

Message from the Chair

Welcome to the latest issue of Criminal Justice News! In this issue we highlight some of the department accomplishments during the 2016-2017 academic year and provide updates on plans for the 2017-2018 academic year.

The 2016-2017 academic year was a very busy and productive one for the Department of Criminal Justice : Criminology. More than 100 students received our degree, including five MA and PhD students. The number of undergraduate students in our program exceeds 900 (including 150 online students) who have selected CJ as either a first or second major or minor. We offered more classes than ever before, and they were all filled. We offered additional seated and online summer classes and several online classes during the December Intersession in an effort to help students matriculate in a timely manner.

Highlights of the year include the fourth annual Study Abroad trip, which was led by Melanie Neuilly. This year Dr. Neuilly plans to take students to Amsterdam in the early summer, allowing more time than the previous trips during spring break. The annual department awards ceremony, hosted by Alpha Phi Sigma, was a success and the faculty had the happy opportunity to hand out more scholarship funds than ever before, thanks to several very generous donations from our CRMJ alumni. The department will continue to seek funds for undergraduate and graduate student scholarships. This year, the department is soliciting funds for a new graduate student scholarship, named after long-time professor Dr. Otwin (Otto) Marenin.

Department faculty had an outstanding year in research. The Washington State Institute for Criminal Justice Research continues to collaborate with the Washington Department of Corrections and other state agencies and the department has established a working relationship with the Oregon Youth Authority. OYA is generously providing funds to support one PhD student a year as a research assistant, and this student will work on projects of mutual interest to the OYA and the department.

The department also obtained grant funding for several new research projects, including a study of procedure and body-worn cameras in Covington, Washington—a project funded by the Washington Traffic Safety Commission. Work continues on the three-year, \$1 million National Institute of Justice (NIJ) grant received by the department in January 2017. This grant, which includes several faculty members (led by Dr. Mary Stohr) and a number of graduate students, is to examine the impact of marijuana legalization on law enforcement practice and policy in Washington and neighboring states.

Faculty and graduate students presented their research at several conferences, including the Academy of

Criminal Justice Sciences meeting in New Orleans, the American Society of Criminology meeting in Philadelphia and the Western Association of Criminal Justice meeting held this year just up the road in Spokane. Faculty and graduate students published several books and a number of articles.

Last year was very busy and very productive. This year looks to be every bit as busy and even more productive. We look forward to working with everyone to make the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology one of the leading departments at Washington State University and in the nation.

Craig Hemmens