

Department of Criminal Justice Newsletter

Georgia State University



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Letter from the Chair, Brian K. Payne, PhD

In the 1980s, British rocker Billy Bragg released a song titled "Scholarship is the Enemy of Romance." Clearly Bragg was never exposed to the scholarship of faculty members in the Department of Criminal Justice at GSU! Because if he were, he would have seen how exciting, idealistic, (and some times romantic) scholarship can be.

When we talk about scholarship, we are referring to the whole framework of our jobs – teaching, research, and service. To us, there are few things more exciting (and romantic) than being scholars at Georgia State University. So many things are going on in our Department, in the College of Health and Human Sciences, and at the University that one can't help but get energized about scholarship. You will read about many of these activities in this newsletter. From changes in our undergraduate program, to growth in our Master's program and the implementation of our PhD program – to paraphrase another rock legend – "our department is a-changing." I bet Bob Dylan would never find scholarship unromantic!

While many things are changing, our commitment to students remains as steadfast as ever. I recently had the opportunity to meet with the Sophomore Learning Community and talk about the department and our expectations of students. I shared with them seven things I thought they should do to succeed in our department. First, I told students something other professors have probably told them – show up for all of your classes. Attendance goes a long way towards success. Second, I shared with the SLC students the importance of creating a learning environment. I described how each student's learning environment might be different, but they needed to proactively figure out what helps them learn. You might not be surprised to hear that my learning environment included some rock music when I was in college. Third, I reminded the students of the importance of having goals. Goals must be set high. If you want to accomplish it, you can. Fourth, I encouraged students to open their eyes, and keep them open, to the world around them. We need to look at our local community, as well as our global community, in order to understand and appreciate our lives. Fifth, I told students to leave their bad habits behind. We all have them. Whether it is procrastination, sloppiness, irrational expectations, or something else, we need to focus on habits that are productive rather than counterproductive. Sixth, students were encouraged to actively participate in Georgia State University activities. Just as faculty members don't just teach in a classroom, students don't just learn in a classroom. Finally, the importance of rewarding yourselves for success was stressed. Doing so reinforces our future efforts.

After discussing these seven points, I summarized them for the students:

- S**how up for all of your classes
- C**reate a learning environment
- H**ave goals
- O**pen your eyes
- L**eave your bad habits behind
- A**ctively participate in Georgia State University activities
- R**eward yourself

As professors, our scholarship entails teaching/learning, research, and service. As students, your scholarship entails the same elements. We are all part of a talented community of scholars at Georgia State University. Together, our scholarship will help to build the future.

I don't know of anything more idealistic and romantic than that!

Recent Accomplishments

Dr. Brenda Sims Blackwell was recently honored as the co-recipient of Georgia State University's Outstanding Critical Thinking Through Writing Ambassador's Report. Dr. Blackwell was also named undergraduate program coordinator. In this role she will lead efforts to promote the undergraduate program and ensure that the program is responsive to students' needs.

Dr. Timothy Brezina was named doctoral program coordinator for the Criminal Justice and Criminology PhD program. Dr. Brezina will lead the department's efforts to implement this program. The first cohort of students will enter the program in Fall 2010. As the only program of its kind in the state, great things are expected as this program prepares future scholars.

Dr. Dean Dabney has continued to advance scholarship in his role as editor of *Criminal Justice Review* and *International Criminal Justice Review*. The two journals have been housed in the Department since their inception. A recent article published in the *Journal of Criminal Justice* ranked journals by the number of times articles from different journals were cited in other scholarly publications. Part of the analysis focused on impact factor (e.g., the average number of citations per article) over a two-year timeframe. *Criminal Justice Review* was 13th out of 67 criminal justice journals. What is particularly impressive about this ranking is that CJR was the highest ranked university-owned journal. In addition to these scholarly pursuits, Dr. Dabney also continues in his efforts to build his yodeling career.

