



Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State Colleges

Meeting Date: **June 11, 2026**

Agenda Item: **2.20**

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION:

Committee: **Academic & Personnel Committee**

Action Item: **Addition of a Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice - PSC**

The Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice degree is a fully online reduced credit pathway for aspiring criminal justice professionals seeking career advancement or accelerated entry into the workforce. The 90-credit program demonstrates Peru State College’s commitment to degree accessibility, student success, and a relevant, streamlined program suitable for criminal justice professionals prepared to advance into supervisory, analytical, and leadership roles in the workforce.

Two Options in the degree provide prescribed coursework to guide students in developing foundational principles within a high-intensity, accelerated format. The Public Safety, Leadership and Management Option is an academic specialization designed to prepare experienced public safety professionals for leadership and administrative roles. The Legal and Judicial Administration track prepares professionals to navigate the intersection of law, organizations, and public service by examining how legal frameworks and bureaucratic systems interact, equipping students for careers in court administration, compliance, and public policy. Through a variety of Selected Courses, including a Criminal Justice internship, students pursuing either Option have the opportunity to tailor the degree to their career aspirations and goals.

The System Office recommends the addition of a Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice at Peru State College.

ATTACHMENTS:

- New Program Proposal Reduced Credit Degree - Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice - PSC

Peru State College
Reduced-Credit Bachelor of Science Degree
Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice

1. Descriptive Information

- A. Name of Institution: Peru State College
- B. Name of Program: Applied Criminal Justice
- C. Degrees/credentials to be awarded graduates of the program: Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice
- D. Other programs offered in this field by the institution: Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice: Administration, Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice: Counseling, Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice: Legal Studies
- E. CIP code: 43.0100
- F. Administrative units for the program: School of Professional Studies
- G. Proposed delivery site(s) and type(s) of delivery, if applicable: Peru State College | Online Delivery
- H. Proposed date (term/year) the program will be initiated: Fall 2027
- I. Description of Program:
The Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice degree is a fully online pathway for aspiring criminal justice professionals seeking career advancement or accelerated entry into the workforce. The 90-credit program demonstrates Peru State College's commitment to degree accessibility, student success, and a relevant, streamlined program suitable for criminal justice professionals prepared to advance into supervisory, analytical, and leadership roles in the workforce.

Two Options in the degree provide prescribed coursework to guide students in developing foundational principles within a high-intensity, accelerated format. The Public Safety, Leadership and Management Option is an academic specialization designed to prepare experienced public safety professionals for leadership and administrative roles. The Legal and Judicial Administration track prepares professionals to navigate the intersection of law, organizations, and public service by examining how legal frameworks and bureaucratic systems interact, equipping students for careers in court administration, compliance, and public policy. Through a variety of Selected Courses, including a Criminal Justice internship, students pursuing either Option have the opportunity to tailor the degree to their career aspirations and goals.

The Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for the Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice are as follows:

- PLO 1: Students will gain foundational knowledge in the criminal justice field.
- PLO 2: Students will communicate effectively in both written and verbal form.
- PLO 3: Students will think critically to analyze issues in criminal justice.
- PLO 4: Students will use problem-solving skills to make informed decisions.
- PLO 5: Students will use fundamental technical skills in the criminal justice field.

Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice | Degree Requirements – 90 Credits Total

The Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice offers an academically rigorous and flexible pathway for students to earn a high-quality degree using the institution's existing courses.

Option 1 – Public Safety, Leadership and Management

The Public Safety, Leadership, and Management Option is a specialized academic track designed to bridge front-line expertise with executive-level administration to transform technical professionals into effective organizational leaders and managers. Students are prepared to pursue public safety roles that combine operational experience with management or administration. The accelerated format leverages students' professional experience while efficiently developing the knowledge and competencies necessary for immediate application.

Option 2 – Legal and Judicial Administration

The Legal and Judicial Administration track is designed for professionals who operate at the intersection of the courtroom, the boardroom, and the community. The curriculum moves the student from a "case-by-case" perspective to a "system-wide" perspective, preparing them for roles in court management, regulatory compliance, or public policy. While a law degree focuses on advocacy, this program focuses on the systems that allow justice to be administered efficiently, legally, and ethically. Modern judicial administration requires more than an understanding of statutes; it requires an understanding of how bureaucratic structures and legal frameworks interact.

