

CJ 500 Final Project Guidelines and Rubric

Overview

For your final project, you will analyze a contemporary issue in criminal justice and provide an evidence-based recommendation to address the issue, selecting an issue of interest on which to focus your brief. You will analyze how the issue has evolved, apply criminological theories to identify causes of the issue, assess the impact of the issue on the community, and propose strategies to address the issue.

Professionals in the field of criminal justice are often faced with making difficult decisions related to critical issues in their field. Those that are able to effectively take action to address these issues are seen as leaders in the field. To effectively form conclusions and recommend appropriate action, it is essential that professionals first analyze the background of the issue. Professionals must understand the history of the issue, the contributing factors, and the impact of the issue on the various individuals and groups involved, all through conducting research and applying criminological theories. This information will then inform data-driven recommendations to effectively address the issue. While the scale of these recommendations may vary (as some resolutions may be immediate while others are complete cultural changes), the solutions will all be rooted in data, and the success of results will be continuously monitored.

In this assignment, you will demonstrate your mastery of the following course outcomes:

- Analyze the evolution of contemporary criminal justice issues for their impact on society
- Draw connections between contemporary criminal justice issues and core criminological theories for identifying factors that contribute to the issues
- Determine how contemporary criminal justice issues impact institutions, individuals, and the ability of key stakeholders to influence change
- Assess the effectiveness of strategies used by public service agencies in the delivery of criminal justice services
- Propose evidence-based strategies to address contemporary issues impacting the delivery of criminal justice services

The project is divided into **three milestones**, which will be submitted at various points throughout the course to scaffold learning and ensure quality final submissions. These milestones will be submitted in **Modules Three, Five, and Seven**. The final case analysis will be submitted in **Module Nine**.

Prompt

For this project, you will play the part of a team leader working in a criminal justice agency. You have been asked by the senior leadership to assist with addressing an issue that is negatively impacting the delivery of criminal justice services. You have been asked to write a brief providing an evidence-based recommendation to address the issue, while also detailing your research, which will then inform the solution that the senior leadership will present to the mayor.

You will select a contemporary issue that is negatively impacting the delivery of criminal justice services to be the focus of your brief, and then research the history of the issue, select a solution, and propose strategies for implementing the solution. **Although you may choose your own topic, you may not choose public policy.**

Specifically, the following **critical elements** must be addressed:

I. **Introduction**

- A. Describe the criminal justice **issue** you have selected. Specifically, how is this an issue in the field of criminal justice, what is the general impact of the issue on society, and why does the problem need to be addressed?
- B. Describe the **evolution of the** selected **issue** throughout history, providing specific examples. In other words, how did this become an issue? What factors have caused the issue to evolve? For example, a regulation may have been created in the past to address an issue, but the regulation is now irrelevant.
- C. Describe the **evolution of** the historical **perception** of this issue, identifying key events and factors that influenced the public perception. For example, did the public always view the topic as an issue? How has technology impacted public perception?

II. **Issue Analysis**

- A. **Select** a criminological **theory** that informs your understanding of the issue, justifying your selection.
- B. Identify **factors contributing to the issue**, justifying your identifications with the selected criminological theory. In other words, what are the factors contributing to the issue? How is the identification of these factors supported by the selected theory?
- C. Describe how the issue impacts the **criminal justice system**, providing specific examples of how the branches of the criminal justice system are affected by the issue. For example, how does the issue impact law enforcement, the courts, and corrections?
- D. Describe how the issue impacts the **general public**, providing specific examples. Does the issue affect specific populations?
- E. Determine the key **stakeholders** of the issue, identifying both the key people impacted by the issue and those with the power to influence change. Justify your selections.
- F. Describe **strategies** that are currently employed to address the issue. These strategies may be used in the community with the issue, or in a different community with the same issue.
- G. Assess the **effectiveness** of the previously identified strategies in addressing the issue, justifying your assessment. How effectively do the strategies combat the issue, and where are there gaps?
- H. How does your previous assessment impact the specific **branches** of the criminal justice system? Justify your response. In which branches are the strategies most and least effective?

III. **Recommendations**

- A. Propose a **solution** to address the issue in criminal justice, justifying your proposal with your previous research. In your justification, you may consider the complexity of the solution, the possible adverse effects, and the feasibility of the solution in terms of time and resources.
- B. Apply criminological **theory** to justify how your proposed solution will address the underlying causes of the issue.
- C. Outline the **immediate actions** that will need to be taken to implement the solution, justifying the necessity and feasibility of these actions with evidence. Consider how you will create buy-in among invested parties.
- D. Outline the **long-term actions** that will need to be taken to implement the solution, justifying the necessity and feasibility of these actions with evidence. Consider how you will create buy-in among invested parties.