Dr. Wendy P. Guastafarro received the Georgia State University Instructional Effectiveness Award for 2009. The award, which is one of only four given to faculty, is presented to a university faculty member each year for use of instructional approaches that are successful in facilitating learning. Dr. Guastafarro was recognized for her use of group work in her Crime and the Media class. Dr. Guastafarro was presented her award at an awards ceremony held in May. Dr. Guastafarro was also the featured speaker at the College of Health and Human Sciences Honor's Day ceremony held last spring.

Dr. Joshua Hinkle is the newest addition to our faculty. Dr. Hinkle successfully defended his dissertation this past summer. His dissertation, titled *Making sense of broken windows: The relationship between perceptions of disorder, fear of crime, and collective efficacy*, focused on the impact of certain policing practices on communities. He has several projects underway that stem from his dissertation. This semester he is teaching Introduction to Criminal Justice. Next semester, he will be teaching Policing. Please join us in welcoming Dr. Hinkle to Georgia State University.

Dr. Brian K. Payne was recently named vice president of the Southern Criminal Justice Association, after serving as second vice president for SCJA. Among other things, in this role he will serve as program chair for the association's 2010 meetings to be held in Clearwater Beach, Florida. Payne selected the theme of "Using Criminal Justice Research to Improve the Community" for the conference.

Anita Stewart, the Department's Business Manager, received the College of Health and Human Sciences (CHHS) Staff Excellence Award. She was presented her award during the May meeting of the College.

From the Classroom...Second Year SLC Well Underway, Dr. Dean Dabney

Last year the department launched a curricular innovation aimed at improving undergraduate retention rates and better connecting students to departmental resources. The Sophomore Learning Community (SLC) builds on the tenets of cohort-based learning and cross-course collaboration that the Freshman Learning Community (FLC) has shown to pay dividends at the university level. Under the initiative, a group of interested students is block enrolled in three required courses in the fall term and three classes in the spring.

At the core of the community is a fall class (Pro-seminar in Criminal Justice) that is designed to expose students to departmental resources and get them thinking and working toward career planning. This hub course is paired with two core courses that traditionally pose a problem for majors (Research Methods and Criminology). Assignments are designed to foster understanding and application across the three courses. A similar model is used in the spring term with the overarching goal being to improve performance in these bottleneck courses, while at the same time getting the students invested in the department. Enrollments in last year's SLC were modest (N=12), as we struggled to effectively market the program to students and coordinate its complex administration. This year the department has appointed a full-time faculty member to administer the initiative and serve as the central recruiter and advisor for all SLC students. A Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) component has been added to enhance the discipline-specific writing and communication skills of the students. This year's enrollments have nearly tripled (N=33), approaching max capacity and systematic efforts are underway to assess student outcomes and satisfaction levels. Early indications suggest that the program will yield important benefits for the department and its constituencies. For more information, contact me at cridad@gsu.edu. I look forward to hearing from you.

From a Criminal Justice Graduate Student...My Perceptions of Georgia State, Johnny Cain

My first few weeks of graduate school at Georgia State University have been very interesting. Adjusting to the new campus has, at times, been very confusing; however, once you figure out that every building is connected by some type of passage, the campus seems less complicated. I am used to a big open campus where one must trek from building to building. At Georgia State, one has to rely on street signs rather than buildings or major landmarks to navigate the campus. Still, when you get right down to it, the experience of starting at a new university is the same regardless of the level of the program.

The faculty at Georgia State University have been very helpful in my adjustment to life at Georgia State. Professors have walked with me to and from classes, so I could learn shortcuts between buildings. With the assistantship program, Dr. Payne has been very patient with me as I learn how he wants things done. He has never seemed annoyed with me despite the multiple questions I have asked him. Overall, this experience has been very exciting. On the one hand, I have this new found confidence as a graduate student, which allows me to interact with the faculty on a more professional level. On the other hand, I still have the nervousness of the new transfer student, who is intimidated by a new campus. I still believe, however, that this will be an exciting new experience for me and I look forward to a great time at Georgia State. I also hope to see you around the department or campus!