Degree Requirements – 90 Credits Total

I. General Education Requirements – 30 Credits

Effective Communication	6-9 credits
Quantitative Learning	3-6 credits
Technology and Its Application	3 credits
Perspectives on Values, Thought and Aesthetics	3-6 credits
Methods of Inquiry and Explanatory Schema	6-7 credits
Cultural Literacy, Diversity and Equity	3 credits

II. Criminal Justice Core Requirements – 18 Credits

CJUS 110 Survey of Criminal Justice	3 credits
CJUS 330 Research Methods	3 credits
CJUS 340 Criminal Procedure & Courts	3 credits
CJUS 360 Criminology	3 credits
CJUS 385 Victimology	3 credits
CJUS 390 Ethics in Criminal Justice	3 credits

III. Options (30 Credits Each) & Selected Courses (12 Credits)

OPTION 1

Public Safety, Leadership and Management – 30 Credits

BUS 201 Organizational Communications	3 credits
BUS 365 Leadership Theory and Practices	3 credits
BUS 373 Organizational Behavior	3 credits
BUS 380 Human Resources Management	3 credits
BUS 381 Employee Training and Development	3 credits
BUS 493 Team Design & Performance	3 credits
CJUS 220 Introduction to Corrections	3 credits
CJUS 230 Policing	3 credits

CJUS 410 Juvenile Delinquency	3 credits
CJUS 495 Seminar in Criminal Justice	3 credits

Selected Courses – Choose 12 Credits

Corrections

CJUS 308 Community-Based Corrections	3 credits
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Cyber Security

CMIS 300 Information Systems Management	3 credits
CMIS 360 Cyber Security	3 credits

Law

BUS 251 Legal Environment/Contract Law	3 credits
BUS 252 Commercial Law	3 credits

Policing

CJUS 450 Criminalistics	3 credits
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Sociology

SOC 300 Contemporary Social Problems	3 credits
SOC 340 The Family	3 credits

Internship

CJUS 441 Criminal Justice Internship	3-12 credits
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OPTION 2

Legal and Judicial Administration – 30 Credits

BUS 201 Organizational Communications	3 credits
BUS 251 Legal Environment/Contract Law	3 credits
BUS 252 Commercial Law	3 credits
BUS 353 Organizational Ethics	3 credits
BUS 493 Team Design & Performance	3 credits
CMIS 101 Information Systems Concepts & Applications	3 credits
PSCI 201 American National Government	3 credits
PSCI 202 State and Local Government	3 credits
PSCI 426 American Constitutional Law	3 credits
SOC 300 Contemporary Social Problems	3 credits

Selected Courses – Choose 12 Credits

Corrections

CJUS 220 Introduction to Corrections	3 credits
CJUS 308 Community-Based Corrections	3 credits

Cyber Security

CMIS 300 Information Systems Management	3 credits
CMIS 360 Cyber Security	3 credits

Policing

CJUS 230 Policing	3 credits
CJUS 450 Criminalistics	3 credits

Sociology

SOC 300 Contemporary Social Problems	3 credits
SOC 340 The Family	3 credits

Internship

CJUS 441 Criminal Justice Internship	3-12 credits
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Within both Options, students can further accelerate degree completion through the College 201 Prior Learning/Life Experience Portfolio course, which awards academic credit for documented professional experience in the criminal justice field.

COLL 201: Prior Learning/Life Experience Portfolio Development – 1 credit

Experienced non-traditional students with significant prior learning through workplace experiences have the opportunity to take COLL 201: Prior Learning/Life Experience Portfolio Development, a one-credit class. This course allows students to document their prior learning acquired through experiences, which in turn creates an opportunity to be granted academic credit after faculty review of the respective student's portfolio.

PROGRAM COURSES & DESCRIPTIONS

All Criminal Justice Core Courses, Option Courses, and Selected Courses are pre-existing.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE CORE REQUIREMENTS | COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

CJUS 110 Survey of Criminal Justice | 3 Credit Hours

This course introduces students to general criminal justice concepts and knowledge about the relationships of crime and criminal behavior. The purpose, role, and interrelationships of the police, other law enforcement officials, the courts and judiciary, corrections, and parole systems are discussed.

