



Department of Criminal Justice Newsletter



From the Chair

Welcome to the Winter/Spring 2016 edition of the newsletter for the Department of Criminal Justice at Wayne State University! We had a busy Winter 2016 semester. Our seven-year program review is completed. The external and internal program reviewers were impressed of the quality of our faculty and students. Our alumni and current students gave very positive evaluations of our program. We are now working on the departmental strategic plan development based on the constructive comments and suggestions received during the program review process.

Our faculty have been productive in research and teaching. In the last year, faculty have published as least 28 refereed journal articles and 5 books or book chapters. They have also submitted several internal and external grant proposals. Faculty integrate their research with teaching. Through learning community courses, students understand crime and criminal justice related issues through classes and after class activities. Our academic advisors and administrative assistants have worked hard in helping the program review, faculty research and teaching, and students.

Criminal Justice students work hard in their studies. We have more than 37% of CJ students with a GPA of 3.0 and above. Our six year graduation rate is higher than that at the university level. We have two master's students who have been admitted to the top criminal justice/criminology programs with a full scholarship. Criminal Justice Student Organization is active. It has organized workshops/seminars and participated in the Department Career Fair.

Our alumni always care about our program and are invaluable to us. Some of them generously donate their money to the Department so that we can offer students with different amounts of scholarship. Alumni's donations also enable criminal justice faculty to continue their research. During our program review, we had the chance to invite several alumni to the campus. They not only shared their positive student experience at WSU but also their constructive suggestions to our program. Since I came to WSU last year, I have received calls and emails from our past students expressing their appreciation of their education received at WSU and their willingness to help in fundraising, internship, and serving on a committee. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all alumni who showed their support to the Department in one way or another.

We have a great Spring/Summer semester so far. We love to hear from our alumni, current students and friends who care about us. If you have any stories or news you would like to share with us, please do not hesitate to contact our newsletter editor Ms. Alicia Ortez or myself. We always treasure your comments and suggestions. We look forward to hearing from you. Have a great summer.

Shanhe Jiang, Chair and Professor

CONGRATULATIONS to those noted below for the many accomplishments!!!



Congratulations to recent graduates from our Masters Degree Program, **LaBreonna Bland** and **Laura Rubino** who have been **admitted into two of the top Criminology Ph.D. programs in the country**. Both LaBreonna and Laura also served as peer mentors in the Justice and Society Learning Community this past year.

LaBreonna writes:

As a master's student in the Criminal Justice Program at WSU, I found my voice. My future plans consist of entering the Criminology, Law, and Society Doctoral program at University of California, Irvine this fall. I want to study mass incarceration, wrongful convictions, racial bias, and gangs while obtaining my Ph.D. I see myself working in crime policy but I'm open to teaching after my experience at WSU. When I consider the impact **Drs. Zalman, Smith, Wareham, and Larson** have had on my graduate experience I find myself wanting to be that resource for future students.

Laura writes:

The time I spent in the criminal justice master's program has been invaluable due to the strong mentorships with faculty. I valued the small class sizes and the willingness of professors to go out of their way to help their students learn, understand, and succeed. With their help, I was able to narrow my career focus to obtaining a Ph.D. in criminal justice. I will start my PhD program August 2016 at the University of Cincinnati. After graduation, I would like to follow in their footsteps and search for a tenure track position at a research university.

Congratulations and good luck - we know that you will represent Wayne State University well!



Professor Matt Larson was awarded the "**Learning Coordinator of the Year**" from a group of over forty-five coordinators of learning communities at Wayne State. Prof. Larson spearheaded the first Justice and Society Learning Community last year for first-year or new transfer students. A Learning Community gives students the advantages of a small college learning environment with the resources of a major research university. In Learning Communities, small groups of students with similar interests work closely together in a "community of learners." Students, along with advanced student mentors and a faculty advisor, study, socialize and problem-solve together.



Jonpaul Taylor is a Senior Honor Student at Wayne State University minoring in Criminal Justice. In April of 2016, Jonpaul **received a R.I.S.E Scholarship** from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to support his **internship at the State Appellate Defender Office**. He has since worked in SADO's Detroit office with their team of talented and successful lawyers and interns to support those who cannot afford legal counsel. Jonpaul has recently taken the LSAT. Upon graduating from Wayne State University in May of 2017, he plans to pursue a degree in law. He then plans to pursue a career in either Constitutional Law or International Human Rights.