Congratulations to our students receiving awards on Honor's Day last Spring:

Chris Perrin Memorial Scholarship—Alyssa Stewart, Tatum Dorsey
Undergraduate Academic Honor Award—Karima A. Ibrahim
James L. Maddex Scholarship—Janay Michelle Davis, Erinn Perry
Greater Atlanta Chapter of the ASIS Scholarship—Laura Ryan
Larry E. Quinn Memorial Award—Lillian Robinson
Phil Peters Memorial Scholarship—Miranda Bauman
Bobby Jo Chancey Sr. Memorial Scholarship—Hung Tran
Distinguished Alumni Service Award—Isaiah Mapp, Jr.

From the Research Arena... It Takes A Village, Dr. Brent Teasdale

Public policy solutions to juvenile delinquency frequently focus on parents. In fact, it is occasionally proposed that we punish parents for the misbehaviors of their children. This policy focus on parents is consistent with criminological theorizing about the role of parents in the creation of high self control in their children. In fact, Gottfredson and Hirschi's *General Theory of Crime* (1990) places primary emphasis on the role of parents in the socialization of high self control in their children. In our article published in *Social Problems*, Eric Silver and I investigated whether the neighborhood context played a role in the socialization of adolescents in middle and high schools across the United States. Using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, we found that over and above the effects of "under the roof" parenting practices, neighborhoods had an independent effect on the development of self control amongst adolescents. Specifically, adolescents from more socially disorganized (disadvantaged) communities had lower self control than did adolescents from more socially organized (less disadvantaged) neighborhoods. We argue that communities with greater social ties, and more integrated social networks, enable the "under the roof parenting" to extend into the community and school contexts. On the other hand, in less integrated neighborhoods, the socialization activities of parents "under the roof" remain there and other socializing agents take over once the adolescent is beyond the reach of his or her parents, thus diminishing the effects of parental socialization. Thus, policy solutions to juvenile delinquency must not only target parents, but also the environments in which parenting takes place.

From the Community...Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange Continues Partnerships

On April 6th, the Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange (GILEE) and the US Attorney for the Northern District of Georgia held a full day special training on International Terrorism and Local Solutions hosted by Georgia Power. Presenters focused on global terrorism, Israel's counter-terrorism experience, international cooperation, and enhanced disaster preparedness. **Dr. Robbie Friedmann** took the 17th GILEE delegation to Israel in June following a send-off hosted by Cox Enterprises and featuring remarks from **President Becker, Dean Kelley** and **Dr. Payne**. The 18 law enforcement leaders from Georgia, California, and Florida trained with the Israel Police on how to balance the response to terrorism with the response to known criminal activity. On August 14th, GILEE and ASIS International - Greater Atlanta Chapter, convened a summit on "Law Enforcement and Business Continuity: Challenges and Solutions for a New Era" at GSU. Seven federal and state agencies aligned with corporate security representatives discussed operations, challenges and solutions. **President Becker** welcomed the participants.

Worth Quoting

Faculty in the Department of Criminal Justice are leading scholars who have contributed a wealth of knowledge to Criminal Justice and Criminology. Below are a select few quotes from recent publications that demonstrate how our faculty have contributed to science.

"States contemplating guidelines must contemplate the degree of discretion made available to judges to allow for the consideration of the circumstances surrounding the offense and the offender, including level of culpability, amenability to rehabilitation, and offender's family status." **Blackwell, Brenda**, Holleran, D., & **Finn, Mary**. "Impact of sentencing guidelines on sex differences in sentencing," - *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*.

"Rumors of widespread anarchy and mayhem contributed to a delay in rescue and evacuation efforts and hampered the response of law enforcement. It will also be important to develop a more complete understanding of why unsubstantiated, harmful rumors about the New Orleans disaster were reported in the first place... Researchers have highlighted many possible contributing factors, including the collapse of the communications infrastructure, stereotypes about the urban poor, and popular disaster myths." **Brezina, Timothy**. "What went wrong in New Orleans?" - *Social Problems*.

"Researchers, service providers, and advocates from different disciplinary perspectives—psychology, social work, criminal justice, sociology, and medicine—need to work more closely. Their creativity is needed to inform the development, implementation, and evaluation of theoretically driven programs and interventions that are grounded in the growing body of rape victimization and perpetration research." Fisher, B. S., **Daigle, Leah E.**, & Cullen, F. T. "Rape against women: What can research offer to guide the development of prevention programs and risk reduction interventions?" - *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*.