- E. Determine the types of **data** necessary to **assess** whether or not your **solution** is successful in addressing the issue, justifying your determinations. How will you measure your success of the solution?

Milestones

Milestone One: Selection of Contemporary Criminal Justice Issue

In **Module Three**, you will select a **contemporary issue** that is negatively impacting the delivery of criminal justice—one that will be the focus of your final case analysis and recommendation brief. In this draft, you will demonstrate your understanding of the issue and its history, evolution, and development. You will need to focus on past and future criminological theories and policies behind these issue. Given your analysis of the issue, discuss the impact on society and what problems need to be addressed to remedy the negative ramifications. This milestone must be formatted according to APA style. Cite your sources within the text of your paper and on the reference page. **This milestone will be graded with the Milestone One Rubric.**

Milestone Two: Criminal Justice Issue Analysis

In **Module Five**, you will submit your in-depth **analysis** on the contemporary criminal justice issue that you have selected. This analysis will identify factors contributing to the issue by examining the criminological theories behind the issue. Specifically, what criminological theory forms your understanding of the issue? Indicate the impact of this issue on the criminal justice system. For example, how does the issue impact law enforcement, the courts, and corrections? Address the negative impacts of the issue on the criminal justice system, general public, and specific populations. Then, identify strategies to influence change. Be sure to cite any data you have analyzed so far; you will rely upon this data to provide recommendations to your criminal justice issue in both the Module Six Memorandum task and your Milestone Three submission in Module Seven. This milestone must be formatted according to APA style. Cite your sources within the text of your paper and on the reference page. **This milestone will be graded with the Milestone Two Rubric.**

Milestone Three: Preliminary Recommendations to the Mayor

In **Module Seven**, you will submit a *draft* of your preliminary **recommendations** to the mayor based on your criminal justice issue selection and analysis. These recommendations will inform the mayor and other senior leadership about a course of action to solve the issue you selected. Based entirely on your research and the analysis you provided in Milestone Two, propose a strategy to implement a solution to the issue. Assess the strategy's potential for success, but also identify possible hurdles and obstacles to the implementation of the recommendations you have proposed. This milestone must be formatted according to APA style. Cite your sources within the text of your paper and on the reference page. Instructor feedback to this milestone should be applied to the final project, due in Module Nine. **This milestone will be graded with the Milestone Three Rubric.**

Final Submission: Final Issue Analysis and Recommendation Brief

In **Module Nine**, you will submit your **final issue analysis and recommendation brief**. It should be a complete, polished artifact containing **all** of the critical elements of the final product. It should reflect the incorporation of feedback gained throughout the course. All of the components of the final project will be used for your portfolio. **This submission will be graded with the Final Project Rubric.**

Deliverables

Milestone	Deliverable	Module Due	Grading
One	Introduction: Selection of Contemporary Criminal Justice Issue	Three	Graded separately; Milestone One Rubric
Two	Criminal Justice Issue Analysis	Five	Graded separately; Milestone Two Rubric
Three	Preliminary Recommendations to the Mayor	Seven	Graded separately; Milestone Three Rubric
	Final Submission: Final Case Analysis	Nine	Graded separately; Final Project Rubric

Final Project Rubric

Guidelines for Submission: Your submission must include reference to recent peer-reviewed articles, be 5–7 pages in length (in addition to the title page and references) and must adhere to standard formatting (Times New Roman, 12 point font, one-inch margins), using the most recent version of the APA style manual for the citations.

Critical Elements	Exemplary (100%)	Proficient (90%)	Needs Improvement (70%)	Not Evident (0%)	Value
Introduction: Issue	Meets “Proficient” criteria and response is especially clear and detailed	Describes the criminal justice issue, providing specifics around how it is an issue in the field, the general impact on society, and why the problem needs to be addressed	Describes the criminal justice issue, describing how it is an issue in the field, the general impact on society, and why the problem needs to be addressed, but with gaps in detail, specificity, or accuracy	Does not describe the criminal justice issue	6.4
Introduction: Evolution of the Issue	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates keen insight into the evolution of the selected issue throughout history	Describes the evolution of the selected issue throughout history, providing specific examples	Describes the evolution of the selected issue throughout history, but with gaps in examples, detail, or accuracy	Does not describe the evolution of the selected issue throughout history	6.4
Introduction: Evolution of Perception	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates keen insight into the evolution of historical perception of the issue	Describes the evolution of historical perception of the issue, identifying key events and factors that influenced the public perception	Describes the evolution of historical perception of the issue, but with gaps in identification of key events and factors that influenced the public perception, detail, or accuracy	Does not describe the evolution of historical perception of the issue	6.4

