MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome! We hope you enjoy the latest edition of the Rap Sheet, our departmental newsletter. In the Department of Criminal Justice at the University of Arkansas Little Rock, we embrace four primary values.

Those values are student success, departmental citizenship, scholarly creativity and justice. We hope these values make us the BEST Criminal Justice program in Arkansas. With these values in mind, please see what we have been up to and give us your feedback!

Dr. Mary Parker
Professor and Chair
Department of Criminal Justice
Meet our New Faculty
Rick Lewis, Ph.D.

Research
Dr. Lewis has been a part of several primary data collections and has received training and the ability to work in a genetic lab extracting, quantifying, and genotyping samples and working with steroids such as cortisol and testosterone.

Currently Dr. Lewis is starting a biosocial criminology lab in the Department of Criminal Justice at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock that will focus on biological factors associated with criminal behavior, trauma, and stress. In addition, this lab will focus on service dogs and their handlers and how stress and trauma affect both the dog and their handler in stressful occupations.

Why UA Little Rock?
Dr. Lewis was attracted to the University of Arkansas at Little Rock based on the diversity and level of research within the Department of Criminal Justice. Further, he was impressed with how excited the faculty were to collaborate on projects and strive to conduct impactful research projects.

Similar to his research passion, Dr. Lewis enjoys all aspects of teaching both in person and online. "Getting to interact with students face to face and see them begin to view things differently than they did before is one of the biggest rewards a professor can obtain," stated Dr. Lewis. "Although online classes are different from face to face courses, the ability to enable students who work full time or live across the country to reach their goals and get a great education is an amazing feeling."

On his downtime, Dr. Lewis is an avid fly fisherman. He enjoys spending time with his wife and two dogs. Dr. Lewis enjoys cooking, watching movies, and playing music.
As a doctoral student, my graduate assistantship afforded me the opportunity to work as a research analyst in the Arkansas Department of Correction (ADC) research section. Serving in this dual capacity enriched my education by providing context for the concepts and theories I was learning in the classroom. Working through the doctoral program while being simultaneously exposed to the real-world correction’s environment also gave me an acute appreciation for the divide that exists between academics and practitioners. I now believe that one cannot really understand what they’re doing without the other. And yet, we have very little in the way of true symbiotic, research-practitioner collaboration.

In my experience, the partnerships that exist are often very one-sided, driven more by academic research-agendas than by practitioner needs. This deficiency was probably my primary motivation for going to work full-time with ADC before moving into the research administrator position at Arkansas Community Correction (ACC) last year. I can’t say that I don’t sometimes question that decision, foregoing the leisure and riches that come with being an assistant professor (that’s how it is, right?) for the 8 to 5 grind of state employment. But mostly I feel fortunate to have the opportunity to engage in work that makes a tangible difference in thousands of lives every day.
At every level of my education, I had professors to guide me and show me how to succeed. I wanted to help students in the same way. Also, I wanted to help people in the community who play a part in the criminal justice system. Academia was the best way to help in both areas.

When I met some of the professors, they seemed to truly care about the students and wanted to help students succeed. This is what drew me to make my final decision to attend UA Little Rock to pursue my MA and Ph.D.

- Brenda Prochaska, former student

First, be sure you are passionate about what you are studying. If not, it could be a long road ahead. Be sure to occasionally take time for yourself. It is going to be hard, but when you take the time to do something you enjoy it makes the journey a little more pleasant. Second, listen to everything your professors tell you. It may not always make sense at that moment, but later you will see the importance of it. Lastly, it will not be easy, but it is worth it. You will get frustrated, you will be exhausted 99% of the time, and you will sometimes want to quit. You will get upset with your professors over things they say or maybe a grade that you receive. In the end, it will all be worth it and you will get to use your degree to do something you truly enjoy.
In the “Crime in Little Rock” session, scholars from the Department of Criminal Justice at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock reviewed the trends and spread of crime citywide along with applications from several issues central to the discussion about crime in Little Rock, including research on gang violence, inmate reentry, and campus crime.

Speakers included Dr. James Golden, Dr. Tusty ten Bensel, Dr. Tim Brown, and Professor James Hurst. The showcase was open to all CSSC students, faculty, staff, and community members.
Tabrina Bratton (Left) - Best Poster Presentation Award.
"Predicting regional hate crime rates: The relationship between fundamentalism and attitudes toward sexual orientation."

Mary H. Hughes (2nd from left) – Best Graduate Research Presentation Award. "Is my health why I'm scared? Examining the effects of perceived health conditions in fear of crime."
The Department of Criminal Justice celebrated the accomplishments of our students. Below is a list of our outstanding students from each of our educational programs.

**Outstanding Undergraduate Student**  
Amy King

**Outstanding Masters Student**  
Madeline Astin

**Outstanding Doctoral Student**  
Tabrina Bratton

- Rob Williams Memorial Scholarship: Jesse Horton
- Rick Finley Memorial Scholarship: Madison Doyle
- Melissa Ma Memorial Scholarship: Morgan Norris
- John A. Boyeskie Memorial Scholarship: Wanda Stanley
- Correctional Leadership Challenge Endowed Scholarship: Trye Price

- Charles Chastain Found Chair Scholarship Fund: Brandi Mojica
- David O. Dillinger Endowed Scholarship: Mary Hughes
- Harold R. Zook Endowed Scholarship: Asiah Bradley
Undergraduate Research Signature Experience

The purpose of the Undergraduate Research Signature Experience grants was to inspire undergraduate students at UA Little Rock to conduct research and enhance their scholarly experience under the guidance of faculty members.

