly elevated overdose risk amid the opioid epidemic's Fourth Wave. The study analyzed 703 Lake County, Indiana coroner cases using both logistic and Cox regression to examine incarceration history, demographics, toxicology, and time since release. Overdose was shown to cause 29% of deaths. Fentanyl and polysubstance burden were the strongest predictors, while incarceration history independently doubled overdose odds. Most overdose deaths among previously incarcerated individuals occurred greater than two years after release rather than immediately post-release. Overdose prevention should extend beyond reentry, with emphasis on long-term support, polysubstance use interventions, and strategies addressing persistent racial disparities.

Estimating the Effect of State v. Clarke on Domestic Violence Arrest Rates in Idaho: A Generalized Synthetic Control Approach

Xuting Dai

*University of Nebraska
at Omaha*

Tara Richards

*University of Nebraska
at Omaha*

Lane Gillespie

*University of Nebraska
at Omaha*

Justin Nix

*University of Nebraska
at Omaha*

In State v. Clarke (2019), the Idaho Supreme Court restricted officers' authority to make warrantless arrests for alleged misdemeanor crimes not committed in their presence. This study estimates the decision's effect on arrests for misdemeanor domestic violence (DV) incidents. We use 10 years of NIBRS data and the generalized synthetic control method to compare DV arrests by Idaho agencies (i.e., treatment group) to non-Idaho agencies (i.e., control group) before- and after- Clarke. Findings suggest that Clarke reduced the misdemeanor DV arrest rate by 10.4 percentage points ($p = .029$). Implications for DV victims, perpetrators, and the community are discussed.

Patterns, Anomalies, and Trends: Tracing Crimes Involving Firearms Over Time

Aiden Kelly

*Bowling Green State
University*

Melissa Burek

*Bowling Green State
University*

This poster presents a longitudinal comparative analysis of firearm violence patterns across the eight largest cities in Ohio and Michigan from 2019 to 2024. Using incident-based firearm data, the study examines temporal trends and regional differences in firearm-related offenses. Specifically, this analysis explores which criminal offenses most frequently involve firearms, identifies which firearm types are most used in these incidents, and assesses how patterns of firearm use have changed over the six-year study period. Findings will provide insight into evolving firearm violence trends and contribute to evidence-based discussions surrounding crime prevention, policy development, and future criminal justice research.

Officer Reoffending: A Study of Sworn Officers who Reoffend in the Years 2005-2021

Olivia Lammers

Bowling Green State University

Laura Harden

Bowling Green State University

Philip Stinson

Bowling Green State University

Samantha Kopf

Bowling Green State University

Eric Cooke

Bowling Green State University

This study examines variation in police officer reoffending across race and gender using data from the Henry A. Wallace Police Crime Database, a national-scale dataset documenting criminal arrest cases involving non-federal sworn law enforcement officers in the United States from 2005 to 2021. The analysis focuses on officers with multiple criminal arrest cases and distinguishes those whose arrests occurred across multiple events or victims from officers with a single criminal arrest case. Descriptive and comparative analyses are used to assess patterns of repeat offending across demographic groups. By focusing on repeat misconduct, this study provides a nuanced understanding of heterogeneity in officer criminal behavior and reoffending.

Examining Family-Based Interventions Through the Lens of Addiction-Affected Family Needs

Sydney Lutz

Loyola University Chicago

Previous research has demonstrated that family members of substance users experience unique forms of stigma and negative consequences. Our previous study explored the support systems and coping mechanisms that addiction-affected families found most beneficial, as well as the ongoing challenges they continue to face. Participant reports highlighted families' need for continued support and empathetic care. The current review examines family-oriented programs, with the goal of evaluating the extent to which family-based approaches address the conflicts and consequences experienced by addiction-affected families.

The Power of Family: Examining Its Role in Juvenile Justice and Recidivism

Hanna Moya

Aurora University

Abigail Jacome

Aurora University

Tatianna Jackson

Aurora University

This study examines the relationship between family involvement in the juvenile justice system and recidivism. Family engagement plays a crucial role that can influence youth behavior by providing emotional support, guidance, and accountability throughout the justice process. This research evaluates how parental involvement, including participation in court proceedings and communication with probation officers, affects recidivism outcomes. It also examines barriers to family participation, such as socioeconomic challenges, transportation limitations, and legal constraints. Findings indicate that increased family involvement is associated with lower recidivism rates and improved reintegration, supporting family-centered interventions as an effective strategy for promoting rehabilitation and reducing reoffending.

When Authority Becomes Opportunity: A Bureaucratic and Legislative Lens on Police Sexual Misconduct Against Minors

Kendra Mueller

Bowling Green State University

The issue of police sexual misconduct against minors remains a neglected area of research. Equally alarming is the lack of bureaucratic and legislative action being taken to address and mitigate these police-perpetrated crimes. This study explores correlations between several aspects of arrest cases, identifying recurring contextual factors of the grooming process to inform potential policies. Analyses revealed several correlations between offending officer characteristics, victim characteristics, and case outcomes. Several patterns of behavior exhibited by predatory officers in the grooming process were identified, and policies addressing the hiring and vetting process, department culture, departmental written policy, and legislation are proposed.