CJUS 330 Research Methods | 3 Credit Hours

This is an introductory course that concentrates on research methods and designs and statistical analysis procedures used in research projects. This course demonstrates how research methods are utilized in the criminal justice field. Prerequisites: CJUS 110, STAT 210

CJUS 340 Criminal Procedures & Courts | 3 Credit Hours

This course provides an overview of the structure and functions of the criminal court system in the United States, including county, state, federal, and specialized courts. The roles of court personnel, case flow management, a variety of issues confronting the court system, court standards as compared to actual functioning, and court reform measures are studied. Constitutional rules regarding evidence, search and seizure, interrogations and confessions, and suspect identification guidelines receive significant attention. Constitutional rights, remedies, post-trial appeal processes, and criminal procedure during times of crisis receive consideration.

CJUS 360 Criminology | 3 Credit Hours

This course examines the nature and causes of crime as a social phenomenon. Prerequisite: CJUS 110

CJUS 385 Victimology | 3 Credit Hours

This course focuses on the theoretical perspectives of victimization, the scope of victimization in the United States, the justice system's response, victim's rights, restorative justice, and research and

evaluation findings. Being exposed to and understanding victimization issues enhances students' knowledge about a comprehensive system of justice rather than a "criminal's justice system."

CJUS 390 Ethics in Criminal Justice | 3 Credit Hours

This course will focus on ethical principles and concepts as they apply to elements of the criminal justice system. Special focus will be assigned to the three major areas of criminal justice: police, courts, and corrections. Students will learn about general philosophical theories and ethics designed to govern both individual behavior and institutions as a whole. Students will be provided with a framework for making ethical decisions in order to be successful practitioners in the field of criminal justice.

OPTION 1: PUBLIC SAFETY, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT | COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

BUS 201 Organizational Communications | 3 Credit Hours

In this course, students study communication foundations, the writing process, and communicating through letters, memorandums, and E-mail messages. The culminating activities permit the students to understand research methods, to design effective organizational communication documents including a resume and cover letter, and to design and deliver a team and individual presentation.

BUS 365 Leadership Theory and Practice | 3 Credit Hours

This course offers a theoretical view and practical approach to studying leadership. Conceptual-based aspects will include introducing various leadership styles, tactics, and theories. For practical application, students will also have the opportunity to learn more about their own tendencies in leadership scenarios and/or experiences based upon case study work and leadership assessments.

BUS 373 Organizational Behavior | 3 Credit Hours

This course presents the foundations of the history, theory, and applications of organizational behavior in the areas of personality, stress, motivation, job design, goal setting, learning theory, behavior modification, group behavior, power, leadership, organizational structure, decision-making, and control.

BUS 380 Human Resources Management | 3 Credit Hours

Students will gain an understanding of the basic concepts associated with human resource management and learn how to plan and implement strategies for efficient management of a firm's most critical resources - employees. Recruiting, selecting, evaluating, developing, and compensating employees is emphasized, while legal issues, managing in a union environment and contemporary issues in human resources management will also be covered.

BUS 381 Employee Training & Development | 3 Credit Hours

This course is designed to assist students in the study of corporate training. Topics include needs assessment, relevant education theories and program design, transfer of training, traditional training methods, use of new technologies in training, and follow-up and evaluation of costs and benefits of training.

BUS 493 Team Design & Performance | 3 Credit Hours

This course examines the design and performance of work and decisional teams including team composition, authority, communication, roles, support, and leadership. This course will prepare the student to be a successful team member and leader by exploring team evolution, self-management, and conflict resolution.

