Criminal Justice

Job Outlook

Completing criminal justice coursework makes you more marketable. Many entry-level applicants for police jobs have completed some formal post-secondary education, and a significant number are college graduates. Some criminal justice agencies require coursework to apply or to be promoted. Examples include the requirement of an associate’s degree to apply at the Texas Department of Public Safety to be a trooper. Some local agencies such as the Texas A&M University Police Department require 45 hours. The Texas Youth Commission requires two years experience as a juvenile correctional officer and 30 college credit hours to be promoted to a case manager.

Employment of police is expected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations through 2014. Applicants with college credits should have the best opportunities. Police and sheriff’s patrol officers had median annual earnings of $45,210 (May 2004).

Job opportunities for correctional officers are expected to be excellent. Median annual earnings of correctional officers and jailers were $33,600 (May 2004). The need to replace correctional officers who transfer to other occupations, retire, or leave the labor force, coupled with rising employment demand, will generate thousands of job openings each year. (US Department of Labor)

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Blinn College seeks to provide equal education without regard to race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, disability, or any other constitutionally or statutorily impermissible reason. This policy extends to all programs and activities supported by the college.

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Blinn College, Texas’ premier two-year college, offers two-year associate degrees and one-year certificates in criminal justice that prepare graduates for work in law enforcement and corrections.

- **Associate of Applied Science in Criminal Justice** (62-64 credit hours) - Graduates are qualified for entry-level criminal justice positions among local, county, and state agencies.

- **Associate of Applied Science in Law Enforcement Technology** (62-64 credit hours) - Courses specific to the use of technology in law enforcement provide students with up-to-date industry specific training to enhance their professional opportunities in positions with local, county and state agencies.
  - Central Texas Police Academy - The two-year AAS curriculum includes a semester at the Central Texas Police Academy through a partnership with the Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX). Students receive Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE) certification.

- **Associate of Arts in Criminal Justice Field of Study** (62-64 credit hours) - A state created AA degree with academic core classes accepted statewide by any four-year college or university that offers a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice. This degree plan does not include the Central Texas Police Academy. Students take five required CRIJ classes and two CRIJ electives in addition to the academic core that includes a sociology course specific to criminology or social problems. The AA degree is the most effective route to ensure the transferability of criminal justice classes. (Note: The student must complete the degree.)

- **Law Enforcement Certificate** (26 credit hours) - Graduates who pass the certification exam will be qualified to work as police officers in the State of Texas.
  - Central Texas Police Academy - The certificate applies college credit to completion of the Central Texas Police Academy through a partnership with the Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX). Students receive Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE) certification.

- **Corrections Certificate** (24 credit hours) - Graduates may qualify for entry-level positions as correctional officers in county, city and private jails, state and federal prisons, and county and private juvenile detention centers and state school facilities.

**TEEX Central Texas Police Academy**

One semester in the AAS program and the Law Enforcement Certificate program is spent at the Central Texas Police Academy that includes hands-on experience with access to a firing range, driving track, and residential prop houses that provide realistic scenarios. The AAS degree and certificate are available at Blinn’s Brenham and Bryan campuses. The police academy is located at Texas A&M University’s Riverside Campus in western Brazos County.

Recognized as the oldest statewide law enforcement extension training agency in Texas, TEEX’s Central Texas Police Academy has been preparing future officers for successful careers in law enforcement since the 1940s. Graduates have a long-standing record of a 99-percent passing rate on the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE) licensing examination and are recruited by law enforcement agencies throughout the state.

Academy costs, $4,200, are charged separately while the other semesters are charged on the regular Blinn tuition and fee schedule. Financial aid is available to qualified students.

**Transferability**

The Criminal Justice degree and certificate courses listed as CRIJ are academic courses that will transfer to universities that offer a criminal justice bachelor’s degree. In addition to the program’s transferability, students may articulate their criminal justice coursework from many high schools and from the TCLEOSE-certified police academy.

Check with the university of your choice and refer to that school’s equivalency guide. High school and police academy articulated courses may best transfer into a Bachelors of Arts and Applied Science (BAAS) or a Bachelors of Arts and Technology (BAT).

**Internships**

Students are encouraged to take an internship class to receive valuable on-the-job experience and training. The Criminal Justice program has established internships with Brazos Valley law enforcement agencies including the Texas Department of Public Safety and other related agencies such as the abused family shelter, county attorney’s office, and the juvenile justice facilities.