

## College of Nursing

## Newton Hall

1585 Neil Ave

Columbus, OH 43210

## Phone (614) 292-8900

Fax (614) 292-4535

E-mail nursing@osu.edu

Web nursing.osu.edu

September 28, 2024

MEMORANDUM

To: Council on Academic Affairs (CAA)

Professor Sue Sutherland, 2024-2025 Chair

Professor W. Randy Smith, Vice Chair

From: CAA Subcommittee C

Associate Clinical Professor, Tara Spalla King (Chair 2023-2024)

Professor Ann Christy

Assistant Professor of Practice, Russell Marzette

Professor, Thomas Nelson

Re: Review and Recommendation for the Criminal Justice Research Center (CJRC)

The 2023-2024 Subcommittee C of CAA shares this report on the CJRC with a recommendation for action, completed in December 2024.

**Review Process**

Our process was guided by [OSU Faculty Rule 3334-3-36 Centers and Institutes, Review of University Centers](https://oaa.osu.edu/council-academic-affairs/academic-center-guidelines), and is outlined below.

* **The self-study report** addressing the five required components was prepared by Professor Paul Bellair, Director CJRC, and Professor Steven Lopez, Associate Director of CJRC, and shared with Associate Clinical Professor King and Subcommittee C in May 2024.
* **The first interview** was held via ZOOM with Paul Bellair, Steven Lopez, Tara Spalla King, Ann Christy, Russell Marzette, and Thomas Nelson on July 24, 2024. We discussed a high-level overview of the center, its accomplishments, and each of the five required components of the review.
* **The initial/draft review report** was shared with subcommittee C members, who provided feedback, including follow-up questions.
* **The second interview** was held via ZOOM with Dr. Ryan King, Divisional Dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Tara Spalla King, Ann Christy, Russell Marzette, and Thomas Nelson on July 29, 2024. We sought Dean King’s evaluation of the CJRC, shared our preliminary findings, and asked clarifying questions.

**Review Findings**

Subcommittee C found the self-study report (Appendix A), including the five required sections of mission, faculty and student involvement and contribution, administrative structure and responsibilities, budget, and evaluative criteria and benchmarks, to be partially effective for the CJRC.

1. Mission
2. “The mission of the Criminal Justice Research Center (CJRC) is to serve the Ohio State University and the Ohio Criminal Justice (OCJ) community by providing a unique capacity to collect and analyze primary data in criminal justice settings” (CJRC, para 1, n.d.). Per the self-study document, the three goals of the center are: (1) conducting and promoting interdisciplinary research on crime, juvenile delinquency, and the administration of justice; (2) establishing an environment in which continuing instruction and intellectual exchange can take place among faculty members, researchers, graduate students, policymakers, and criminal justice practitioners, and; (3) providing information and consultation to governmental and social agencies and citizens' groups and to assist in formulating, implementing, and evaluating policy.
3. The mission of the College of Arts and Sciences is to “fuel world-changing research and creative work; prepare passionate learners, critical thinkers, and global citizens; and engage, serve, and champion our diverse communities” (College of Arts and Sciences, 2023).
4. The CJRC and OSU College of Arts and Sciences mission statements are aligned.
5. Dean King believes the mission and goals align with the College of Arts and Sciences. He expressed his goal of downgrading from a center to a collaborative one within the Department of Sociology. A collaborative is an initiative with lower funding to see if a “ground swell of support” exists to sustain it. There is a perceived lack of interest and collaboration in the center. Most centers that report to Dean King foster relationships across departments and colleges. No opposition has been expressed of which the committee is aware.

**The subcommittee recognizes the strength in the alignment of mission and goals between the College of Arts and Sciences and the Criminal Justice Research Center. It also recognizes the strength of attaining the second and third goals of the CJRC mission**. The subcommittee recommends **and supports collaborative efforts in the university to pursue interdisciplinary research opportunities beyond the department of sociology as an integral part of the CJRC mission. One idea could be a collaboration with the Drug Enforcement Policy Center (DEPC) from the Mortiz College of Law.**

1. Faculty and Student Involvement and Contribution
2. The list of current faculty affiliates has recently been updated to include 51 faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Education and Human Ecology, College of Engineering, John Glenn College of Public Affairs, Moritz School of Law, College of Nursing, and the OSU Libraries. The CJRC directors led an outreach effort and received a “big response.” They do not restrict which faculty can be involved and are open to any interested faculty whose work intersects with criminal justice.   
     
