Executive Summary

Graduate Program in Criminology
Cyclical Review 2014-2015

Approved by the Graduate Program Evaluation Committee
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
Meeting of May 13, 2015

<table>
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<th>Name of program reviewed</th>
<th>Criminology</th>
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| Degrees                  | • Master of Arts (MA) in Criminology  
                          | • Doctor of Philosophy in Criminology |
| Fields                   | There is one field of study at the PhD level:  
                          | • Creation and Reform of Criminal Justice Policy in Canada |
| Final evaluation         | Good Quality |

Strengths of the program

The Department of Criminology at the University of Ottawa is the largest criminology department in Canada. External evaluators noted the excellent skills and research achievements of the Department’s faculty and the good-quality education provided to master’s and PhD students. The exciting challenge of studying and working in a bilingual environment gives students an opportunity to explore both French and English traditions in the discipline.

The students at both the master’s and PhD levels are satisfied with the funding they receive. They have access to funds for conferences and to research fellowships. Professional development activities and resources are available through the Department and through the University. The program also organizes academic and research activities that bring together professors and students of this intellectual community.

The Department of Criminology recently moved to a modern and spacious facility that provides study and meeting spaces for master’s and PhD students. Faculty members demonstrate a strong sense of collegiality and a consistent commitment to improving the graduate studies program at both the master’s and PhD levels.

Areas for improvement

The program review and discussions currently under way and the sound advice of the external reviewers have identified some possible areas for improvements at both levels of study.

As it is no longer necessary for the specific areas of study to be identified for PhD programs, it was suggested that thought be given to the pertinence of the area currently listed. The evaluators in fact believe the current area does not do justice to the diverse specialities of the professors and recommend instead establishing and promoting research groups that highlight the existing strengths of the department and that would give a more realistic picture of the department and program.

External evaluators noted a weakness in research methodology training provided to students, as
Professors have a preference for qualitative rather than quantitative methodology. The recent hiring of a professor able to teach quantitative methodology is a positive step forward, but the department must continue reviewing the methodological skills students are acquiring during their studies.

In terms of communication, better use should be made of the department website as a recruitment tool and to communicate with master’s and PhD students. Including information on the current goals of the program, admission criteria, the academic path and the department’s strengths would be very helpful for students and professors. Discussions between professors and students should continue in order to address the perception of a lack of uniformity in the content of courses of the same name given in French and in English.

Finally, time-to-completion in both the MA and PhD programs should be monitored closely in order to measure the impact of recent changes.

**Recommendations**

1. Determine whether to maintain the identified area of study and consider aligning it with research specialities that would better showcase faculty members’ areas of specialty.
2. Make better use of the program website and use it as a recruitment and communication tool for master’s and doctoral students.
3. Remain vigilant vis-à-vis courses with similar titles and learning objectives offered in French and in English while placing an emphasis on ongoing communication with students on the matter.
4. Continue reviewing methodology courses offered to students, particularly those related to quantitative research methods.
5. Closely monitor time-to-completion at both the master’s and PhD levels in order to measure the impact of changes made over the years.

**Implementation plan**

**Calendar and deadlines**

All recommendations are to be addressed in the next cyclical review, which is to be completed within seven years and no later than 2022.

**Authorities**

The authorities who are responsible for implementing and monitoring the recommendations include the supervisor of graduate studies for master’s degrees, supervisor of graduate studies for doctorates, the chair of the Department of Criminology and the Vice-Dean of graduate studies of the Faculty of Social Sciences.