

Find out how to prove — and improve — the effectiveness of your Criminal Justice program with the ETS® Major Field Tests.

Content Validity

The Major Field Test in Criminal Justice, first administered in 2001, assesses mastery of concepts, principles and knowledge by graduating Criminal Justice students. To ensure fairness and content relevance, the test is revised approximately every four to five years.

Developed by Leading Educators in the Field

Experienced faculty members representing all the relevant areas of the discipline determine test specifications, questions and types of scores reported. ETS assessment experts subject each question to rigorous tests of sensitivity and reliability. Every effort is made to include questions that assess the most common and important topics and skills.

In addition to factual knowledge, the test evaluates students' abilities to analyze and solve problems, understand relationships and interpret material. Questions that require interpretation of graphs, diagrams and charts are included. Academic departments may add up to two subgroups and as many as 50 additional locally written questions to test areas of the discipline that may be unique to the department or institution.

National Comparative Data

A *Comparative Data Guide*, published each year, contains tables of scaled scores and percentiles for individual student scores, departmental mean scores and any subscores or group assessment indicators that the test may support. The tables of data are drawn from senior-level test takers at a large number of diverse institutions. Nearly 1,500 colleges and universities employ one or more of the Major Field Tests for student achievement and curriculum evaluation each year.

Who Develops the MFT in Criminal Justice?

Individuals who serve or recently have served on the Committee for the MFT in Criminal Justice are faculty members from the following institutions:

Chadron State College
Indiana University Northwest
James Madison University
Texas Christian University
University of Louisville
University of South Alabama

For more information about the MFT in Criminal Justice:

Phone: **1-800-745-0269**
Email: **highered@ets.org**
Visit: **www.ets.org/mft**

Educational Testing Service
Rosedale Road
Princeton, NJ 08541

Test Content — Criminal Justice

The Major Field Test in Criminal Justice consists of 150 multiple-choice questions, some of which are grouped in sets and based on such materials as diagrams, graphs and statistical data. Most of the questions require knowledge of specific information about the criminal justice system, but the test also draws on the student's critical-thinking ability — that is, the ability to interpret data, to apply concepts and ideas, and to analyze data, theories and relationships, deductively and inductively.

The broad field of criminal justice encompasses many subfields and specialties; this test covers the skills and subject matter included in most undergraduate programs. Programs can choose when and where to administer the tests. It is designed to take two hours and may be split into two sessions. This test must be given by a proctor. Mathematical operations do not require the use of a calculator. The distribution of the content areas with some examples of the topics covered is as follows:

The Test Outline

I. The Law (~20%)

- A. Civil vs. criminal law
- B. Defining a crime (elements of a crime)
- C. Defenses
- D. Constitutional law
- E. Major alterations to the law
- F. The sociology of law
- G. The philosophy of law
- H. Criminal liability

II. Law Enforcement (~20%)

- A. Social function of the police
- B. Role of the community in defining the police role
- C. History of the police in the United States
- D. Critical issues including corruption
- E. Investigative techniques
- F. Police subculture (informal)
- G. Police organization and management (formal)
- H. International issues and terrorism

III. Corrections (~20%)

- A. History and philosophy of corrections
- B. Juvenile vs. adult systems of corrections
- C. Probation and parole
- D. Theories of punishment
- E. Prison organization and management
- F. Issues and trends (including privatization)
- G. Community corrections

IV. The Court System in the United States (~20%)

- A. History of the court system in the United States
- B. Pre-trial issues

- C. Plea bargaining
- D. Courtroom culture (the actors)
- E. Sentencing
- F. Organization and management
- G. Judicial decision making
- H. Juvenile justice

V. Theories of Criminal Behavior (~20%)

- A. Classical theories
- B. Positivist theories
- C. Conflict theories
- D. Integrated theories

VI. Critical Thinking (overlapping and drawn from all content areas above): Critical-thinking questions are integrated into the entire test. The questions require students to:

- A. Draw inferences from theories and data
- B. Recognize unstated assumptions
- C. Deduce conclusions from information presented in statements or premises
- D. Interpret and weigh evidence as to whether asserted conclusions are warranted
- E. Evaluate the strengths of comparative arguments regarding a specific issue
- F. Apply knowledge to new problems
- G. Read and interpret tables of data and graphs
- H. Recognize the strengths and limitations of both quantitative and qualitative data
- I. Compare and contrast subjects and ideas
- J. Understand ethics in criminal justice practice

VII. Research Methodology and Statistics (overlapping and drawn from all content areas above): Research methodology and statistics questions are integrated into the entire test. The questions require students to understand:

- A. Quantitative and qualitative methods
- B. Research design (including basic and applied approaches and ethics in research)
- C. Statistics with application to criminal justice subject matter
- D. Sampling
- E. Statistical software
- F. Hypothesis testing

How scores for the Major Field Test in Criminal Justice are reported:

Total Score — Reported for each student and summarized for the group

Assessment Indicators — Reported for the group* only

- Theory (30)
- The Law (30)
- Law Enforcement (30)
- Corrections (30)
- The Court System (30)
- Critical Thinking (37)
- Research Methodology and Statistics (15)

Numbers in parentheses are the approximate number of questions in each category.

* A minimum of five (5) students is required for assessment indicators to be reported.