**criminal justice – law enforcement**

**program review**

**reporting period 2013-2016**

**Part 1: Review of Past 3 Years**

1. **Service Unit Outcomes/Program Learning Outcomes/Student Learning Outcomes Assessment**
2. Crime is an unfortunate part of society. Were it not for criminal justice practitioners, there would be chaos. Hence, there is an unending ***job market***. Within the service area of Jefferson State Community College that includes the greater Birmingham area, there are numerous local, state and federal law enforcement agencies. Similarly, there are many other criminal justice organizations such as probation & parole, community corrections, department of corrections, county and city jails and a vast number of courts covering various jurisdictions. ***Higher education is increasingly part of hiring*** and promotion and therefore, the two-year college degree provides an affordable, accessible and meaningful academic accomplishment for those students interested in or already working in the field.

Jefferson State Community College’s Criminal Justice & Law Enforcement Program offers ***exceptional education*** in various areas within the field. The program is honestly marketed and ethically managed. Students are advised of the realities of criminal justice occupations, not led astray by popular culture that often promotes unrealistic expectations. It is important that students understand ***basic job requirements*** as well as personal factors that may preclude employment. They should also understand the inherent dangers, mental and physical, of this work. It is a calling, not just a career.

A ***major strength*** of the program is the quality and professionalism of its ***instructors.*** The Program Coordinator is a former federal probation officer and Department of Justice researcher designated to the Birmingham Police Department’s Narcotics Unit as site director for the federal drug enforcement grant “Operation Caine Break”. Instructors bring their expertise to the classroom, i.e. attorneys teach pre-law courses, law enforcement officials teach investigations and other police-related topics, evidence experts teach criminalistics, forensics and so on.

***Program Enrollment*** has held steady between 200-300 per term over the past 3 years. The AAS ***Graduation rate***continues to exceed state ***viability*** requirements with a three-year average of 62. ***Credit Hour Production*** has remained high for this small department, averaging 1217 between the 3 years.

***Student*** surveys reveal a ***96% satisfaction rate (66% very satisfied, 30% satisfied, 4% neutral)*** with the program and its educational preparation. Student suggestions included offering classes on all campuses and offering additional Internet courses (more are in development). Students continue to express appreciation for instructors with “real world” experience and instructors who understand issues that may affect the working, non-traditional student with family and occupational priorities.

***Job placement*** as a measurement of program success is problematic due to factors beyond academia’s control. We can prepare students academically yet they may have personal issues that preclude employment such as physical and/or psychological limitations, criminal record, poor credit, unacceptable driving record, drug use, polygraph failure, etc. And, while instructors do their best in advising, some students continue to pursue the degree but remain unemployable. One possible solution would be an admissions requirement whereby students sign a statement of affirmation that they understand basic occupational requirements related to fitness, integrity, trustworthiness, character and ethics. This would be a reliable means of assurance that we have provided sufficient notification before students invest too much time in the program.

For many students who have completed the program and pass standard requirements, the degree has given them an edge in ***hiring***, particularly in agencies that require either college degrees or a combination of experience and college hours. For students employed in the field, the educational achievement is weighted during the ***promotional process*** and thus, gives them a higher overall ranking.

1. **Analysis**
2. **External Conditions**

There is no accrediting body for Criminal Justice - Law Enforcement within the two-year college or university systems. The Alabama Peace Officers Standards & Training Commission (APOSTC) in Montgomery certifies all sworn officers in the state. APOSTC oversees all police and sheriffs training academies where officers receive the necessary skills, education and training to become sworn officers. The program coordinator has met with APOSTC officials over the years to discuss this issue but APOSTC maintains the separate nature of their mission from that of academia. While both share similar goals of education, APOSTC focuses on necessary skills and the certification process. No academic institution in the state “certifies” law enforcement officers, only APOSTC is legally recognized to do so.

The Criminal Justice-Law Enforcement ***Advisory Committee*** is comprised of local law enforcement officials from area police departments, sheriffs’ departments, police academies and private security companies. Their contributions have been in marketing the program, reaching sworn officers who do not have college degrees and promoting professional development. To that end, the program coordinator visits law enforcement departments, participates in academy training, career fairs and special events such as the National Law Enforcement Night Out.