   The leadership of the CJRC has undertaken outreach efforts that include reviewing the CVs of all faculty in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS) to identify scholars whose interests overlap with the Center’s mission. They did the same with units outside of SBS with faculty who have present or past affiliations with CJRC (e.g., Law, Public Health). Inquiries have been sent to all identified potential faculty affiliates.
3. The self-study document lists 84 recent (since 2016) publications by faculty affiliates related to criminal justice. The CJRC directors shared that most of these publications include student co-authors; however, they have no control over the type or amount of scholarly activity of faculty across campus. The self-study document also includes four student publications related to their work with the center.
4. The CJRC does not operate the internship program or receive any subsidy for such. Rather, CJRC helps students who would like an internship in a criminal justice setting. The CJRC has found multiple student placements in practicum settings for the past three academic years. In 2022-2023, 45 students were placed. In 2023-2024, 38 students were placed. So far, from 2024 to 2025, five students have been placed. Examples of practicum placements include pre-law, criminal justice, forensic science, forensics lab, crime lab, FBI, Columbus Police Department (CPD), Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services (OMAS), Ohio Correctional Institution Inspection Committee (CIIC), Ohio Public Defender Commission (OPD), and intelligence/federal law enforcement, among others. After CJRC has spoken with students and helped them select an appropriate internship setting, the student must meet with the Sociology Department advisor teaching the internship and enroll in Sociology 3191 (Internship) through them. The Sociology department receives the tuition subsidies for that enrollment, not the CJRC.

**The subcommittee considers this evaluation component of the CJRC to be strong. Approximately 88 students have been assisted in finding practicum sites through the CJSC in the past three academic years.**

1. Administrative Structure and Responsibilities
2. The CJRC is currently staffed with a:

* director (faculty) at 50% FTE
* associate director (faculty) at 11.1% FTE
* program manager (staff) at 75% FTE

There is no longer a researcher with the CJRC.

1. **Oversight Committee – The CJRC uses an interdisciplinary oversight committee that provides general support, monitoring, review, and advice on the center's direction.** They meet at least quarterly. They contribute to an annual report and are currently developing a strategic plan.

**The subcommittee considers this evaluation component of the CJRC, particularly community outreach and collaboration and student placements, to be strong. All interviewed stakeholders agreed that the current administrative structure is partially effective in meeting their mission.**

1. Budget
2. The CJRC is not self-sufficient. It receives budgetary support from the College of Arts & Sciences.
3. **Indirect Funds**
   * The CJRC receives indirect funding when included in a grant submitted by a faculty, and the Chair approves the addition of the CJRC to that grant.
   * This amount is typically ≤ 5% of all indirect funds in the grant budget.
   * When the CJSC director receives a grant, 50% of indirect funds go to the CJRC and 50% to Sociology, the director's tenure-initiating unit (TIU).
4. **GFAs** – None of the general fund accounts (GFAs) for the CJRC are from grants.
5. **Tuition** – No CJRC funds are from tuition as the CJRC does not offer coursework; the Department of Sociology offers courses.
6. If reduced to a collaborative, the funding would remain the same in FY25 but would be reduced in FY26. The director has been tasked with making a concrete budget and planning how a reduced CJRC would look and function. In this case, the director would not need a full course release. The CJSC would continue to engage with the community of scholars.

**In the Budgetary category the CJRC is evaluated as needs improvement. All stakeholders interviewed agree that the CJRC has been challenged regarding self-sufficiency. It is currently reliant on CAS for support.**

1. Evaluative Criteria and Benchmarks
2. Upon interview, Subcommittee C learned that no evaluative criteria or benchmarks were set by the previous CJRC leadership/director(s). The current director was appointed in June 2019, and the associate director was appointed in 2022. They have developed specific benchmarks related to the three broad goals previously identified, along with outcomes:

**Goal 1** - **Conduct and promote interdisciplinary research on crime, juvenile delinquency, and the administration of justice**

**Benchmark 1a** - Successful collaboration with or performance of research for local, state, or federal criminal justice agencies

**Outcome 1a** - Affiliates are engaged in ongoing and new cross-disciplinary research collaborations, including grant submissions and regular publications of high-quality interdisciplinary research. The CJRC has recently obtained the following grants: **2024 Columbus Police Department ($50,000)** to address research questions about a recent surge in criminal violence; and **2023 Franklin County Sheriffs ($35,000)** to address violence prevention. This award from the Franklin County Sheriffs was extended and increased to **$140,000** through 8/31/25.

