

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 2015-2016 academic year, and provide updates on plans for the 2016-2017 academic year.

The 2015-2016 academic year was very busy and productive for the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology. We saw more than 120 undergraduates obtain the degree, as well as a number of MA and PhD students. The number of undergraduate students in the program remains in excess of 850 (including 150 students) who have selected CRMJ as either a first or second major or minor. We offered more classes than ever before, and they 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 third annual Study Abroad trip, which was led by Dr. Melanie Neuilly. This year, Dr. Neuilly plans to take students to London over the 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 by 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.

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). The OYA is generously providing the funds to support one PhD student a year as a Research Assistant, and this student is working on projects of mutual interest to the OYA and the department. The first recipient of these Oregon Youth Authority funds is Melissa Kowalski. The department obtained grant funding for several new research projects including an outcome evaluation of the Spokane DUI Court and a study of traffic fatalities that involved driving with THC in their bloodstream.

Faculty and graduate students presented their research at several conferences, including the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences meeting in Denver, the American Society of Criminology meeting, and the Western Association of Criminal Justice meeting. Faculty (and graduate students) published several books and a number of articles.

There have been some changes in the department. Dr. Bryan Vila retired during the Summer. Dr. Russell

a position in the Department of Sociology at Portland State University. Dr. Jacqueline van Wormer left her faculty position to work full-time for the Spokane Justice Commission, but she will continue to teach occasionally for the department, and to work with students on research projects. We are sorry to see our colleague go, but we wish them well in the next stages of their lives.

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