1. **Internal Conditions**

***Recent curriculum changes*** were made to reduce CRJ elective options and increase precise required courses while maintaining the same number of total hours and CRJ hours required. It is hoped that these changes will focus the student, enhance graduation rates, and reduce the number of substitutions for courses that were cancelled or not offered as frequently as planned.

The program has hired an ***L19 position*** to assist the program coordinator in teaching, administration, recruiting, course development and other duties. In the short time since her hiring, Sheila Stephens has been a tremendous asset to the coordinator, students and program.

1. **Collaboration**

Collaboration between the Criminal Justice-Law Enforcement Program and various law enforcement agencies is strong. As a former ***federal*** probation, the program coordinator maintains close ties to that community of judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, probation officers and other federal agents. Several attorneys with whom she has worked are now judges who welcome students to observe court in session.

The program coordinator has long-standing working relationships with many ***local and state law enforcement*** agencies as well. She has worked closely with the Birmingham, Hoover, Homewood and Gardendale Police Departments, as well as the Jefferson, Shelby and Blount County Sheriff’s Departments. It is hoped that she and L19 Stephens will be working more with the St. Clair region in the near future.

In the ***corrections*** arena, the program coordinator is a Past President of the Alabama Council on Crime & Delinquency, an organization comprised of federal, state and local corrections officials from the Alabama Department of Corrections, the Alabama Board of Pardons & Paroles, Federal Probation, Juvenile Probation, Community Corrections and the Department of Youth Services. She is also an active member of Southern States Correctional Association, a 14-state regional corrections organization. Since 1998, she has worked with many state commissioners and directors in training and continuing education. These agencies have provided many internship opportunities.

***Academically***, the program works closely with the Justice Sciences Department of the University of Alabama at Birmingham. It also works with other colleges throughout the state that have Criminal Justice programs. The program coordinator has been an adjunct at UAB’s Justice Sciences Department and Samford University’s Sociology Department since the early 1990’s. She has served as a consultant for universities in their program and curriculum development, and recently taught a corrections course for Huntingdon College.

For over 20 years, the program coordinator has served as a judge for the ***Alabama Center for Law & Civic Education***, a non-profit organization dedicated to educating young people about civic duty, the law and the Constitution. Each year high schools from around the state compete for the state title and the winner then competes nationally in Washington D.C. Many of these students become the leaders of tomorrow.

1. **Communication**

Communication between the Criminal Justice-Law Enforcement Program and other departments is ***efficient and effective***. As a long-time member (recently rolled off) of the Curriculum Committee, the program coordinator has worked with many other faculty and staff from other disciplines. She has also served on the Outstanding Faculty (former recipient) Committee, Who’s Who Among College Students Committee and Employee Search Committees, most recently for the Campus Police positions.

The department works well with Enrollment Services during new student orientations, advising/registration and upon request. Before moving from Liberal Arts to Career Tech, the program coordinator was in charge of large “undecided” groups, presenting broad-based overviews during orientations. She continues to advise students efficiently and in a timely manner.

Communication to faculty, staff and students is primarily done via email but the coordinator is also available for personal meetings, phone conferences and advising sessions during office hours and by appointment. The unit works from Jefferson and Shelby campuses.

1. **Primary Functions/Primary Purpose/Unit Mission**
2. There have been no significant changes that would affect the mission: to provide a comprehensive knowledge base pertinent to the various areas within the broad scope of Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement.The program enriches intellectual, political, cultural and civic dialogue and understanding through its diversified curriculum.
3. Assessment language was revised to more accurately describe the evaluation of student learning outcomes as noted in red below:

Program Outcomes

* Graduation rates will exceed state viability requirements
* Graduates will report an 80% satisfaction with educational preparation
* At least 75% of graduates returning surveys will indicate employment in field or a related field, or current enrollment in a 4-year degree program

Program Level Student Learning Outcomes

* Explain the history, development, structure and function of the American Criminal Justice System
* Understand the criminal justice processes and the scope of responsibilities of various local, state and federal agencies from arrest through corrections
* Understand relationships between criminological theories, public policy, ethics and the law
* Develop critical thinking and analytical skills

1. **Goal Progress**
2. The program continues to maintain high enrollment, graduation rates, credit hour production and student satisfaction.