Error 404 - Legal Framework Not Found: An Analysis of AI-Generated Crimes From a Law Enforcement Perspective

Ella Shroads

Bowling Green State University

Lillian Sproull

Bowling Green State University

Skylar Squire

Bowling Green State University

Madeline Zemanek

Bowling Green State University

This poster presents findings from a study examining how law enforcement agencies across the United States are responding to the growing issue of generated Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) generated by artificial intelligence (AI). Using qualitative interviews with law enforcement professionals, this study showcases investigative practices, and the operational challenges associated with AI-generated CSAM. This project also focusses on the issues involving technological capabilities, resource limitations, and gaps in existing legal framework. By gathering practitioners' experiences and perspectives, findings will provide evidence to inform policy, strengthen investigative strategies, and support the development of more effective criminal justice responses to AI child exploitation.

Unidentified Persons and Criminological Research

Madison Tramel

University of Nebraska at Omaha

1,100 cases of unidentified persons (human remains) cases come to the attention of law enforcement across the country every year. While not all unidentified persons' deaths are attributable to violence, there is evidence that victimization plays a pivotal role in unidentified persons cases directly and indirectly. However, criminological research on unidentified persons cases is virtually non-existent. This call for research identifies relevant research pathways and research questions regarding unidentified persons cases including vulnerabilities - prior victimization, homelessness, lack of knowledge of their missing status - and methods of identification (e.g., genetic genealogy). Unidentified persons research has implications for prevention and case resolution.

Decade in Review

Formally established in 2015, the Center for Criminal Justice is the interdisciplinary home for criminal justice research in the College of Arts and Sciences at Loyola University Chicago. We collaborate with government and community partners on research, teaching, and service to inform and support criminal justice reform.

Knowledge

95 Reports, newsletters, and publications, including [The First Year of the Pretrial Fairness Act](#), which gave the public its first detailed look at the abolition of cash bail in Illinois.

40+ Data dashboards, bringing transparency to prosecutorial decision making, corrections populations, and local justice systems, such as the interagency [Cook County Criminal Justice Dashboard](#).

100+ Media citations, interviews, and accounts of our research in national outlets like [The Nation](#), Axios, and Pro Publica and local outlets like Chicago Tribune, [Chicago Sun-Times](#), [WBEZ](#), and NPR Illinois.

150+ Presentations at international, national, and local convenings including the Ontario Crown Attorney's Office, the Illinois Supreme Court, and numerous local criminal justice coordinating councils.

Research

\$11M Research funding secured, from [Microsoft](#), [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#), [Joyce Foundation](#), [MacArthur Foundation](#), [National Institute of Justice](#), and others that supports applied research projects.

30 Research projects in seven substantive areas including prosecution, bail reform, gun crime, institutional and community corrections, women in the criminal justice system, reentry, and case processing.

15+ Collaborations with universities across the US, including Stanford, Northwestern, University of Maryland, University of Massachusetts, Texas Christian University, University of Colorado, and Bowie State University.

175+ Partnerships with government, non-profit, and advocacy organizations across seventeen states to engage in applied research projects.

Education

100+ Undergraduate and graduate students who have worked on projects at CCJ. Many have gone on to positions in the criminal justice field and are applying what they learned as student researchers to make the system better.

1000+ Hours worked for local non-profits by Loyola students enrolled in CCJ's Prison Reform class, leveraging partnerships with the [John Howard Association](#), the [Women's Justice Institute](#), the [Illinois Justice Project](#), and others to provide students with real-world learning experiences and connections.

10 Chicago Neighborhood Research Fellows hired to facilitate criminal justice research training and opportunities for Loyola students from Chicago communities impacted by violence.

3 New undergraduate courses launched, based on CCJ projects, taught by the Center's staff, and explicitly designed to draw a new generation of student-researchers into the Center's work.

27 Criminology majors who now can code in Python — building data scrapers to look at everything from crime to [NYC rat complaints](#) — thanks to a new Criminal Justice Data Science course.

The Center

Don Stemen, PhD, Co-Director and Professor
David E. Olson, PhD, Co-Director and Professor
Patrick Griffin, JD, Director of Policy & Communications
Amanda Ward, PhD, Research Associate Professor
Letitia Monreal, MA, Research Associate