News from the NOBLE, CJSO and CRJ Career and Job Fair

Pedro Smith, currently a senior in the Criminal Justice Program, attended our Career and Job Fair in April, 2016. This is what he conveyed: "My desire was to find an entry level position where I could possibly gain some experience dealing with troubled youth. I was able to land a position with Wolverine Human Services as a Youth Care Specialist. A lot of these youths have been placed in Wolverine because of their past living conditions and situations or because they were recently released from a juvenile detention center." Pedro is excited to learn all that he can so that the position will be a stepping stone to a successful career in helping youths.



SEED Grants from the Wayne State University Office of the Vice-President for Research have been funded for two projects in the Criminal Justice Department. **Professors Brad Smith and Charles Klahm** will be examining "the influence of body worn cameras on police officer behavior, citizen complaints, and the process of investigating citizen complaints." Graduate students **Mackenzie Boehler and Toycia Collins** will be full graduate research assistants on the project. The second SEED Grant was obtained by **Professors Matt Larson and Charles Klahm**. This research will focus on the impact of mass-scale home demolitions (less crime...) and if crime is displaced into other neighboring areas. **Leah Oulette**, will be the graduate research assistant on this project. Graduate research assistantships (GRA's) include tuition, a salary and benefits. Congratulations to the professors and to the graduate students who will be working on the projects.



The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program: Social Change through Transformative Education

Future New Class

Professor Matt Larson and **Lecturer Ebonie L. Byndon-Fields, M.S., M.S.W., J.D.** attended the **Michigan Inside Out Prison Exchange Training Program**. Professor Byndon-Fields states that "Inside-Out creates a dynamic partnership between institutions of higher learning and correctional systems in order to deepen the conversation about and transform our approaches to understanding crime, justice, freedom, inequality, and other issues of social concern. Inside-Out is an opportunity for college students to go behind the walls to reconsider what they have come to know about crime and justice. At the same time, it is also an opportunity for those inside prison to place their life experiences in a larger framework. Inside-Out creates a paradigm shift for participants, encouraging transformation and change agency in individuals and, in so doing, serves as an engine for social change." Professor Larson indicated that **"the training was transformative."** It was the best experience he had in the last six years both personally and professionally. Professor Ebonie Byndon-Fields conveyed that the training **"served as a life altering experience."** Needless to say, it was a week of great vigor and a week stained by unforgettable, life enhancing moments." The Program through the Criminal Justice Department will hopefully begin in the Winter of 2017 with fifteen students, fifteen inmates, one class, all inside a prison.

The Seven-Year Department Review Results

The Department of Criminal Justice has completed its seven-year review. The review started in Winter 2015. The self-study by the Department was completed in Fall 2015. The evaluations by the internal and external reviewers were completed in Winter 2016. Our self-study report and the reviewer's reports identified the major strengths of the Department, such as high quality of faculty, rich local resources, and both online and traditional land-based graduate program. The Department also needs to develop its identity, revise its curriculum at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, increase elective courses, and strengthen its internship program.

The Department is now working on its post-review responses and strategic plan development. We will seek opinions from our alumni and current students to help us develop our strategies. Thank you Criminal Justice students and alumni for their input and support during our program review.



Judge Mary Chrzanowski

News on our Alumni

Earlier this year, **Judge Mary Chrzanowski** of the 16th Circuit Court in Macomb County accepted an appointment as a Federal Administrative Law Judge. Judge Chrzanowski received a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice, graduating "with distinction" in 1982 from Wayne State University, and earned her Juris Doctor degree from the University of Detroit School of Law in 1985. "This is a dream come true for me," stated Judge Chrzanowski. Congratulations from all of us in the Criminal Justice Department at Wayne State! We are so proud!

Recent past CRJ graduate student scholarships have gone to :

MacKenzie Bohler

Andrew Eppich

Toycia Collins

Rachel Shango

Jacklyn Hood

Nadia Audreikiv

Many thanks to those who have donated to the department!