**2013-14 Accomplishments**:

* Updated the Criminal Justice-Law Enforcement website to include more job links and increased dissemination of job information to adjuncts for their students and to distance education (online) students
* Offered internships and seminar classes specifically for students needing hours to graduate within targeted time frames
* Program Coordinator was recognized by Samford University for 20 years of service as a Sociology Adjunct.

**2014-15 Accomplishments**:

* Continued working with University of Alabama at Birmingham, Justice Sciences Department to coordinate transfer courses
* Referred students to the “3 degrees in 5 years” with the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Justice Sciences Department
* Offered internships and seminar classes for pending graduates
* Continued coordination with JSCC Security Director Mark Bailey in scheduling Crime Scene Investigation classes and in-service training for officers

**2015-16 Accomplishments:**

* Revised Law Enforcement AAS curriculum to enhance student learning, to streamline adjuncts, reduce substitutions thereby improving the graduation process
* L19 Position filled by Sheila Stephens, long-time adjunct, who is now helping more administratively and in advising
* Development of additional online courses, awaiting distance education committee approval.
* Continued marketing, speaking engagements, etc. to grow the program.

1. Resources have been adequate. Three areas that would enhance the program: (1) establish an office at the Shelby Campus for the program coordinator and L19; recently requested in goals revision statement; (2) expand course offerings to all campuses and (3) add more online course options; CRJ 160 recently approved.

**Part 2: Implications of Program Review for Developing 3-Year Plan**

1. **Vision and Direction of Unit**

Based on the endless need for law enforcement, court and corrections personnel, it is expected that the program will continue to thrive. However, due to the current anti-police climate in our country, it would not be surprising to see fewer students opt for law enforcement as a career. It is hoped that this will not be the case.

Collaborative relationships with agencies and other colleges will remain strong. With the addition of the L19 position, the program coordinator will be able to increase her time in marketing the program.

The program coordinator has worked more with advisors in Enrollment Services and is scheduled to address them at their 9/23/16 meeting to clarify differences between the AAS in Law Enforcement and the AS in Criminal Justice degrees. Program brochures and one-page flyers continue to be updated and supplied to recruiters, orientation sessions, etc.

**Part 3: Evidence of Staff Participation**

The Criminal Justice-Law Enforcement Program consists of one full-time faculty, the program coordinator, an L19, and part-time instructors who are licensed attorneys, active and retired law enforcement officers and other criminal justice professionals.

The program also has access to support staff consisting of two full-time Office Managers, a part-time Administrative Specialist-Career Tech who is responsible for helping with tracking, the Administrative Assistant to the Dean, and other support staff and administrators at the college.

In addition, the program has an Advisory Committee that meets at least one time per year. This committee consists of professionals from the criminal justice-law enforcement field. This committee provides valuable feedback and input to the program in areas such as program curriculum, marketing and promotion, training/professional development, employment opportunities, current trends, future goals, and others. Minutes of all program advisory committee meetings are on file for review. Members include the following:

Teresa Thorne, Director, City Action Partnership, Birmingham

Investigator Sue Ashworth, Blount County Sheriff’s Department

Mark Bailey, Director of Safety and Security, Jefferson State

James Bottom, VP, Security Engineers, Inc.

Captain Jeff Hartley, Shelby County Sheriff’s Department

Deputy Chief Henry Irby, Birmingham Police Department

Lt. Chester McClinton, Jefferson County Sheriff’s Department

Cecilia Tubbs, Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement Program Coordinator, Jefferson State Community College

The program employs several part-time instructors on an as needed basis to teach program classes. Many of these part-time instructors have been teaching in the program for several years that is beneficial to the program’s longevity and consistency. The program coordinator works closely with part-time faculty and ensures that classes are being conducted in accordance with college policy. Established, part-time instructors are consulted on promoting the program, their individual classes, textbook decisions and semester scheduling.

