

**EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY**  
**Master of Science in Criminal Justice**  
**Criminal Justice Education Certificate**  
**Criminology Certificate**  
**Higher and Adult Education in Criminal Justice Certificate**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

For general information, please visit:

- [Criminal Justice & Criminology Graduate Program Website](#)
- [ECU Graduate School](#) (application and policies)
- For other questions write us at: [mscj@ecu.edu](mailto:mscj@ecu.edu)

**APPLICATION**

Please visit the ECU Graduate School website to complete the application process.

Q: Are there deadlines for submitting my application?

A: Yes, the MSCJ program and the Criminal Justice Education certificate, as well as our other certificate programs, accept applications for fall and spring semester entry. The deadlines for COMPLETED application are listed below:

- Fall admission: May 15
  - Priority Deadline: March 30
- Spring admission: October 15
  - Priority Deadline: August 30

Q: What should I include in my statement of intent?

A: The statement of intent should indicate why you are interested in an advanced degree or certificate in criminal justice and discuss your career goals.

Q: How do I submit my letters of recommendation, and what should be included?

A: Letters of recommendation will be submitted with your application. Specific details on the application process can be found on the [Application](#) page on the Graduate School website. Letters of recommendation should speak to your likely success in graduate school and **should be from professional or academic references. We do not accept recommendations from friends or family members.**

**ADMISSIONS**

**EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS**

Q: Does ECU have minimum admission requirements for graduate study?

A: Yes, the ECU Graduate School has specific admission requirements for **all** graduate programs. The basic requirements are:

1. Completed application form, application fee;
2. Successful completion of a bachelor's degree prior to program start;
3. Official transcripts for all colleges/universities attended;
4. Three (3) letters of recommendation from professional or academic sources; and
5. Statement of Purpose/Intent.

Q: Do I have to take the GRE test?

A: No, we do not require the GRE for admission decisions.

Q: What is the minimum GPA required for regular admission?

A: To qualify for regular admission to a degree program, an applicant must have an overall GPA of 2.7 on a 4.0 scale on all undergraduate work or a graduate GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. However, we utilize a holistic method when reviewing an application for admission and GPA is just one component we evaluate. Otherwise qualified applicants may be admitted by exception.

## **OTHER PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESSES**

Q: How do I know which courses to take?

A: The official MSCJ degree requirements are listed in the ECU Graduate Catalog as well as on the Department of Criminal Justice & Criminology website (see General Information section above for links). We also provide recommended course sequencing for students planning to complete the degree in two or three years (or the certificate in one or two years). However, please note that each semester may have different course offerings based upon factors such as curriculum, faculty availability, and student needs. Students should review the semester course offering on the ECU website each semester prior to or during the pre-registration period to make course selections for either the MSCJ or the certificate.

Q: Can the program be completed on-line?

A: Yes, all courses needed to complete the degree or certificate are offered on-line. There is no residency requirement, meaning the first time a student must physically show up on campus is for graduation.

Q: What is the format for on-line courses?

A: Course instruction is generally asynchronous, meaning that students can complete assignments (by the deadline) during a time that is convenient. Exceptions to this rule may include assignments such as tests, which must be taken at an approved testing site near your home, or presentations which require students' presence on-line during specified time slots. Even in the case of such exceptions, instructors strive to accommodate the schedules of working professionals.

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

A: It is the responsibility of students to register for classes ([Registration instructions](#)), deal with any holds of their accounts ([Holds and How To Fix Them](#)), pay their tuition on time ([Cashier's Main Website](#)), and to follow their progress through the program using DegreeWorks. You may feel free to contact the Criminal Justice Graduate Program Director for advising, advice, and general questions ([mscj@ecu.edu](mailto:mscj@ecu.edu)).

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

A: No.

Q: Is there an internship requirement for this degree?

A: No.

- Q: Do I have to complete a capstone project to complete the MSCJ degree?  
A: Yes. Students are required to complete a professional paper during their final semester in the program. The paper is taught as a course wherein the paper is submitted in segments by students throughout the semester, leading to the completion of the final paper.
- Q: Can I obtain a Criminal Justice Education Certificate (**on-line**) at the same time as the Master of Science in Criminal Justice?  
A: No, the CJ Education certificate is designed as a stand-alone degree and is not available to MSCJ students.
- Q: Can I obtain a Criminology Certificate (**on-line**) at the same time as the Master of Science in Criminal Justice?  
A: Yes, the 15 semester hours required for the Criminology Certificate are subsumed within the 36 hours required to complete the MSCJ.
- Q: Can I obtain a Higher and Adult Education in Criminal Justice Certificate (**on-line**) at the same time as the Master of Science in Criminal Justice?  
A: Yes, the 15 semester hours required for the Higher and Adult Education in Criminal Justice Certificate are subsumed within the 36 hours required to complete the MSCJ.
- Q: Can I obtain a Graduate Certificate in Security Studies (**on-line**) at the same time as the Master of Science in Criminal Justice?  
A: Yes, the MSCJ program requires 18 semester hours of elective courses, which can include those offered in the Graduate Certificate in Security Studies program in the Department of Political Science. The policy states "...up to 15 s.h. of courses for the Graduate Certificate in Security Studies can be transferred as electives for the Master of Science in Criminal Justice. For more information, see the Department of Political Science, Security Studies program [webpage](#).
- Q: Can I obtain a Graduate Certificate in Public Administration and Leadership (**hybrid**) at the same time as the Master of Science in Criminal Justice?  
A: Yes, the same opportunity exists for students wanting to obtain a Graduate Certificate in Public Administration and Leadership. For more information, see the Department of Political Science, Public Administration program [webpage](#).
- Q: Can electives from other departments count for criminal justice electives?  
A: Yes, but only at the discretion of the Graduate Program Director and with prior approval.
- Q: Can courses from other universities be transferred into the program?  
A: With the support of the Graduate Program Director, up to one third of the credit hours in an attempted graduate certificate or degree program may be transferred from a regionally accredited college or university. Per Graduate School policy, no credit hours completed as part of a previously earned master's degree can be counted toward a second master's degree. Students are generally allowed to transfer up to 12 hours toward the MSCJ degree. You can request an unofficial review of potential transfer credits from the Graduate Program Director before applying.
- Q: Who can I speak with if I have other questions?  
A: Students can contact the Graduate Program Director (Dr. Michele Stacey). Contact information is available in the above web links as well as below.

Department of Criminal Justice  
Graduate Program Office  
240 Rivers Building  
Greenville, NC 27858-4353  
(252) 328-4382 phone  
[mscj@ecu.edu](mailto:mscj@ecu.edu)