"Drinkers are much more likely to engage in violence while sober and this tendency is almost as strong as the overall relationship between being a drinker and engaging in violence. It is also well known that frequent drinkers are more likely to engage in violence than infrequent drinkers. Our evidence suggests that this relationship is partly spurious and partly causal, the result of the situational effects of intoxication." Felson, R. B., **Teasdale, Brent**, & Burchfield, K. B. "The influence of being under the influence: Alcohol effects on adolescent violence." - *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*.

"The results support the conclusion that despite intensive training and specific instructions to ignore shopper demographic characteristics in selecting potential or probable offenders, observers were unable to resist the power of implicit cultural stereotypes in shaping their selection of individuals." **Dabney, Dean.**, Dugan, L., **Topalli, Volkan**. (2006). "The impact of implicit stereotyping on offender profiling ." - *Criminal Justice and Behavior*.

"Social disorganization theory has provided important tools for building stronger communities, yet its success has been limited by its neglect of cultural issues. Building stronger communities will require not only strengthening the structural arrangements therein, but also strengthening the culture." **Warner, Barbara D.** "The role of attenuated culture in social disorganization theory." - *Criminology*.

"Although the present study concurs that female officers tend to respond to aggressive situations of inmate misbehavior in ways similar to their male counterparts, there is no evidence in this sample that female officers differ in any significant way and definitely not in a more aggressive manner." Tewksbury, R., and **Collins, Sue Carter**. "Aggression levels among correctional officers." - *The Prison Journal*.

"We found that more than half of the studies that had no statistically significant finding for a no difference null hypothesis evidenced a statistically significant result in the case of a minimal worthwhile treatment effect null hypothesis. In such cases, there is statistical evidence that the programs failed to meet a minimal threshold of success." Weisburd, D., Lum, C., and **Yang, Sue-Ming**. "When Can We Conclude That Treatments or Programs 'Don't Work'?" - *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*.

"Related to the lack of understanding of the intent and aim of terrorists is the lack of understanding of the measured reactions, and nowhere is it more obvious than in the false dichotomy between "privacy" and "security" as if they are two competing values. There is a need to identify and define what is meant by *security*, how much of it we want, at what fiscal and at what social price." **Friedmann, Robert**. "Homeland Security," - *International CJ Review*.

"Attention is also given to whether type of neighborhood is related to attitudes about the *Miranda* warnings. Findings suggest that while the warnings are perceived in different ways, there are similarities that could bridge the gap between the police and public." **Payne, Brian K.** and **Guastafarro, Wendy**. "Attitudes about *Miranda* warnings." - *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*.

"Such programs must be geared not only to reduce disorder, but also to prevent increases in citizen fear that may accompany crackdowns and other intensive enforcement efforts associated with broken windows policing. The police must communicate with citizens and explain their efforts. In this sense, they need to gain legitimacy in the areas where they police." **Hinkle, Joshua** and Weisburd, D., "The irony of broken windows policing," - *Journal of Criminal Justice*.

"Drawing on differential association and social learning theories, our research specifies the social processes... which dictate particular causal pathways leading to and from substance use and then estimates the reciprocal influences among differential association, social pressure from peers, attitudes favorable toward substance use, and individual use," **Reed, Mark**, and Wilcox, P. "Peer pressure and adolescent substance use," - *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*.

