

FORM G
BOARD OF REGENTS, STATE OF IOWA
PROPOSAL FOR PROGRAM/DEPARTMENT NAME CHANGE

Institution: _____ Iowa State University _____

Current Title of Program/Department: _____ Department of Sociology _____

Proposed Title of Program/Department: _____ Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice _____

Name of College: _____ Liberal Arts & Sciences/Agriculture & Life Sciences _____

Approximate date to implement changes: Month _____ July _____ Year _____ 2021 _____

Contact person: (name, telephone, and e-mail) _____ Leana Bouffard, 515-294-3903, lab17@iastate.edu _____

Please do not use acronyms without defining them.

1. Describe reasons (justification) for the proposed changes.

Beginning in Fall 2016, the Department of Sociology at Iowa State University launched a new undergraduate major in Criminal Justice, becoming one of three distinct majors in the department (Sociology, Criminal Justice, Agriculture and Society). The faculty would like the department name to reflect its current composition, which includes students and faculty in the fields of both sociology and criminal justice. The faculty voted 20-1 in favor of changing the department title following the February 5, 2020 faculty meeting.

Therefore, the intent of this proposal is to:

- Change the name of our department from “Sociology” to “Sociology and Criminal Justice.”
- Better reflect our current curriculum and the current and future research of department faculty, which includes criminal justice.
- Better recruit and retain undergraduate and graduate students, as well as faculty interested in this discipline.

Supporting departmental information:

- Eight of the 21 tenured/tenure-track faculty in the department (38%) identify criminology/criminal justice as their major research focus.
- Fall 2019 undergraduate enrollments (first majors only)
 - Criminal Justice = 376
 - Sociology = 61
 - Agriculture & Society = 23
- Among the 26 current PhD/MS students, nine (35%) identify criminology/criminal justice as their primary area of interest.

2. How will the proposed change affect current students?

There will be no effect on current students in terms of their degree progression or major designation, since no curricular changes are being proposed. Incorporating criminal justice into the department title will be helpful to current and future students by more inclusively representing their area of

study. A sizable increase in enrollments and student credit hours (SCH) between Fall 2016 and Fall 2019 (from 96 to 376 for enrollments and from 2137 to 3687 for SCH) is a strong indicator of student interest in this major and these courses. Comments from undergraduate students indicate that a lack of “criminal justice” in the department name is confusing to them as they searched for a major or attempted to identify scholarships for which they are eligible. Recognition of this large major in the department name will also build community and aid retention of current students.

Given the national and state trends, the department name change at ISU will be in keeping with those at other Regents institutions and at other similarly-situated institutions (University of Iowa, Department of Sociology and Criminology; University of Northern Iowa, Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology). The Criminal Justice major at Iowa State University is popular, reflecting nationwide trends. “College Factual” identified Criminal Justice as the 5th most popular major in the nation (<https://www.collegefactual.com/majors/protective-security-safety-services/criminal-justice-and-corrections/>), and careers related to criminal justice are projected to continue growing into the next decade. A name change facilitates prospective students’ ability to identify ISU as a place that fits their educational and career goals. For graduate students, the department name may help attract students interested in graduate studies in the area of criminal justice and may help prospective students identify Iowa State as a place with faculty expertise in this area.

3. If relevant, have accreditation requirements been addressed?

There are no known accreditation issues.

4. If relevant, describe program configuration changes that will accompany the proposed program or department name change, e.g., change in number of credit hours required, faculty appointments, etc.

There will be no program configuration changes.

5. If relevant, identify resources that will be needed in connection with the proposed program or department name change, e.g., facilities, faculty, funds, etc.

No costs will be incurred beyond the time needed to update university records, systems, signage, and catalog as well as internal departmental documents to reflect the name change.

6. Is this intended to be a temporary or permanent change? If temporary, for how long?

This is a permanent change.

October 23, 2020

Dear Senior Vice President and Provost Wickert,

We are writing on behalf of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences to request your support to rename the Department of Sociology to the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice. The Department is co-administered by our colleges; we both recommend this name change.

The attached Regents Form G lays out the central justification for this request. The colleges recommend this change not only to better reflect current and future research of the faculty in the department, but also to help students in the criminal justice major identify the department as their academic home. This name change is also in step with the more complex department names of our sister Regents Institutions: University of Iowa, Department of Sociology and Criminology; and University of Northern Iowa, Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology.

The faculty of the department discussed this proposal at length and 20 of the 21 faculty voted in support of this name change. That vote happened back in February 2020; our process of reviewing the proposal was disrupted by the pandemic and we are glad to now have the opportunity to bring this request forward in accordance with the policy laid out in chapter 2, section 8 of the Faculty Handbook.

The colleges support this straightforward request of the department faculty. The costs of this renaming are minimal and the benefits to faculty and student recruitment and retention are significant. We look forward to continuing to work with your office through this process.

Respectfully,



Beate Schmittmann
Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences



Daniel J. Robison
Dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences