

# JUSTICE STUDIES PRACTICUM

JUSTICE STUDIES 495, THREE SEMESTER CREDITS

*Criminal Justice Internship*



**Dr. Gene T. Straughan**

**Office Hours M/W 1:30-2:30; T/TH 1:30-2:30**

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**<https://www.youtube.com/@GeneStraughan>**

## JUSTICE STUDIES INTERNSHIP PRACTICUM

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** The primary objective of this internship is to provide an opportunity for students to be exposed to practical on the job experience with the criminal justice system. This course consists of the students taking the initiative and selecting a site themselves or being recommended to a site by the criminal justice faculty. There is some flexibility in what constitutes an appropriate practicum site, but the internship should be connected directly or tangentially to policing, adjudication, corrections, or human services. Some internship examples include police departments, sheriff offices, state patrol, probation and parole agencies, prisons, security organizations, social service agencies, prosecutor or defense attorney offices, and research institutions or foundations. Internships can also be with federal government institutions such as the FBI, INS, Customs, Forest Service, and homeland security or emergency management agencies. Internships must be approved by the course instructor and supervisor of the criminal justice agency. The course is designed to provide a first hand practical experience which augments what has been taught within the classroom. The internship is NOT designed to be a substitute for ordinary or elective credits. Students are required to put in 45 hours per credit with 135 hours needed to satisfy the 3 credit degree requirement. The best internships are planned in advance. By focusing on these different areas, the course will provide students with an opportunity to accomplish the following objectives:

- A. To acquire an understanding of the activities, operations, practices, laws, and policies relating to the type of work performed by the internship agency;
- B. To analyze, conceptualize, and evaluate the functions of the organization;
- C. To apply what was learned in the classroom to the criminal justice system;
- D. To conduct an individual self-assessment of whether the internship agency and corresponding line of work represent a desirable professional career; and
- E. To more fully appreciate the complex nature of the criminal justice system.

**COURSE EVALUATION:** Students are required to meet with the instructor to select an appropriate public or private agency related to the criminal justice system and then arrange a practicum with that particular agency. They must develop a professional vitae or resume to be presented during the initial interview with the internship agency. Once the agency has agreed to allow an internship, the students must maintain a daily log book of dates, hours, and activities under the supervision of the agency supervisor. They must also write a final report covering where they did their justice studies practicum, what activities they engaged in, and how their activities connected to previous classroom learning experiences. This allows the students to document their internship experience, evaluate reasons for selecting criminal justice as a major, express sentiments such as enjoyment, concern, confusion, doubts, and frustration. It also allows students to monitor their professional development and job interest, integrate criminal justice classroom concepts with practical field experiences, express sensitivity toward persons whose backgrounds are different, and evaluate the criminal justice system along with the problems, policies, and procedures of the particular agency. The practicum log book with the signature of the agency supervisor and final internship report are due at the end of the semester.

## **STEPS FOR JUSTICE STUDIES PRACTICUM**

Step One: Enrollment verification and introduction to the justice studies internship experience.

Step Two: Meeting with Dr. Gene Straughan to discuss the details of the justice studies practicum.

Step Three: Development of a professional resume to be given to instructor and practicum agency.

Step Four: Identification and scheduling of a meeting with a prospective practicum agency.

Step Five: Providing Dr. Gene Straughan with the following information through email:

- A. Name of Agency and Supervisor;
- B. Number of Practicum Credits and Hours;
- C. Anticipated Activities with Agency;
- D. Phone of Agency Supervisor; and
- E. Email of Agency Supervisor.

Step Six: Putting in the required number of hours (45 hours per credit) for the internship experience.

Step Seven: Keeping a logbook with the actual dates, activities, and hours relating to the internship.

Step Eight: Providing periodic student updates about the progress of the justice studies practicum.

Step Nine: Writing a report about the agency internship and what was gained from the experience.

Step Ten: Handing in the final report and log book with the signature of the practicum supervisor.