

FAQs for Criminal Justice Master's Students

Application Questions

When should I apply?

Students may apply on a rolling basis for either a fall or spring start in the program. Deadlines are:

Fall Term

June 15 (International)

August 15

Spring Term

October 1 (International)

December 15

What materials are required for admission?

Students must submit the following to be considered for admission: 1) personal statement; 2) resume or CV; 3) academic transcripts; 4) writing sample; 5) TOEFL/IELTS scores, if needed.

What is the required GPA for admission to the program?

While there is no required GPA for admission, the Graduate Admissions Committee prefers that students apply with at least a 3.0 GPA. Students with a GPA lower than 3.0 should contact the Graduate Program Coordinator, Dakotah Kennedy, at dak.kennedy@northeastern.edu or call 617.373.8849 to discuss their application.

I am interested in obtaining an application fee waiver. Does SCCJ provide those?

Prospective students who attend a Graduate Welcome Day or a similar event are eligible for a fee waiver. Students who are experiencing financial hardship may also request a fee waiver. To request a waiver, please contact Graduate Program Coordinator Dakotah Kennedy at dak.kennedy@northeastern.edu or call 617.373.8849.

I am an international student. Can you help me with my visa?

All international applicants should contact the Office of Global Services for questions related to visas.

What is required for a "personal statement"?

The personal statement should be a 1-2 page essay introducing yourself to the graduate committee beyond your transcripts and resume. It should address topics such as: who you are, your research interests, your career goals, why you are applying to Northeastern, and what faculty members would help you to obtain your academic and/or professional goals.

What is required for the "writing sample"?

The writing sample should be a significant piece of academic writing. The most common examples are an undergraduate thesis or a research paper. Alternatively, if you write as part of your current job and would prefer to submit a piece of professional writing, that is also acceptable. The writing sample should demonstrate your academic writing skills to the graduate committee. There is no set length, although we recommend that it is at least 5 pages long.

What is the difference between part-time and full-time?

The difference between full-time and part-time status is important for the purpose of scholarships and financial aid. Full-time status is defined by CSSH as taking two or more courses (8 credits) per semester. Students who are part-time only take one course per semester (4 credits) are not considered for merit-based aid and may have difficulty receiving federal financial aid.

What are Northeastern's cut-off scores for the GRE?

The GRE is not required for admission to the MS program. Students may submit GRE scores if they prefer, but applications without GRE scores will not be penalized.

When will I know if I have been admitted?

The graduate committee reviews applications on a rolling basis. Decisions are generally made within two weeks of receiving a complete application. Please keep in mind that any missing aspects of the application will cause a delay in the decision-making process.

I am interested in applying to one of the dual-degree pathways with the Law School (JD/MS). How do I apply to this program?

Students interested in applying to one of the dual-degree programs must submit applications to both the program housed within SCCJ (MS) and the Law School (JD). SCCJ and the Law School work together to determine if a student is a good fit for the dual-degree program and applicants should be in touch with both admissions offices regarding application requirements and deadlines.

Co-op Questions

What is co-op and is it a good fit for me?

Co-op provides MS students with a six-month work experience during the course of their graduate education. Co-op is typically completed after the second semester in the MS program during either January-June or July-December. Co-op is optional and if pursued, adds six-months as well as 2 credit hours to the program.

Co-op is beneficial for any student looking to gain hands on experience in the field of criminology and criminal justice. Most experiences are paid and Northeastern has partnerships with many local and regional employers. Many students who choose to pursue co-op are hired upon graduation with their co-op employer.

I think I want to pursue the co-op option but am not sure. What should I do?

Students will begin planning for co-op at the end of their first semester in the program. Our co-op coordinator hosts an information session at the end of each semester to explain the co-op process. Students who wish to go on co-op must attend three mandatory information sessions during their second semester in the MS program. Additionally, students going on co-op must reserve at least one course to complete while on co-op as students are not permitted to graduate on solely co-op.

Where do students complete co-ops?

Placements are available in corrections, courts, human services, investigations, juvenile justice, law, loss prevention, security, social services, and more. We are one of the only programs in the country that offers experiential learning at the graduate level, extending Northeastern's trademark undergraduate co-op to graduate students.

