

Program Change Proposal: MA, Police Graduate Studies Program to MA, to Law Enforcement Executive Leadership (by Thomas Shea, Program Director)

Program Overview, Rationale, and Expectations

The Police Graduate Studies Program first underwent a review by an External Advisory Board in 2012, delineating multiple recommendations to redesign and update the program. As a result of that report, I wrote an innovation proposal and submitted it to the Dean in 2020 (attached). Some of the many goals (expectations) identified for the new master's program:

- To grow by expanding recruitment efforts nationwide,
- To redesign courses to meet the needs of today's law enforcement leader
- To determine how we can better differentiate ourselves in a crowded market of law enforcement focused graduate programs
- To develop a program with increased representation (for both faculty and students) of formerly under-represented members of the law enforcement community, including veterans, females, and minorities.
- To innovate the program to reflect modern policing in terms of technology, diversity, and globalization.
- To develop fresh course offerings by leverage pedagogies that address contemporary public safety needs and learning outcomes, thus strengthening the degree program as a whole.
- To assess alternative and convenient instruction methodologies to attract a geographically broader student body population.

Internal and External Market Assessment

The faculty in the Police Graduate Studies Program (Drs. Manuel Gonzalez and Thomas Shea) continuously gathered information to create the new curriculum. After analyzing similar markets, including comparable programs at William Paterson University, John Jay College, and Fairleigh Dickinson University, we propose adjusting the curriculum in the master's programs to better align with the current needs of law enforcement leaders. We are proud to state that we believe our new curriculum is unique to comparable programs, which narrowly focus on criminal justice elements of policing without considering other aspects of law enforcement in their curricula (e.g., personnel issues, leadership, homeland security). The process to innovate the curriculum originated after conducting the following process:

- First, we compiled a list of current policing needs from an extensive review of the research.
- Second, we surveyed our current Police Graduate students, adjuncts (many of whom are high-ranking police professionals in the field), and members of our External Advisory Board (again, many current and former law-enforcement leaders) to rank the topics in order of importance in police practice today.
- We triangulated the results. The result is a curriculum that addresses the complex needs of the current law enforcement executive working in the field today. All courses are designed to make operational decisions based on evidence-based research.

Table 1 shows the old curriculum. Many of the courses had not been updated through QM in years and many of the textbooks were outdated:

Table 1

Original Curriculum: M.A., Police Graduate Studies Program

Course of Study

Students are required to complete 18 foundational credits and 18 concentration credits.

A. Foundation (18 credits)

Required:

ELMP 6006	Ethical Foundations in the Helping Professions	3
HRTD 6501	Introduction to Human Resources Training and Development	3
HRTD 6502	Adult Learning	3
HRTD 6503	Design and Evaluation of HRTD Programs	3
HRTD 7100	Selected Topics (Final Research/Case Study)	3
HRTD 8891	Directed Research	3

Select two of the following courses: (6 credits)

HRTD 6504	Performance Analysis	3
HRTD 6505	Performance Improvement Strategies	3
HRTD 6506	Consulting Skills	3

Select two of the following courses: (6 credits)

EDST 6306	Instructional Design	3
EDST 6665	Curriculum Development and Evaluation	3
EDST 6666	Supervision of Instruction	3
EDST 7776	Curriculum Design and Engineering	3

Electives (6 credits) Select two of the following courses:

