**Proposed Program Changes**

**MA in Criminal Justice**

The Criminal Justice Department is proposing three changes to the graduate program. Two of the changes are clarifications while the third is substantive.

1. The first clarification is to make it clear to students that they may take 500-level courses as electives, an option which is currently available but is not specified in the catalog.
2. The second clarification is to make it clearer to students what their degree plan options are. More specifically, students may choose the thesis or professional project option, or they may choose the special individual studies option (see below); a “field study” is not an option.
3. The substantive change is to allow students to select a special individual study as a degree plan option. The way the catalog currently reads, students must select the thesis option.

Many of our graduate students are working professionals and see the Master of Arts degree as a means to enhance their professional careers. For this group, the special individual studies option is appropriate, where they select a specific academic topic to focus on throughout their graduate studies and take comprehensive exams as an exit requirement.

Other graduate students in our program wish to continue their education at the doctoral level; these students are advised to select the thesis or professional project option, the defense of which serves as their exit requirement.

These changes more accurately reflect the options the faculty of the Criminal Justice Department believes should be available to our graduate students.