Issue Analysis: Select Theory	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates keen insight into the selection of relevant criminological theories to inform understanding of issues	Selects a criminological theory that informs the understanding of the issue, justifying selection	Selects a criminological theory that informs the understanding of the issue, but with gaps in detail, accuracy, or justification	Does not select a criminological theory that informs the understanding of the issue	6.4
Issue Analysis: Factors Contributing to the Issue	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates keen insight into the application of criminological theory to identify causes of issues	Identifies factors contributing to the issue, justifying identifications with the selected criminological theory	Identifies factors contributing to the issue, but with gaps in detail, logic, justification, or appropriate application of criminological theory	Does not identify factors contributing to the issue	6.4
Issue Analysis: Criminal Justice System	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates keen insight into the impact of the issue on the criminal justice system	Describes how the issue impacts the criminal justice system, providing specific examples of how the branches of the criminal justice system are affected	Describes how the issue impacts the criminal justice system, but with gaps in examples, detail, or accuracy	Does not describe how the issue impacts the criminal justice system	6.4
Issue Analysis: General Public	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates keen insight into the impact of the issue on the general public	Describes how the issue impacts the general public, providing specific examples	Describes how the issue impacts the general public, but with gaps in examples, detail, or accuracy	Does not describe how the issue impacts the general public	6.4
Issue Analysis: Stakeholders	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates keen insight into identifying the key stakeholders of the issue	Determines the key stakeholders of the issue, identifying both the key people impacted, as well as those with the power to influence change, justifying selections	Determines the key stakeholders of the issue, identifying both the key people impacted, as well as those with the power to influence change, but with gaps in justification, detail, or logic	Does not determine the key stakeholders of the issue	6.4
Issue Analysis: Strategies	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates keen insight into the strategies currently used to address the issue	Describes strategies currently employed to address the issue	Describes strategies currently employed to address the issue, but with gaps in detail or accuracy	Does not describe strategies currently employed to address the issue	6.4
Issue Analysis: Effectiveness	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates keen insight into the strengths and weaknesses of identified strategies in addressing issues	Assesses the effectiveness of identified strategies in addressing the issue, justifying assessment	Assesses the effectiveness of identified strategies in addressing the issue, but with gaps in justification or logic	Does not assess the effectiveness of identified strategies in addressing the issue	6.4
Issue Analysis: Branches	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates keen insight into the impact of identified strategies on the specific branches of the criminal justice system	Explains how the previous assessment of strategies impacts the specific branches of the criminal justice system, justifying response	Explains how the previous assessment of strategies impacts the specific branches of the criminal justice system, but with gaps in justification or logic	Does not explain how the previous assessment of strategies impacts the specific branches of the criminal justice system	6.4

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Recommendations: Solution	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates keen insight in proposing evidence-based strategies to address issues in criminal justice	Proposes a solution to address the issue in criminal justice, justifying proposal with previous research	Proposes a solution to address the issue in criminal justice, but with gaps in justification, logic, or detail	Does not propose a solution to address the issue in criminal justice	4.8
Recommendations: Theory	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates keen insight into the application of criminological theory to justify proposed solutions	Applies criminological theory to justify how the proposed solution will address the underlying causes of the issue	Applies criminological theory to justify how the proposed solution will address the underlying causes of the issue, but with gaps in appropriate application, detail, or logic	Does not apply criminological theory to justify how the proposed solution will address the underlying causes of the issue	6.4
Recommendations: Immediate Actions	Meets “Proficient” criteria and actions are especially well supported with evidence	Outlines immediate actions that will need to be taken to implement the solution, justifying necessity and feasibility of actions with evidence	Outlines immediate actions that will need to be taken to implement the solution, but with gaps in justification, detail, or accuracy	Does not outline immediate actions that will need to be taken to implement the solution	4.8
Recommendations: Long-Term Actions	Meets “Proficient” criteria and actions are especially well supported with evidence	Outlines the long-term actions that will need to be taken to implement the solution, justifying the necessity and feasibility of the actions with evidence	Outlines the long-term actions that will need to be taken to implement the solution, but with gaps in justification, detail, or accuracy of outlined actions	Does not outline the long-term actions that will need to be taken to implement the solution	4.8
Recommendations: Data to Assess Solution	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates keen insight into the types of data necessary for assessing the effectiveness of strategies	Determines the types of data necessary to assess the success of a solution in addressing the issue, justifying determinations	Determines the types of data necessary to assess the success of a solution in addressing the issue, but with gaps in justification, logic, or accuracy	Does not determine the types of data necessary to assess the success of a solution	4.8
Articulation of Response	Submission is free of errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, and organization, and is presented in a professional and easy to read format	Submission has no major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization	Submission has major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that negatively impact readability or articulation of main ideas	Submission has critical errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that prevent understanding of ideas	4
Total					100%