"While prior attempts at theoretical integration have taken various forms, the majority of these attempts have relied on a single-level of explanation. Single level theories, however, have generally fallen short in their ability to explain crime and criminality." - **Muftic, Lisa**. "Macro-micro theoretical integration: An unexplored theoretical frontier." - *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Criminology*

Mastering the Master's Program, Dr. Barbara Warner

The Master's Degree program in Criminal Justice at GSU is thriving, and we are very excited about our newest cohort of students who are joining us this Fall. We had 21 students apply for admission in the Fall, and accepted 14. Students applied with undergraduate degrees from universities in Georgia (including GSU, UGA, Georgia Tech, Kennesaw State, and Clark Atlanta), Alabama, Utah, Illinois, North Carolina, New Jersey and Ohio. The average combined GRE scores of students that were admitted to the program was 1001 and the average undergraduate GPA was 3.17. The new students attended an orientation the week before classes and seem to be quickly settling in to their classes and the program. Most of our new students are receiving some form of funding. Several of them are consultants for CTW and WAC courses so you will probably be meeting them in your classes. You might want to ask them about what it's like to be a graduate student. Several second year graduate students will be beginning work on their Master's theses this year, including Beverly Reese, Sadie Mummert and Lauren Perea, so be sure to ask them about how their studies are going.

Evidence-Based Criminal Justice At Georgia State

Thousands of people have graduated from drug court programs in the United States, nearly 20,000 people in 2005 alone. Drug courts have moved from a pilot intervention in Dade County Florida to a national phenomenon 20 years later: at year's end 2007 there were over 2,100 drug courts in operation in the United States. These programs use the court as a therapeutic tool in combination with substance abuse treatment and other ancillary services to move people into recovery and away from criminal behavior.

Dr. Wendy P. Guastafarro continues her work with the DeKalb County Drug Court (DCDC) to implement evidence-based practices (EBP). EBP are those that produce positive outcomes and have been validated by scientific research. Two examples of EBP used in the DCDC are described below.

EBP #1. Provide intensive services to high risk people. There are 65-70 participants in the intensive track at any one time. Crack cocaine is the drug of choice for 95% of the DCDC population. On average, participants have an addiction history of 15 years; 10 previous arrests and 14.5 years of criminal activity per participant. Nearly all were homeless at the time of program entry. 1 in 6 has a co-occurring mental health disorder. 70% are parents. The majority enter the program unemployed and without a high school diploma. The DCDC provides substance abuse treatment, group and individual counseling rooted in a cognitive behavioral change model, housing and job placement. In Phase 1 participants meet with the judge every week; are randomly and regularly drug-screened; attend treatment services at least 6 hours/day, 5 days/week; attend weekly NA/AA meetings; have curfews; and must have a job before moving to the next phase. Sanctions include but are not limited to serving time in jail for rule violations or drug use. 62% remained in the program during a 1-year follow up; national retention rates (for high and low risk drug courts) are 60%.

EBP #2. Treatment must address both substance abuse and criminal thinking patterns. Participants learn effective social and recovery skills to help them manage their addiction. Each person learns to identify what causes the urge to use drugs and how to respond when facing triggers. Participants are randomly drug-screened 2-3 times a week during the first phase. Drug testing 2 times/week increases the rate of detection to 80%; testing once/week results in just a 35% chance of detection. Criminal behavior is a result of more than drug use however. There are specific thinking patterns that give rise to criminal behavior. These patterns predict negative outcomes but are treatable. Examples include anti-social attitudes and values, impulsivity and a lack of problem-solving skills. The DCDC uses the cognitive behavioral curriculum, *Thinking for a Change* developed by the National Institute of Corrections, to change thinking patterns. From 2004 - 2008, 16% of DCDC graduates had been re-arrested. Nationally, 2/3 of released offenders recidivate within three years of release.

Dr. Guastafarro's research helped the DeKalb County Drug Court to receive additional funding to expand its efforts. By using her evaluation skills to evaluate the court, officials were able to demonstrate that the practices of the drug court adhered to these evidence-based principles. As a result, the community has benefited from better responses to substance abusers and less re-offending by those graduating from the drug court.

'We don't mean to brag, but we will':

- In 2005, the Department of Criminal Justice had 429 majors. Today, we have 509 majors.
- In 2005, faculty authored seven scholarly journal publications. In 2008, faculty in the Department of Criminal Justice published thirty-four refereed journal articles.
- In Fall 2005, the Department of Criminal Justice produced 4,378 credit hours. In Fall 2009, the Department produced 4,919 credit hours.