CJUS 220 Introduction to Corrections | 3 Credit Hours

This course is a general introductory course that describes the history and development of corrections in America, the various aspects of correctional practices, and issues and perspectives affecting institutional life within the correctional system. Organizational and administrative practices are examined. Prerequisite: CJUS 110

CJUS 230 Policing | 3 Credit Hours

This course covers the major roles of the police in American society. The course investigates the origins of policing and law enforcement, police organization, the functions of police in society, and the polices' relationships to the various components of the criminal justice system. Issues confronting police administration are discussed. Prerequisite: CJUS 110

CJUS 410 Juvenile Delinquency | 3 Credit Hours

This course focuses on the nature and extent of delinquent acts and status offenses historically, theoretical approaches to explain why these behaviors develop including environmental/contextual approaches to explanation, and how the justice system and society legally respond. A variety of cultural and social factors related to delinquency are examined, along with program implications for prevention and intervention. Prerequisite: CJUS 110

CJUS 495 Seminar in Criminal Justice | 3 Credit Hours

This course requires students to use critical thinking, research, oral and written communication skills to investigate, discuss and explain how major criminal justice theories contribute to an understanding of deviant, delinquent or abnormal behaviors and crime. Particular emphasis is placed on discussion and evaluation of contemporary problems facing one of the elements of the criminal justice system; law enforcement, courts, and corrections. This senior level seminar is the capstone experience and senior competency course for criminal justice students and should be taken in the last year of study. Prerequisite: Senior Standing

OPTION 1: SELECTED COURSES | COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**CJUS 308 Community-Based Corrections | 3 Credit Hours**

This course focuses on correctional processes and strategies regarding probation, parole, juveniles, diversion, and other innovative approaches applied in a community setting. Prerequisite: CJUS 110

CMIS 300 Information Systems Management | 3 Credit Hours

This course introduces concepts of systems management from a business viewpoint and an information systems viewpoint. Students utilize graphical tools including flowcharts to examine business and information systems processes. Fundamental programming concepts are introduced including algorithms, data types, control structures and Boolean logic. An overview of project management including critical path and dependencies is introduced.

CMIS 360 Cyber Security | 3 Credit Hours

Fundamentals of information security are addressed. Current issues as well as historical incidents will be examined to assess vulnerabilities and provide solutions and countermeasures. Topics include identification and authentication, access control, security models, and operating system integrity. Security is considered from macro and micro scales and from virtual to physical intrusions. Costs, potential liabilities, and other issues with data leakage are explored. This course is designed so students of any major with an interest in Cyber Security may take the course. Prerequisite: CMIS 101

BUS 251 Legal Environment & Contract Law | 3 Credit Hours

This course examines the sources and origins of law and the legal system, legal processes, and fundamental legal principles, with an emphasis on the obligations of parties to a contract.

BUS 252 Commercial Law | 3 Credit Hours

This course examines the legal principles covering sales contracts and negotiable instruments under the Uniform Commercial Code, property ownership, bailments, corporations, partnerships, and other business organizations. Prerequisite: BUS 251

CJUS 450 Criminalistics | 3 Credit Hours

This course introduces students to the basics of forensic science, focusing on the legal and procedural methods of evidence and evidence collection techniques to include fingerprint collection and analysis, firearms identification, gunshot residue, tool marks, footprint and tire mark impressions, forensic serology, blood spatter evidence, forensic photography, DNA theory and analysis, and electronic surveillance issues.

SOC 300 Contemporary Social Problems | 3 Credit Hours

This course is an introduction to the causes, treatment, and prevention of selected social problems with particular emphasis on the problems of conflict and inequality. Social problems tend to be those issues, situations, behaviors, and ideas labeled as problematic and in need of an immediate solution. In this course, we will not only be learning what constitutes a social problem, but why. More specifically, why few labeled social problems receive more attention than others do and how politics and the media play a role in this determination.

SOC 340 The Family | 3 Credit Hours

This course provides an examination of the role of the family in contemporary society with an emphasis on the factors influencing the family structure, functions, and roles, and their implications for both the community and individuals at varying stages of the family life cycle.

CJUS 441 Criminal Justice Internship | 3-12 Credit Hours

This course is designed for students to explore and gain work experience related to their major and anticipated career goals. Students may enroll for 1-12 hours of graded credit. A minimum of forty-five hours of work experience will be required for each hour of credit per semester. The student will complete necessary paperwork with the employer and the Internship Supervisor. No more than 12 credit hours of internship credit may be counted towards graduation requirements. Prerequisites: 45 completed credit hours and good academic standing.