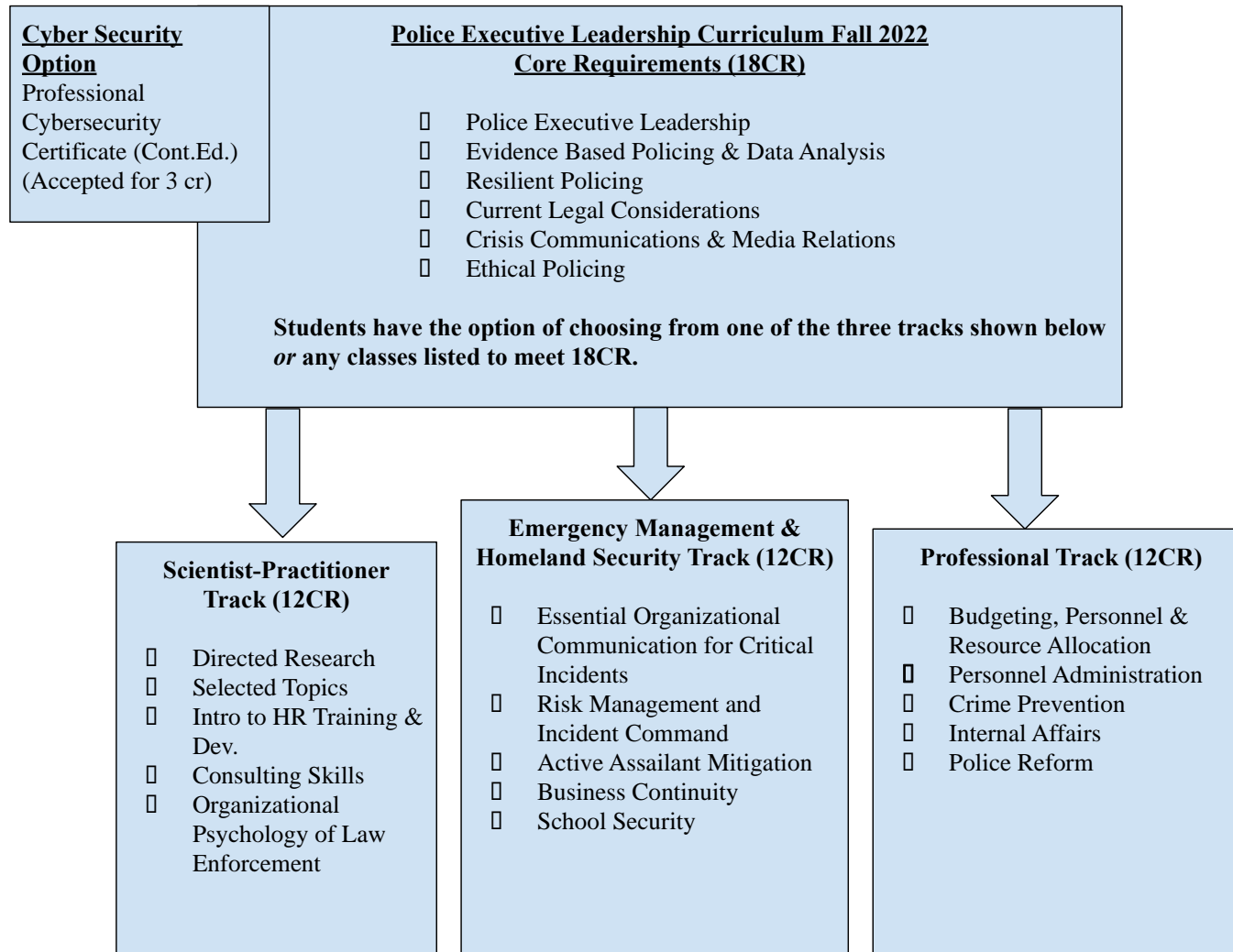
EDST 6323	Community Relations	3
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EDST 6324	Human Relations	3
EDST 6664	Current Legal Issues of Public Policies at State and Federal Levels	3
ELMP 6667	Personnel Administration	3
ELMP 6761	Finance in Administration	3
ELMP 6764	Principles of Public Sector Bargaining	3
ELMP 6765	Policy Analysis in Administration	3
ELMP 7762	Public Relations in Administration	3
ELMP 7768	Technology for Administrators	3
ELMP 7772	Leadership Dynamics	3
ELMP 8801	Interdisciplinary Studies for Administrators	3
ELMP 8891	Independent Study in Administration	3
ELMP 8892	Independent Study in Human Resources Training and Development	3

Proposed Program Updates

Based on our curriculum review, we determined that many of the courses above had substantial conceptual overlap or were too focused on contexts outside of policing for students to effectively apply the learning content to their work. An audit of some classes also revealed outdated course materials. Overall, our review indicated that an updated curriculum was needed in order to maintain the long-term success of the program. Figure 1 shows the ***MA, Law Enforcement Executive Program (PELC)*** that we propose to launch in Fall 2022, for the incoming class of master's students:

Figure 1



The new curriculum depicted above will consist of three "tracks" offered plus six core classes that all students must complete, regardless of track. Students can take all the electives in one track or choose from various tracks. The idea is to provide complete flexibility after completing the core classes, depending on the needs students feel are most necessary to succeed in their respective agencies. As you can observe by comparing the curriculum side-by-side, we chose to retain some traditional classes and added many new ones designed by subject matter experts from the field. TLTC evaluated both course updates and new courses through quality matters, with many more to follow in the Fall and Summer.

Additionally, we will be offering our classes in hybrid course delivery. Traditionally, unpredictable schedules often hindered many law-enforcement officers from taking college courses because of unforeseen events at work or rotating schedules. Although the new courses will be offered synchronously virtual, officers will be able to view a pre-recorded version if they cannot make the class due to work commitments. This change provides much more flexibility, allowing many more officers the opportunity to attain their degrees.

Lastly, before the proposed credit requirement curriculum change, the previous curriculum required students to complete a minimum of 36 credit hours. Students may transfer up to 6 credits not applied to previous degrees. We propose to reduce the credit requirement to 30 credits. We believe these changes will increase the program's appeal and help market it more competitively.