How to Do Well in College, Andrea Barber, Criminal Justice Graduate Student

As you now know, you should have acquired the map of campus weeks before the first day of class and scrutinized every route that you intended to take to reach your classrooms. Constantly searching for that bent up piece of paper and standing on Peachtree Street attempting to interpret the composition of downtown Atlanta in the middle of chaos can reduce self-confidence. After the first week's trauma and being let out of class early, you had to face reality.

Despite the commonly held belief that going to class is overrated, go to class. Attending class allows you to master the material as well as ask questions of your professors. You ever know, you may ask a question that is on the exam. While in class, you should take notes. Try to avoid the temptation of texting and surfing the net. The unfortunate consequence of not taking notes is that you may be stuck borrowing notes from the only person in the class who abbreviates every word in their shorthand note taking style.

I also strongly suggest designating study times in advance, which allows you to manage your time. This is also your very expensive chance to practice your work ethic which is important when obtaining and keeping employment. So, try not to wait until the night before the exam to study. Writing papers the night before they are due may also lead to your demise. As in a real world job, the boss expects quality work. These expectations cannot be met with a last ditch effort to complete the task. Also contrary to "college student life law," the benefits of not procrastinating lead to a far more fulfilling social life. Taking care of you body is also crucial to scholarly development. In a college atmosphere this is very difficult. Yes, caffeine and energy drinks are our friends but maybe they can be ditched one night a week, so that you can at least get some sleep.

Lastly, I know that for some of you the title of Doctor may be intimidating, but it is vital that you get to know your professors on some level. This will allow you to access them in the future if you wish to seek a subsequent degree. I will tell you that it is very difficult to approach three faculty members that do not know your name and ask for letters of recommendation. On that note, never beg them for extra credit. If you do, you have most likely just ruined any chance that the whole class may benefit from surprise extra credit. This type of extra credit pleases the instructors as well as providing a short lived excitement about the exam or extra assignment for the students. All of these tips may seem very basic, but if you incorporate them to fit your lifestyle then you are destined for success.

Our Scholarship is Romance

Faculty members in the Department of Criminal Justice are active as teachers and researchers. They strike a balance often missing in research universities. Many of you have been exposed to their teaching skills. In terms of research, the faculty have already published two books and two dozen scholarly journal articles this year. Below is a selected list of these publications.

Books:

Copes, Heith, & **Volkan Topalli**. *Criminological Theory: Readings and Retrospectives*. McGraw-Hill.

Payne, Brian K., & Gaine, R.G. *Family Violence and Criminal Justice: A Life Course Approach*. (3rd ed). Lexis-Nexis.

Articles:

Brezina, Timothy, Tekin, E, and **Topalli, Volkan**. Might not be a tomorrow: A multi-methods approach to anticipated early death and youth crime. *Criminology*.

Brezina, Timothy, and **Phipps, Herbert Jr**. False news reports, folk devils, and the role of public officials: Notes on the social construction of law and order in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. *Deviant Behavior*.*

Highland, R.A., and **Dabney, Dean**. Using Adlerian theory to shed light on drug dealer motivations. *Applied Psychology in Criminal Justice*.*

Fisher, Bonnie S., **Daigle, Leah**, and Cullen, F. Explaining recurrent sexual victimization: Lifestyle-routine activities and first-incident characteristics. *Justice Quarterly*.

Daigle, Leah E., Fisher, B. S., and Stewart, M. The effectiveness of sexual victimization prevention among college students: a summary of "what works." *Victims and Offenders*.

Hinkle, Joshua, and Weisburd, D. The irony of broken windows policing: A micro-place study of the relationship between disorder, focused police crackdowns and fear of crime. *Journal of Criminal Justice*.

Muftić, Lisa R., & Bouffard, L. A. Intimate partner violence in post-conflict Bosnia: Incidence and attitudes among Bosnian Muslim women. *International Journal of Public Health*.

Muftić, Lisa R. Macro-micro theoretical integration: An unexplored theoretical frontier. *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Criminology*.