Recent graduate co-op placements include:

- Boston Police Department, Assistant Crime Analyst
- Office of the Inspector General, Assistant Investigator

- Department of Justice Interpol Washington, Intern
- Rwanda National Commission for the Fight against Genocide, Research Intern
- The New England Innocence Project LLC, Intake Intern
- Children’s Advocacy Center of Suffolk County, Support to End Exploitation Now (SEEN) Program Assistant
- Boston Private Financial Holdings Inc, Financial Intelligence Research Assistant

Online Questions

What is the difference between the online MS and the on-ground MS?

The modality is the only difference between the online and on-ground MS programs. All of the courses – regardless of modality – are taught by the same faculty and cover the same content. Our on-ground courses are run with weekly meeting times where the online courses are asynchronous. Students at any time during the program may choose to take courses on-ground or online, regardless of if they began the program in the opposite modality.

Are all on-ground courses offered online?

All of the required courses are offered online at least once per academic year. Below is a list of electives that are currently offered online.

Available Online Electives (all requirements offered online)

Elective Courses:

Global Criminology	CRIM 7201
Immigration and Crime	CRIM 7264
Security and Resilience Policy	POLS 7341
Counterterrorism	POLS 7343
Resilient Cities	POLS 7346
International Security	POLS 7369
Cyber Conflict in the International System	POLS 7441
Big Data	PPUA 5262
GIS	PPUA 5263
Advanced Spatial Analysis	PPUA 7237
Urban Policies and Politics	POLS 7315
Techniques of Policy Analysis	PPUA 6506
Techniques of Program Evaluation	PPUA 6509
Security Administration	POLS 7442
Collecting, Storing and Retrieving Data	DSCS 6020
Introduction to Data Mining/Machine Learning	DSCS 6030
Information Design and Visual Analytics	INSH 5302

Concentrations and Graduate Certificates

I am thinking about pursuing a graduate certificate or a concentration. How would this work?

Students may use their elective credits within the MS degree to complete either a graduate certificate or a concentration. Currently, SCCJ offers a concentration in Cybersecurity and CSSH offers multiple graduate certificates. Graduate certificates as well as the Cybersecurity concentration are 12 credits, leaving students with 4 elective credits to use within CRIM. Since students are typically permitted to

take 8 credits outside of SCCJ, the Graduate Program Director must approve student involvement in all concentrations and certificates.

<https://cssh.northeastern.edu/graduate/programs/certificate-programs>

I am interested in pursuing a concentration in cybersecurity. How would this work?

Students interested in pursuing the cybersecurity concentration may indicate so on their application to the MS program. Once admitted, students will work to utilize 12 of their 16 elective credits to complete the concentration. See below for details about the courses required to complete.

<http://catalog.northeastern.edu/graduate/social-sciences-humanities/criminology-criminal-justice/criminal-justice-mscj/#programrequirementstext>

Visiting Campus

I really want to visit campus, sit in on a class, and/or speak with a faculty member or current student. How can I arrange this?

Northeastern hosts Open Houses and Graduate Welcome Days throughout the year where students can visit campus, sit in on classes, and meet with current students and faculty. Contact Graduate Program Coordinator Dakotah Kennedy at dak.kennedy@northeastern.edu to find out when the next Welcome Day is happening. We also arrange individual campus visits upon request and availability of the faculty and staff. Students receive an application fee waiver for attending an event or visiting campus.

I do not anticipate being able to visit campus but would like more information. Do you ever host virtual events?

Yes. Virtual information sessions are held regularly. Please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator, Dakotah Kennedy, at dak.kennedy@northeastern.edu to find out when the next virtual information session will take place. Students will receive an application fee waiver for attending this event just like an on-campus event.

Funding Opportunities for MS students

Does the program offer research assistantships for MS students?

Funded positions for MS students are extremely competitive and limited. These positions depend greatly on faculty grant funding and cannot be guaranteed upon admission to the program. Throughout the year, faculty may need MS students to perform tasks like data collection where MS students may be paid hourly to do so. Students are also welcome and encouraged to seek out work study positions within the University and may do so by contacting the Office of Student Employment.

Employment Outcomes for MS students

What types of careers do MS graduates have after graduation?

MS students from the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice move into prestigious positions after graduation. Our MS students have secured positions in corrections, courts, local and federal agencies, human services, police departments, legal firms, doctoral programs, and more.

Tuition and Fees

What is the cost of tuition and what scholarships are available?

All applicants to the MS program are considered for merit-based aid upon admittance into the program. No additional application is necessary. Students are considered automatically by the Graduate Admissions Committee.

<https://studentfinance.northeastern.edu/billing-payments/tuition-and-fees/>