

I. GENERAL PURPOSE/AUDIENCE

The Criminal Justice field studies official and unofficial responses to criminal and delinquent behavior, while criminology focuses on theories that explain criminal and delinquent behavior. This is a multi-disciplinary field (combining sociology, political science, public administration, psychology, history, and/or law) with a focus on justice and justice policies. Writing is used to inform, explain, document, persuade, or make a request of an audience. Specialty fields within this discipline include law enforcement, juvenile justice, corrections, law and courts, homeland security, and justice administration. Audiences include peers, supervisors, readers of professional and academic publications, and members of the court system, such as defense attorneys, prosecutors, and judges.

II. TYPES OF WRITING

- Research papers
- Analytical essays
- Argumentative essays
- Investigative reports
 - Crime, Arrest, Incident and Accident reports; pre-sentence reports for court
- Administrative reports
- Policy memos
- Case briefs and legal briefs
 - Description of case with key issues, relevant facts, related court decisions; analysis and interpretation; legal principles
- Case plans/Case notes
 - Memos to public defenders, prosecutors, judges, probation officers, social workers, treatment providers

III. TYPES OF EVIDENCE

- Quantitative, qualitative, historical and legal evidence
- Interviews, observation, survey, narrative analysis, experiments
- Analysis of demographics, statistics, legalities, geography and history
- Theory-based evidence or history of theory and criminal justice policy
- Both primary and secondary sources

IV. WRITING CONVENTIONS

- Incorporate independent thought within student papers and essays
- Focus on accurate and concise data in professional writing
- Gather, synthesize, and analyze evidence from various sources
- Interpret theory and apply it to practice and practice to theory
- Ensure writing is clear, concise, accurate, objective, and well organized with clear statement of purpose and main points
- Be mindful of using appropriate voice, tone and format in regards to both purpose and audience

- Present facts in an objective, balanced manner; accuracy is crucial
- Understand that factual description is important (dates, times, locations; identifiers of people involved)
- Remember first person is rarely used in research, reports memos, briefings or analysis
- Note that although memos may include *I*, recommendations must be based on analysis of evidence, not personal opinion or bias
- Use active voice; paraphrase rather than use long, quoted material

V. COMMON TERMS AND CONCEPTS

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| Actus Reus | Lay Witness |
| Acquittal | Legality |
| Alibi | Mens Reas |
| Appeal | Miranda Rights |
| Arson | Misdemeanor |
| Capital Punishment | Nolo Contendere |
| Causation | Parole |
| Concurrence | Plea Bargaining |
| Criminology | Procedural Law |
| Defense Counsel | Prosecution |
| Due Diligence | Public Defender |
| Ethics | Public Policy |
| Evidentiary | Punishment |
| Expert Witness | Recidivism |
| Federal Court System | State Court System |
| Felony | Subpoena |
| Harm | Substantive Law |
| Jurisdiction | Summons |
| Judge | Vigilante |
| Juror | Visible Crime |

VI. CITATION STYLE

- APA (American Psychological Association) or CMS (Chicago Manual of Style)
- *Bluebook* style may be used for briefs: used by courts, law schools, and attorneys