Payne, Brian K., **Ekhomu, Jessica**, and Carmody, Dianne. Structural barriers to preventing and responding to sexual assaults: Distinctions between community- and campus-based advocates. *Crime Prevention and Community Safety*.*

Payne, Brian K., King, P., and **Manois, Andrew**. Police training about elder abuse: A survey of one community's officers. *International Perspectives in Victimology*.*

Teasdale, Brent, et al. The influence of program mediators on eleventh grade outcomes for seventh grade substance users and non-users. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*. 102: 11-18.

Teasdale, Brent. Mental disorder and violent victimization. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*.

Teasdale, Brent, and Silver, E. Neighborhood disadvantage and low self-control. *Social Problems*.

Taylor, T.J., Holleran, D., & **Topalli, Volkan**. (2009). Racial bias in case processing: Does victim race affect police clearance of violent crime incidents? *Justice Quarterly*

*denotes work with a graduate student

Letter from CJSA President, Steven S. Fields

As the newly elected President of the Criminal Justice Student Association (CJSA), I am excited about the upcoming year for us. If one were to look at previous years, it is obvious that times have changed drastically due to a number of factors. However, one thing that will never change in our lifetime is the need for justice, for criminals and victims alike.

This year, it is my hope for our association to be more involved with the greater Atlanta community, particularly our local law enforcement agencies. To accomplish this goal, we seek to assist our local law enforcement agencies in their community service projects such as: neighborhood cleanups, the annual Olympic Torch runs, and other projects that are solely targeted towards giving back to the community and those less fortunate than us.

The CJSA takes pride in being a part of this university system and appreciates its students, especially those who are dedicated to serving the community for the greater good. The CJSA intends to implement a student's police academy. The purpose of this academy is two-fold; it is designed to give students insight into the inner workings of law enforcement and their daily operations, but is also designed to be a fun event, allowing students to have a chance to act as police officers under the watchful eye of professionals.

As spring approaches we look forward to having our annual career fair, not only to enhance our relationships with surrounding agencies, but to create opportunities for students as they move on to the professional world. The career fair gives agencies a chance to choose from the cream of the crop in a central location. Our graduates include a wide array of students with numerous talents, who are ready to serve their community.

I believe there are three ways in which students and teachers can benefit from all of these activities. First, participation is the key ingredient to taking advantage in these opportunities. We need students to be at events, and be open to new ideas and to be involved with the community.

Involvement, then, is the second ingredient to success. Many ideas are taking form within the organization, and most of the best ideas come from our students. We need students who will use their ideas to become the leaders that this university needs.

Finally, the organization, and the criminal justice department, needs feedback from you. Your feedback is critical to our success as an organization and as a department. The great ideas and values of our students from different cultures and beliefs is what enriches this organization. I believe this is our path to a promising future.

I look forward to leading the Criminal Justice Student Association as we take advantage of each opportunity afforded us in beautiful downtown Atlanta.

Faculty Spotlight, Dr. Lisa Muftić

My quest for conducting research started quite early. In high school I took it upon myself to take an English writing assignment a step further and gather my own research. My chosen topic: hate groups. I don't remember how or where I located the mailing addresses of several hate groups (there was no internet), but I did, and I wrote a series of well crafted letters requesting materials (pamphlets, handouts, whatever they had and could send me). Of course, I never asked for my teacher's nor my parents' permission to go forward with this "field" research (and there was no IRB). It didn't cross my mind that my research methodology might not be the most solid, not to mention safe.

What harm could it do? It seemed so simple: I'd send them a couple of bogus letters expressing interest in their twisted ideology; they'd send me some colorful propaganda; I'd use this "literature" to write my paper and even attach a few of the documents as appendices to my paper and presto, I'd have the best paper in class! After all, no one else in the class was conducting *original* research. I was sure that my paper would be one my teacher would talk about for years. . . . I wasn't *entirely* wrong.

It didn't take long until the literature started rolling in. Some of it was kind of amusing (misspelled words, typos, outrageous claims, etc.); most of it was downright disgusting. But all-in- all the process was very exciting -- until the phone started ringing. *Mr. Ryberg? This is so-and-so from the "I-Hate-Everyone" organization. We received a letter from your daughter asking for our help. We'd like to come by for a visit.* Let's just put it like this; my parents were not pleased; nor was my English teacher. But it all worked out in the end, I got an A (after all it *was* the best in the class), and 15+ years later my high school English teacher still talks about my imaginative (bordering on crazy) research project!