We proposed these changes in proposals to department faculty members of Education Leadership, Management & Policy and the EPC committee, which approved the program changes. Dr. Shea is currently compiling the signatures on the APC form and will get that to you as soon as all signatures are present.

Internal Impact

Currently, our program has the supports from the College of Education and Human Services and from the university, including the Provost. We seek to maintain these supports, and do not foresee additional needs for support beyond university and college assistance with marketing the updated program through a wide array of channels, in order to maximize student enrollment. We also do not foresee our program competing for students from other programs, and may actually aid with retention of some groups of students from the undergraduate level to the graduate level at the university. In particular, we foresee the updated curriculum as offering potential appeal to current undergraduate criminal justice students, which may prompt these students to remain at Seton Hall for graduate study in the Police Executive Leadership Program. Therefore, we foresee minimal resource demand on the university as a result of the proposed program change, and instead predict positive return on investment for the university in the form of increased graduate enrollment and student retention.

Lastly, given the unique context in which law enforcement members work, relative to members of other professions, we currently do not plan to cross-list our courses so that we can tailor course content specifically to policing contexts. Currently, the only exception would be to allow for students to apply credits from the cybersecurity certification program currently offered by Seton Hall, given the importance of this content area for modern policing.

Program Needs

We foresee minimal change needed in the university resources provided to our program from pre- to post-proposal. In addition to Drs. Gonzalez and Shea, we have various adjunct instructors designing and teaching courses, all of whom either possess doctorates or are doctoral candidates. Due to fully-virtual nature of the proposed program, we instead foresee reduced demand on university resources due to leveraging of currently-available online pedagogical technologies (e.g., Microsoft Teams, Blackboard).

Program Evaluation

To reiterate the core expectations of the proposed program, we seek...

1. To grow by expanding recruitment efforts nationwide,
2. To redesign courses to meet the needs of today's law enforcement leader
3. To better differentiate ourselves in a crowded market of law enforcement focused graduate programs
4. To develop a program with increased representation (for both faculty and students) of formerly under-represented members of the law enforcement community, including veterans, females, and minorities.
5. To innovate the program to reflect modern policing in terms of technology, diversity, and globalization.
6. To develop fresh course offerings by leverage pedagogies that address contemporary public safety needs and learning outcomes, thus strengthening the degree program as a whole.
7. To assess alternative and convenient instruction methodologies to attract a geographically broader student body population.

To ensure satisfactory progress toward the above objectives, we will...

1. Regularly evaluate enrollment numbers on a yearly basis at the end of the Spring semester (objective #1)
2. Maintain a log of instructors' course evaluations from the past academic year, which will be used to evaluate whether students' needs are sufficiently being met (objectives #2, #5, #6)
3. Expand the diversity of our students and faculty by leveraging a wider array of recruitment sources and techniques (see below; objective #4)
4. Conduct a yearly review of comparable programs in other universities, to ensure that we remain competitive (objectives #3, #6)

5. Conduct a 3-year follow-up evaluation survey with current program instructors, program advisory board members, and students to evaluate the comprehensiveness of the new curriculum and whether new courses should be added (objectives #2, #3, #5, #6)
6. Continually engage with TLTC to ensure that course offerings are appropriately leveraging modern instructional techniques and technologies (objective #7)

Once formally approved, we are currently conducting plans to launch several marketing initiatives:

- In late June, Dr. Gonzalez will be attending the New Jersey Chiefs of Police conference in Atlantic City, NJ, staffing an advertising booth to communicate the program changes.
- Dr. Shea will be attending and presenting at the International Association of Chiefs of Police conference in Dallas, Texas, and he will also offer program information at a booth afterward.
- Dr. Shea had a meeting with Linda Karten to discuss the marketing budget, attending conferences, and focus campaigns on nationwide police agencies with tuition reimbursement.
- Dean Martinelli and Dr. Shea had a meeting with Dean Boozang from the law school and Manfred Minimar (cybersecurity department) to create a cyber security track that caters to law enforcement needs. We also plan to offer continuing education courses to law-enforcement practitioners in the field who are not affiliated with Seton Hall, currently in development with Dean Passaro.
- After formal approval, one of the primary objectives is to create either a 3:2 or a 4:1 program with the undergraduate criminal justice department. The possibilities are endless in enrollment, mentoring, networking, internships, adjunct professors teaching undergrads, etc.

Finally, we plan to keep developing new courses (for which all necessary levels of approval would be sought, when ready), consistently reevaluate our current courses, and study student evaluations to improve the program further in the future. Again, I appreciate your consideration of our proposal. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need clarification regarding anything written here.

Thank you,



Tom Shea

Program Director-Police Graduate Studies

5/18/22