OPTION 2: LEGAL AND JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION | COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**BUS 201 Organizational Communications | 3 Credit Hours**

In this course, students study communication foundations, the writing process, and communicating through letters, memorandums, and E-mail messages. The culminating activities permit the students to understand research methods, to design effective organizational communication documents including a resume and cover letter, and to design and deliver a team and individual presentation.

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This course examines the legal principles covering sales contracts and negotiable instruments under the Uniform Commercial Code, property ownership, bailments, corporations, partnerships, and other business organizations. Prerequisite: BUS 251

BUS 353 Organizational Ethics | 3 Credit Hours

This course applies ethical concepts and principles to moral issues in business: corporate responsibility, discrimination, advertising, competition, whistleblowing, trade-secrets, multinationals, environment, workers' rights, government regulation, investment, bribes, product liability, and consumerism.

BUS 493 Team Design & Performance | 3 Credit Hours

This course examines the design and performance of work and decisional teams including team composition, authority, communication, roles, support, and leadership. This course will prepare the student to be a successful team member and leader by exploring team evolution, self-management, and conflict resolution.

CMIS 101 Information Systems Concepts & Applications | 3 Credit Hours

This course is an introduction to basic computer concepts and the Windows-based spreadsheet, database, and presentation graphics software currently used in industry. Development of problem-solving and proficiency using selected commercial software packages are stressed.

PSCI 201 American National Government | 3 Credit Hours

This course includes a comparative analysis of political systems and institutions of several nations; the nations studied may change with each offering. The course emphasis is on political culture, comparative political history, chief executives, legislatures, political parties, interest groups, courts, and policy making with ample comparisons to the U.S.

PSCI 202 State & Local Government | 3 Credit Hours

This course includes description and analysis of political institutions and behavior in American states with interstate comparisons and comparisons between state and national political systems. Lecture topics include the development and role of American local government, its forms and structures, and the relationship to the federal government.

PSCI 426 American Constitutional Law | 3 Credit Hours

A study of the historical and political context of constitutional doctrine through major decisions. The emphasis is on constitutional growth as it relates to the fundamental structure of American government and the social order. Cross listed as HIST 426. Prerequisite: PSCI 201

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OPTION 2: SELECTED COURSES | COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**CJUS 220 Introduction to Corrections | 3 Credit Hours**

This course is a general introductory course that describes the history and development of corrections in America, the various aspects of correctional practices, and issues and perspectives affecting

institutional life within the correctional system. Organizational and administrative practices are examined. Prerequisite: CJUS 110

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2. Centrality to Role and Mission

The Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice program at Peru State College is grounded in the institution's mission to *"provide students of all backgrounds access to engaging educational experiences to strengthen and enrich communities, Nebraska, and the world."* In alignment with this mission and the Nebraska State College System's priorities of accessibility, efficiency, and workforce responsiveness, the program is designed to prepare students for meaningful, impactful careers across the criminal justice field.

Consistent with the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education's (CCPE) Comprehensive State Plan for Postsecondary Education, the degree reflects Peru State College's response to changing academic, workforce, economic, and community development needs. Peru State College has been a longstanding provider of criminal justice education and continues to play a vital role in meeting regional workforce needs. The proposed program emphasizes both academic rigor and practical skill development, ensuring graduates enter the field with a solid understanding of justice systems, professional ethics, and evidence-based practices. Students benefit from strong partnerships with local, regional, and state criminal justice agencies, particularly within corrections and law enforcement.

Through these relationships and a curriculum focused on real-world application, the program equips students to become workforce-ready professionals prepared to address the ongoing personnel shortages within Nebraska's criminal justice system. Graduates leave the program with the knowledge, competencies, and experience necessary to positively contribute to the safety and well-being of communities across the state and beyond.

3. Evidence of Need and Demand

A. Need for the Program:

The criminal justice field is experiencing a significant demand for professionals due to various factors, including the need for skilled individuals to ensure community safety and security. The field is evolving with new technologies, social dynamics, and global threats, leading to new challenges and opportunities. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the career outlook for criminal justice graduates is promising with expected job growth in the fields of law enforcement and related sectors. In addition, approximately 31,900 correctional officer and bailiff positions are projected to open annually over the next decade, primarily due to workforce turnover and retirements.