While I am no longer interested in studying organized hate groups, the overall experience solidified my passion for combining field research with writing. Today my (IRB approved) research and teaching energies are largely centered on three areas: Gender Based Violence (primarily examining the impact self defense plays on the phenomenon of dual arrest in intimate partner violence, characteristics of women arrested for intimate partner violence, and gender based violence in post-conflict areas), Criminological Theory (focusing on the advancement of theory through integration and utilization of quantitative research methods), and Community Corrections (highlighting issues related to how various correctional programs implement service activities, the characteristics of clients engaged in these services, and whether any of these client characteristics and service activities are related to various program outcomes, including completion of court orders or subsequent recidivism).

I am very fortunate in that at my current position at GSU I am surrounded by colleagues who share my enthusiasm for original scholarship. Furthermore, my earlier "data collection" attempts pale in comparison to some of the research conducted by CJ faculty (interviewing street robbers, riding along with homicide detectives, visiting supermax prisons, and touring disaster areas to just name a few). It's an exciting place to be and I am looking forward to what the future holds in store.

(Editor's note: check out Dr. Muftic's classes in Spring 2010. She will be teaching Criminal Justice Policy Analysis and Correctional Alternatives. Make sure you register early because these classes will fill up quickly).

San Bernardino Valley Broken Windows Policing Experiment

Over the last two decades, "Broken Windows Policing" has become a central component of police strategies to combat crime and disorder. But surprisingly, Broken Windows Policing itself has not been subject to sustained empirical examination. **Dr. Joshua Hinkle** is working with scholars from George Mason University and California State University, San Bernardino to address this knowledge gap by conducting a randomized, experimental evaluation of Broken Windows Policing in three cities in the San Bernardino Valley area of California. Questions addressed in this study will be whether broken windows policing reduced disorder and crime, made residents feel safer, and increased collective community efficacy. This project is being funded by the National Institute of Justice.

Wisdom from Your Undergraduate Program Coordinator, Dr. Brenda Sims Blackwell

With the start of a new academic year, students at Georgia State University are finding many changes. New buildings are on campus, new programs (football) are on the verge of emerging, and the campus, despite economic circumstances, seems to be brimming with energy. I am lucky to be taking over as the undergraduate coordinator for the Department of Criminal Justice from the capable hands of Dr. Sue Carter Collins, and I will continue to usher in changes initiated under her leadership.

The most obvious curricular change involves the official, university-wide implementation of the Critical Thinking through Writing (CTW) initiative. Students entering GSU this semester (as true freshmen and women or as transfer students) must complete two CTW courses within their major. Our department has piloted this program in two courses, Research Methods in Criminal Justice (CRJU 3020), and Internship Seminar in Criminal Justice (CRJU 4930), and faculty have been actively engaged in discussions about how to better prepare students to think critically and communicate their reasoning abilities through writing in our field. With the official start of CTW on campus this semester, our department and faculty are quite prepared to help students meet these requirements. A third course, Ethics in Criminal Justice (CRJU 4060), has been added to this fall, largely as a result of our internal assessment of CTW in the piloted courses. Within these courses you will find assignments designed to promote your independent and critical thinking skills and you will receive feedback designed to help you improve such skills. If you have questions about the deployment of CTW in our department, I would be happy, as the department's CTW Ambassador to answer your questions.

As the new Undergraduate Coordinator, and in line with advice students will be receiving from other sources, at the start of this new academic year I would like to remind students that faculty are here to assist you in your learning journey. However, I would also note that you must invest in your own education as well. To this end, you are encouraged to attend class (on time), to actively engage the materials recommended by their professors (in other words, read those books and articles), to come to class prepared, and to work hard. Dedicating yourself to your education and enlisting the resources of the department and its faculty will surely lead you towards successful completion of your degree. To use the words of Napoleon Hill, "Education comes from within; you get it by struggle and effort and thought." Welcome!