They learned the importance of research, how to create, implement, and analyze research questions, and present their research at the university expo, as well as, at a regional conference.

We had four grant recipients for 2017–2018.

1. Amy King "No Time for School: Looking at the Factors that Influence Truancy."

2. Cassie Dennis "Disproportionate Minority Contact of Youth within the Arkansas Juvenile Justice System."

3. Jesse Horton "Impact of County-level Economic Disadvantage on Juvenile Case Dispositions in Arkansas."

In the summer of 2018, the Department of Criminal Justice hosted the Criminal Justice Summer Research Program (CJSRP), with funding from the UA Little Rock Graduate School, the College of Social Sciences and Communications (CSSC), and a grant from the Middle Eastern Studies. CJSRP was created to provide research experiences to undergraduate students interested in criminology and criminal justice.

LEARNING ABOUT RESEARCH

This program spanned four weeks and introduced students to basic topics in research, including (but not limited to):

- How to read a research article
- Writing a literature review
- Asking and framing research questions
- Designing a research study
- Data collection and management strategies
- Generating survey questions
- Analyzing data
- Presenting your findings

While learning how to do research, program participants designed and carried out a pilot research study on anti-Muslim bias crimes in Arkansas. The students created questions and analyzed data from a focus group of Muslim students from Central Arkansas. Their preliminary findings were presented to the faculty in the Department of Criminal Justice, as well as the Deans of the Graduate School and CSSC.
The Department of Criminal Justice co-hosted CSI: UALR with the LRPD Crime Scene unit. The event was promoted through university emails, fliers, and our community partners. Students at UALR, E-stem, and members of the community were invited to learn about crime scene investigation. LRPD demonstrated techniques while participants analyzed a mock crime scene and interviewed suspects. The event increased awareness about crime scene investigation and processing, including documentation, interviewing, making castings, analyzing blood spatter patterns, and latent analysis with a UV light.

We also had a recruiter and training officer from LRPD speak briefly during the event. Over 100 people participated in the event, which was held on the main floor of Ross Hall.

Participants were charged a nominal fee to support student scholarships in our department. The department raised around $100. Raffle prizes were also donated by several local businesses and offered to participants.
The Take Back the Night event was held to end sexual and domestic violence through awareness and education. This event was a tremendous success! We had over 100 attendees and 10 community organizations represented at the event. We were able to host an evening of survivor stories and musical performances along with a candlelight march through campus.

The event raised over $5,000 to support a non-profit organization that helps victims of sexual trafficking in Arkansas, Partners against Trafficking Human (PATH) – as well as scholarships for Criminal Justice students.

The evening of survivor stories had numerous speakers share their stories. Our first speaker works directly with victims of human trafficking here in Little Rock. Casonia Vinson coordinates a variety of programs and services to survivors to help restore and reintegrate them into a system of hope, healing and personal growth.

Our next speaker was a native Arkansian who is currently a S.A.N.E (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) Coordinator at the Arkansas Coalition Against Sexual Assault (ACASA). Meagan Bowers is also a survivor of sexual assault.

Our keynote speaker was Brandi Smith, a survivor of domestic and sexual violence. She is now a motivational speaker who tours around the country empowering other survivors. Our vocals were Tara Bratton and Chana Caylor. We are grateful to all those who dedicated their time into this event.

JOIN US NEXT YEAR AND LET THE CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY KNOW THAT WE WILL NO LONGER BE SILENT ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE!


The Department of Criminal Justice offers 5 unique degree programs: A.S. in Law Enforcement; B.A. in Criminal Justice; M.S. in Criminal Justice; M.A. in Criminal Justice; Ph.D. in Criminal Justice. UA Little Rock offers the only Ph.D. in Criminal Justice in the state of Arkansas.

**Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice**
- Faculty members integrate their real-world experiences with stellar academic backgrounds.
- Practical field experience with theory to help students take their classroom learning and apply it to everyday life.
- Internship experiences.
- Work alongside our faculty in the Biosocial Research Lab and Justice Research and Policy Center (JRAP)

**Master of Science in Criminal Justice**
- Professionally-oriented degree offered completely online.
- Accelerated program – 8-week courses
- Customizable degree plans.
- Advanced academic training and special expertise in critical issues within the CJ system.
- Gain applied knowledge on leadership positions within CJ organizations.

**Master of Arts in Criminal Justice**
- Prepare for positions of responsibility in the CJ system.
- Distinctive melding of professionally structured knowledge and ethical imperatives in our democracy
- Provides a strong foundation for those planning careers in research or teaching.
- Unique 2+3 fast-track program for students interested in pursuing a Ph.D.

**Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice**
- Students are guided through intense, supervised courses of the history, current issues, and research in criminology and criminal justice.
- This program requires extensive work in quantitative and qualitative methods, statistical analysis, and research design.
- We offer focused mentorships and have 100% success rate in tenure-track job placement.

For more information:

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