Through discipline-specific coursework focused on applied learning, the proposed Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice program prepares working adults and those with prior experience in the field to meet workforce demands of the criminal justice industry. The program offers an efficient and flexible route to complete a bachelor's degree and advance into supervisory, analytical, and leadership roles in the criminal justice workforce.

A bachelor's degree provides clear, measurable financial and career advantages for law enforcement professionals. Multiple states and municipalities directly link higher education to compensation, promotion, and retention incentives. Additionally, the National Institute of Justice recommends that

agencies require some form of college education for recruits. Building an educated workforce is advantageous for any agency locally, in the State of Nebraska, and in the United States. Although some positions in corrections do not require a bachelor's degree, the credential is necessary for professional advancement to supervisory or specialized positions, including those at the federal level.

The proposed Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice degree is aligned with the Nebraska State College System's initiatives in Corrections and Rural Law Enforcement Partnerships, supporting statewide workforce and educational priorities.

Option 1 – Public Safety, Leadership and Management

The Public Safety, Leadership and Management field offers a stable employment outlook with strong advancement potential. While overall job growth is moderate (around 3–5%), substantial annual openings, persistent workforce shortages, and increasing professionalization create meaningful opportunities for graduates prepared to assume supervisory and administrative roles. This Public Safety, Leadership & Management Option directly supports workforce trends emphasizing the professionalization of public safety careers, where advancement increasingly requires formal education combined with applied experience.

The curriculum's focus on crisis leadership, risk management, and interagency coordination reflects evolving industry expectations. Employers are seeking professionals equipped to manage complex emergencies, lead multidisciplinary teams, and implement data-informed strategies to enhance community safety and organizational resilience. Graduates will be well-positioned to transition from entry-level roles into mid- and upper-level leadership positions, including supervisory, administrative, and policy-oriented functions across government agencies, healthcare systems, higher education institutions, and private-sector security organizations.

Option 2 – Legal and Judicial Administration

The Legal and Judicial Administration Option addresses a sustained workforce need within the legal and judicial system at the state, regional, and national levels. Employment in legal occupations is projected to grow at a rate comparable to the national average from 2024 to 2034, with approximately 83,800 annual job openings driven by both employment growth and the need to replace workers who exit the field. This steady demand reflects the ongoing need for professionals who support legal processes and ensure the effective administration of justice. [Legal Occupations : Occupational Outlook Handbook: : U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)

Within this broader occupational category, legal and judicial administration roles—including court administrators, case management specialists, and court clerks—are essential to the functioning of the judicial system. These positions directly support the efficient progression of civil and criminal cases by ensuring accurate documentation, adherence to procedural requirements, and timely case disposition. [Court Administrator Training, Jobs, Salary | Court Careers](#), [Court Administration and Services Careers](#)
The Legal and Judicial Administration Option directly supports workforce development priorities by preparing graduates for in-demand roles that are critical to the efficient and effective administration of justice.

B. Demand for the Program:

The demand for reduced-credit, career-focused bachelor's degrees reflects broad shifts in higher education rather than traditional measures of student demand. This alternative degree structure better serves the needs of today's learners by emphasizing affordability, flexibility, and workforce alignment. As such, student demand will likely increase as more reduced-credit degree programs are approved and implemented nationally.

The proposed Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice program does not replace the 120-credit Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice; rather, it adds a fully online pathway for aspiring criminal justice professionals seeking career advancement or accelerated entry into the workforce. Because the program is designed for adult learners who are working professionals, only a small number of students are expected to shift from the traditional pathway to the accelerated option. An estimated 6.5% of the current criminal justice student body may be affected, primarily those online students already employed in the field who may find the 90-credit program better aligned with their needs and goals.

Current Enrollment in the Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice Degree: 91

- * On Campus Students: 56
- * Online Students: 35

The program is fully viable and ready for implementation, with all courses already established and sufficient enrollment capacity. Qualified full-time and part-time faculty are in place and prepared to deliver the curriculum. With adequate marketing and promotion, enrollment in the program is anticipated to increase significantly in the next five years:

Academic Year	Expected Total Enrollment in the Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice Degree
2026/27	5 students
2027/28	15 students
2028/29	25 students
2029/30	30 students
2030/31	35 students

4. Adequacy of Resources

A. Faculty and Staff Resources:

There is no need for additional faculty or staff to implement the Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice degree. Criminal Justice courses in the proposed program are taught by three full-time criminal justice faculty and several part-time faculty. Together, these faculty have a wide variety of experience in corrections, forensic science, probation and parole, law enforcement, and law. Academic advising will be provided by full-time faculty and the online academic advisor in the School of Professional Studies.