Other college personnel from areas such as Office of Institutional Research, Center for Professional Career and Technical Education, and Enrollment Services provided support and assistance in preparing this document.

**Instructional Unit Program Review**

1. **Enrollment/Achievement**

Year Registrations/Enrollment Credit Hour Production

2013/14 461 1371

2014/15 427 1167

2015/16 443 1113

Enrollment AAS in Law Enforcement AS in Criminal Justice

Fall 2010 54 198

Fall 2011 61 239

Fall 2012 64 197

1. **Program Learning Outcomes/Student Learning Outcomes Assessment**

Program Outcomes and Student Learning Outcomes are assessed through the Criminal Justice-Law Enforcement Assessment plans that are attached to this document. They are also a part of the Criminal Justice-Law Enforcement Unit Strategic Plan. Student Learning Outcomes for each course are included in the College Assessment plan and are attached at the conclusion of this document. Student Learning Outcomes for each course are in development and included at the conclusion of this document.

1. **Goals Progress**

Program instructional and Student Learning Outcomes are being accomplished. Graduates are meeting the criteria for success. Older online students perform equally well compared to traditional students. However, some younger online students sometimes experience difficulties in structuring their time. The program coordinator provides guidance about such issues, thoroughly explains the importance of self-discipline in the course shells and syllabi, and reminds students throughout the term not to procrastinate!

1. **College Wide**

The program’s mission, goals and student learning outcomes are in accordance with the College’s Institutional Action Priorities, Long Range Goals and Strategic Plan.

**College’s Long-Range Goals:**

* 1. *To provide accessible education offerings that are available in places, at times and in facilities that can best serve the people in the college service area.*

The Criminal Justice-Law Enforcement program offers day and evening classes at Jefferson and Shelby campuses as well as a minimum of 4 Internet classes every term. It is hoped that in the near future, the program can expand to other sites.

* 1. *Educational opportunities within the financial reach of the great majority of the people in the college service area.*

Tuition is one of the most reasonable in the state and nationally when compared to similar institutions. Grants, student loans and scholarships are available to qualified students.

1. *Jefferson State Community College shall offer educational opportunities that meet or exceed standards set forth by the appropriate accrediting agencies:*
   1. *University parallel degree programs that allow students to make a successful transition to senior colleges or universities.*

The AS in Criminal Justice continues to prepare transfer students via the state articulation and STARS University Parallel guides.

* 1. *Career and technical associate degree programs that integrate general and career-specific education and prepare students for immediate employment*.

Although the Law Enforcement program is not an accredited field academically, the program stays in communication with the Alabama Peace Officers & Standards Training Commission and the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee to ensure curriculum is current and relevant for students seeking employment in the field.

**2.6** *Distance Learning programs and classes that promote accessibility through new technologies.*

The primary introductory CRJ courses, including those in the state articulation, are offered online every term. More are in development.

**3**. Jefferson State Community College shall support a learning environment designed to enhance the intellectual, social and physical development of its students by providing the following:

**3.1** A friendly and stimulating atmosphere that is conducive to both formal and informal learning and cross-cultural awareness.

Student surveys show high levels of satisfaction with courses, instructors and educational preparation. Topics covered in this arena are often emotionally, socially and politically charged but civil discourse is always insisted upon. Students from various backgrounds generally leave the courses with a more open mind and a greater tolerance for different views.

**3.2** Physical facilities, technological resources and other resources that promote learning.

The Criminal Justice-Law Enforcement program students’ surveys indicate an overall satisfaction with facilities.

**3.3** Qualified personnel who enable the college to fulfill its purpose.

Criminal Justice-Law Enforcement faculty meets all state educational employment requirements. Most are considered “exceptional” hires based on their years of experience as practitioners in their respective fields. A few examples include retired Pelham Police Chief Edgar T. Thomas, Alabama Pharmaceutical Investigator Mark Delk, Shelby County Assistance District Attorney Roger Hepburn, Jefferson County Homicide Detective Sgt. Rod Robinson and Attorney Doug Scofield, Appellate Specialist.