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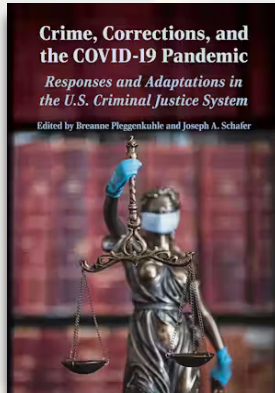
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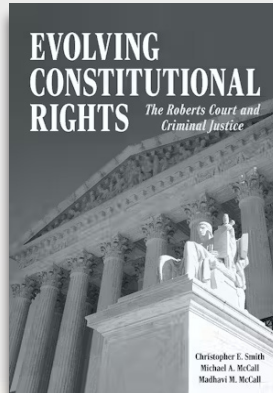
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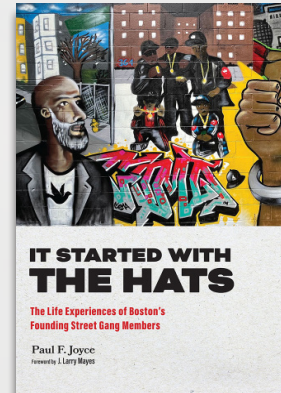
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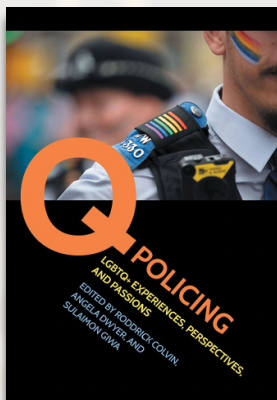
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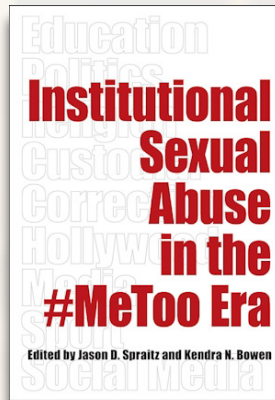
Evolving Constitutional Rights: The Roberts Court and Criminal Justice, by **Christopher E. Smith, Michael A. McCall, and Madhavi M. McCall**



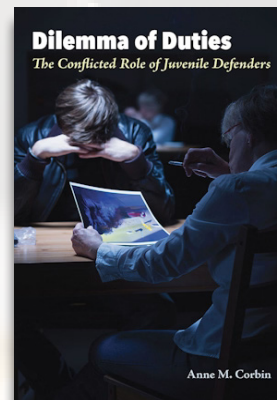
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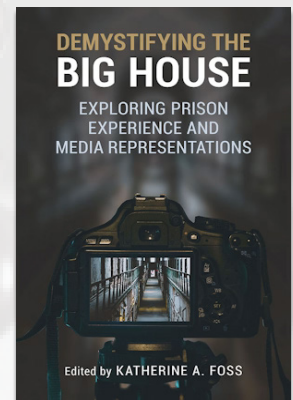
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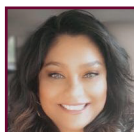
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Dr. Maya Barak,
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Science in Criminology, Law,
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Tina Freiburger (Indiana University of Pennsylvania), Dean and Professor. *Specialties:* Gender and racial disparities in criminal justice decision-making; juvenile delinquency and court processing; program evaluation; the intersection of the criminal justice system with substance use and behavioral health.

Kimberly D. Hassell (University of Nebraska), Associate Professor. *Specialties:* Data-driven policing strategies; police-community relations; women and policing; race/ethnicity and policing; police organizational behavior; program evaluation.

Rebecca Headley Konkel (Georgia State University), Associate Professor. *Specialties:* The associations between neighborhood context and offending, victimization, and substance use; the impact of programming on recidivism and desistance from substance use.

Thomas LeBel (University at Albany, SUNY), Chair and Associate Professor. *Specialties:* Prisoner reintegration; desistance from crime; substance use treatment and services for individuals in the criminal justice system; women involved with the criminal justice system.

Leon Sawh (University of Massachusetts-Lowell), Visiting Assistant Professor. *Specialties:* Smart decarceration; community corrections and behavioral health; community reentry; qualitative research methods.

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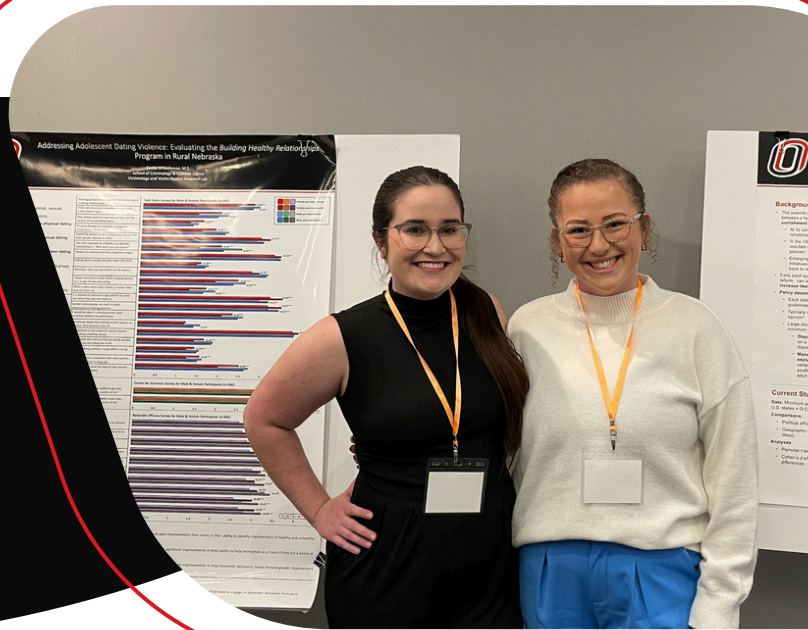
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