B. Physical Facilities:

Since this program is offered fully online, there are no anticipated costs related to physical facilities.

C. Instructional Equipment and Informational Resources:

Instructional equipment and informational resources necessary for the proposed online program are already in place and available. Examples include instructor computers and laptops, Internet access and connectivity, a learning management system (Canvas) for course delivery, IT/Computer Services support, and assistance from the Academic Technology department.

D. Budget Projections for the first five years of program:

This new degree offering represents an expansion of Peru State College's academic portfolio; however, the Criminal Justice major is already established as a traditional baccalaureate program. The reduced-credit format leverages existing coursework, faculty expertise, and institutional resources. With the exception of inflation, salary increases, and marketing costs to be determined, minimal budgetary

impacts are expected. Projected enrollment targets for the next five years are structured to promote steady and sustainable program growth.

5. Avoidance of Unnecessary Duplication

Within the Nebraska State College System, Chadron State College plans to offer the Reduced-Credit Bachelor of Arts Degree in Applied Justice Studies with Options in Corrections, Law Enforcement, and Paralegal Studies to serve the State of Nebraska and the High Plains Region. Within the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), Southeast Missouri State University offers a 90-credit Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice. Johnson & Wales University in Rhode Island also offers a three-year reduced-credit Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice.

6. Program Differentiation (to be completed if a traditional pathway for the major already exists):

The learning outcomes for the proposed program differ slightly from those of the traditional program due to their focus on applied learning and the most relevant, practice-oriented outcomes such as ethical decision-making, procedural knowledge, critical analysis, and technical skills. This focus allows working criminal justice professionals to directly connect coursework to their daily responsibilities, strengthening practical skills while reinforcing theoretical knowledge. Because these students are already engaged in the field, applied learning deepens understanding, supports immediate on-the-job application, and enhances readiness for supervisory or specialized roles.

Program competencies are streamlined through 18 credit hours of Criminal Justice Core Requirements and 30 credit hours of General Education Requirements. Two 30-credit Options in the degree provide prescribed coursework to guide students in developing foundational principles in a high-intensity, accelerated format. The Public Safety, Leadership and Management Option is an academic specialization designed to prepare experienced public safety professionals for leadership and administrative roles. The Legal and Judicial Administration track prepares professionals to navigate the intersection of law, organizations, and public service by examining how legal frameworks and bureaucratic systems interact, equipping students for careers in court administration, compliance, and public policy.

Through a variety of Selected Courses, including a Criminal Justice internship, students have the opportunity to tailor the degree to their career aspirations and goals. Students can further accelerate degree completion through the College 201 Prior Learning/Life Experience Portfolio course, which awards academic credit for documented professional experience in the criminal justice field.

7. Accreditation, Quality Assurance, and Regulatory Considerations

The Criminal Justice Program at Peru State College is institutionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and does not require separate programmatic accreditation. The proposed reduced-credit bachelor's degree meets all applicable HLC standards and adheres to the same quality assurance processes as the traditional program.

The Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice degree enhances preparation for a range of criminal justice certifications by aligning academic competencies with industry expectations. The proposed degree is a solid pathway to the 120-credit Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice with the completion of 30 additional credit hours.

8. Consistency with the Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education

The proposed program demonstrates direct alignment with the Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education by advancing statewide goals related to educational attainment, cost-effectiveness, and access to high-quality postsecondary learning opportunities.

As an additional educational opportunity, the proposed Bachelor of Science in Applied Criminal Justice program at Peru State College supports Nebraska's Educational Attainment Goal that at least seventy percent of 25- to 34-year-old Nebraskans have a degree, certificate, diploma, or other postsecondary or industry-recognized credential with economic value by 2030 (Legislative Resolution 335, 107th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2022).