**Benchmark 1b** - Facilitation of interdisciplinary research collaboration among faculty affiliates via the cross-disciplinary conversations and interaction created by the CJRC and its events

**Outcome 1b** - The CJRC director is an active member of the board of the Ohio ReEntry Coalition, participating in policy discussions and strategic planning regarding how to support better and assist returning citizens as they transition back to the community. The CJRC is currently writing the following grant: **Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction ($200,000)** to evaluate employment and recidivism outcomes. The CJSC received some indirect funds from the **Healing Communities Study** **($30,000,000)** from OSU’s College of Medicine, the University of Kentucky, Boston Medical Center, and Columbia University. One of the study's aims is to look at law enforcement responses to the opioid crisis.

**Benchmark 1c** - Support for the research programs of junior and RAISE scholars and graduate students via seed grant funding

**Outcome 1c** – The Center gave three awards of $1,000 to graduate student affiliates in 2023 and another three awards in 2024. It gave one award of $3,000 to a faculty affiliate in 2023 and another in 2024.

**Goal 2** - **Establish an environment in which continuing instruction and intellectual exchange can take place among faculty members, researchers, graduate students, policy makers, and criminal justice practitioners**

**Benchmark 2a** - Maintain the Reckless-Dinitz lecture as a high-profile and well-attended annual event

**Outcome 2a** – Post-pandemic, the Center attracted leading scholars to deliver the lecture; attendance was over 50 in 2023.

**Benchmark 2b** – Hold regular, well-attended brown-bag events to facilitate cross-disciplinary intellectual exchange as well as exchange among faculty affiliates, policymakers, and criminal justice practitioners

**Outcome 2b** – In 2023, three well-attended brown-bag events were held. Affiliates commented on the value of these events in connecting them with like-minded researchers in other disciplines.

**Benchmark 2c** – Continue provision of criminal justice internship opportunities for undergraduate students

**Outcome 2c** – In 2022-2023, CJRC worked with 45 students to help facilitate internship opportunities and career choices. In 2023-2024, CJRC worked with 38 students. So far in 2024-2025, they worked with 5 students.

**Goal 3** - **Provide information and consultation to governmental and social agencies and citizens' groups and assist in formulating, implementing, and evaluating policy**

**Benchmark 3a** – Criminal justice agencies view the Center as an important source of information and advice

**Outcome 3a** – The Center receives 1-5 requests per year from local, state, and federal criminal justice agencies for advice and consultation. Most recently, The Ohio Mayors Alliance requested a crime analysis. The CJRC has also consulted with the Southern District of Ohio Federal Court and the Ohio Division of Youth Services in the past two years.

**Benchmark 3b** – Maintain a visible presence among Ohio coalitions of criminal justice practitioners and contribute to governmental initiatives around re-entry reform

**Outcome 3b** – The CJRC director is an active member of the board of the Ohio ReEntry Coalition, participating in policy discussions and strategic planning regarding how to support better and assist returning citizens as they transition back to the community.

**Benchmark 3c** – Help advise police organizations on best practices

**Outcome 3c** – CJRC is helping the Columbus Police Department transition to a more forward-thinking approach to demonstration and legal protest response.

**The subcommittee considers this evaluation component of the CJRC to need improvement by collecting more quantitative data to evaluate benchmarks.**

**Evaluation Summary and Subcommittee C Recommendations**

CAA Subcommittee C reviewed the self-study report and supporting materials shared by the CJRC and interviewed key constituents. Having achieved two-thirds of its goals and primarily reliant on CAS financial support, the subcommittee has determined that the CJRC has partially met its evaluation criteria. Subcommittee C encourages the CJRC to seek additional collaborative opportunities, diversify its financial support, and strengthen its data collection to more strongly document its impact.

**Therefore, the subcommittee recommends to CAA that the CJRC receive conditional continuation and be reviewed again in two years.**

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Tara Spalla King

Associate Clinical Professor

College of Nursing

Chair, CAA Subcommittee C (2023-2024)

References

College of Arts and Sciences. (2023). Strategic Plan. OSU. <https://artsandsciences.osu.edu/sites/default/files/2023-10/asc-strategic-plan-10-24-23.pdf>

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