



WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Social & Behavioral Sciences

May 12, 2021

Program Review
Master of Criminal Justice (MCJ)
Department of Criminal Justice
Weber State University

Dean Response

I have read the MCJ Program of Self-study, the Report of the Evaluation Team, and the program's response to the report. I thank Dr. Brad Reyns and his colleagues for the time and effort in: (a) reviewing the MCJ program, (b) organizing the pool of reviewers, and (c) generating the documentation about the program. These tasks are never easy, but a thorough review of a program is necessary in order to strengthen and improve what we offer our students, so I applaud what has been accomplished.

I would like to address the faculty response to the MCJ Program Review (February 1, 2021). The strengths of the program outlined by the review team and mentioned in Dr. Reyns' letter of response include:

- A clear and appropriate mission statement that is woven throughout the curriculum of the program and aligns with the core values of Weber State University.
- A newly remodeled facility (Lindquist Hall) with state of the art resources, plus support from the Stewart Library, WSU Online, and the department administrative assistant.
- Learning outcomes that align with the program mission statement and the graduate requirements.
- Faculty expertise and student support.
- Relationships that have been developed with organizations across Utah.

I will address the program's challenges as reported by the evaluation team, through discussion of the report's recommendations meant to address those challenges, and the department's response to those recommendations. Recommendation 1 - An area of improvement for the Master's of Criminal Justice program includes a revision of the curriculum to align more closely with trends in the field and the creation of pathways to align with student's goals. I highly support this curriculum revision and would encourage the director to develop a timetable for a plan of action. Recommendation 2 - Advising is another area where the review said improvement needs to occur. The director and MCJ faculty agree that students can benefit from formal advising during

the first semester in the program. I recommend that the MCJ faculty, under the guidance of the program director, develop a formal advising schedule for the new cohort of MCJ students that are entering the program and continue this process going forward. Recommendation 3 - The review team recommended strategy meetings to develop an action plan for program growth, support, and determining the optimum number of admitted applicants into the program. I support this suggestion of strategy meetings to align admitted students with available resources and planning for growth. Recommendation 4 - The comment by the review team about utilizing teaching and/or graduate assistants is valid and it would be worth exploring how the differential tuition funding from the program is spent to see if some funds could go toward TAs and GAs. If the Director and MCJ faculty are interested in exploring this idea of assistants, then we should meet with the campus financial expert who can help us navigate this process.

Other recommendations (5 & 6 and additional) from the review team is that the MCJ program is too reliant on overload teaching. I recognize there is a definite need for more resources, especially a faculty line. I highly encourage including this request for an additional tenure track faculty in the strategic planning report (SPR) for the program. New faculty lines are needed for the entire college and the SPR process can help discern where the greatest need is located. I applaud your approach to using an in-house faculty member in the Sociology Department to teach a course once a year and I encourage you to reach out to other university faculty who may be interested in teaching as indicated in the MCJ program response letter.

I reiterate my support of the reviewers request that the MCJ faculty need to “sit down and engage in strategic, long-term planning for the MCJ program”. Continuous reflection and thoughtful planning will help ensure the strength and vitality of the program going forward.

Best regards,



Julie Rich, D.Phil.

Dean

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