

THOMAS JEFFERSON
SCHOOL OF LAW
SAN DIEGO • CALIFORNIA

Center for Criminal Law and Policy

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THE CERTIFICATE IN CRIMINAL LAW AND POLICY

The Center for Criminal Law and Policy offers a Certificate to students who meet certain requirements. The Certificate is intended to recognize achievement and proficiency in the study of criminal law and policy.

This document details the requirements to earn a Certificate in Criminal Law and Policy. Please keep in mind that a student may earn only one Certificate from one of the Academic Centers at Thomas Jefferson School of Law.

Summary of the Criminal Law and Policy Certificate Requirements

- **Program Enrollment** – Students interested in working toward the Certificate in Criminal Law and Policy typically enroll in the program after completing one year of law school and before beginning their last year of law school. You can enroll online at <http://www.tjssl.edu/criminal-law-policy>.
- **Participation Requirement** – Students enrolled in the program and working toward a Certificate must show a reasonable, good faith level of participation in Center-related events and activities. Attendance logs to track your participation are available at <http://www.tjssl.edu/criminal-law-policy>.
- **Writing Requirement** – Students must fulfill a Substantial Writing Requirement by writing a research paper or a significant brief or motion related to criminal law. The same paper may fulfill both the Substantial Writing Requirement and the law school's Upper Level Writing Requirement.
- **The Units Requirement** – Students must earn a total of at least 12 elective units from Center-eligible graded classroom courses at Thomas Jefferson, from eligible Thomas Jefferson non-classroom units, or from eligible non-TJSL units.
- **The GPA Requirement** – Certificate candidates must graduate with at least a 2.5 overall GPA and at least a 2.7 Center GPA.
- **The Experiential Requirement** – Certificate candidates must complete at least one full semester or summer internship or externship related to criminal law.
- **Certificate Application** – Candidates must complete an application during their last semester of law school so that their credentials can be reviewed.
- **Waiver applications** – A student who falls short of one or more of these requirements may apply for a waiver by submitting a written request to the program directors. The decision to grant or deny a waiver request is left to the discretion of the program directors.

*** *The above is only a summary of each requirement. The full requirements follow.* ***

Requirements to Earn the Certificate in Criminal Law and Policy

To receive the Certificate in Criminal Law and Policy, a student must meet the requirements described below. If you intend to apply for the Certificate upon graduation, you should review these requirements and keep them in mind as you plan your course of study at the law school.

1. The Program Enrollment Requirement:

Students interested in working toward the Certificate in Criminal Law and Policy must enroll in the program sometime prior to their last two semesters of law school. By enrolling, you will receive notice of event announcements and other news related to the Center in Criminal Law and Policy. Enrolling in the program also allows students to fulfill other program requirements, like the event attendance requirement.

Students should enroll online at: <http://www.tjssl.edu/criminal-law-policy>.

2. The Participation Requirement:

Criminal Law and Policy Certificate candidates are expected to show a reasonable, good-faith level of participation and attendance over time at events hosted by the Center for Criminal Law and Policy. Candidates must report and summarize their event attendance when applying for the Certificate. Students should keep track of the events they attend on an ongoing basis in order to maintain a thorough and accurate record.

Attendance logs to track your participation are available online at: <http://www.tjssl.edu/criminal-law-policy>.

3. The Writing Requirement:

Students must fulfill a Substantial Writing Requirement by writing a research paper or a significant brief or motion related to criminal law. The paper or brief/motion can be written during an externship or in a class or Directed Study at Thomas Jefferson. The guidelines for fulfilling this requirement are similar to those governing the Upper Level Writing Requirement, as detailed in the Student Handbook. The same paper may fulfill both the Substantial Writing Requirement for the Certificate and the law school's Upper Level Writing Requirement.

Students are advised to submit the writing that they plan to use for this requirement to the program Directors as soon as they are able, so that the Directors can confirm that it satisfies the requirement. A student who waits until her final semester to submit her paper for review risks the possibility that the program Directors will find the paper to be insufficient and that it will be too late for her to be able to try to meet the requirement by writing a different paper.

4. The Units Requirement:

Certificate candidates must earn a total of at least 12 eligible elective units.

The easiest way to meet this requirement is by completing 12 units of Criminal Law and Policy designated courses at Thomas Jefferson. A list of eligible courses is included in law school registration materials every semester. In addition, a list of eligible courses from past semesters is available on the Center's website at <http://www.tjssl.edu/criminal-law-policy>.

Students are also permitted to count up to 4 eligible non-classroom units toward this requirement. There are two categories of eligible non-classroom units: (1) eligible non-classroom units taken at Thomas Jefferson (for example, units from an externship or directed study related to criminal law); (2) eligible units taken at other law schools (for example, a criminal law elective taken in a different school's study abroad program). There is a 4-unit cap on the number of non-classroom units that may be counted toward the Certificate. Students who plan to apply non-classroom units toward the Certificate are advised to confirm that the units are eligible with the program Directors as soon as they are able.

5. The GPA Requirement:

Certificate candidates must graduate with at least a **2.5 overall GPA** and at least a **2.7 Center for Criminal Law and Policy GPA** (that is, at least a 2.7 average in Criminal Law and Policy-eligible graded units that you have earned).

6. The Experiential Requirement:

Certificate candidates must complete a significant internship or externship related to criminal law or policy. Typically, this requirement will be met through a semester- or summer-long internship or externship with a criminal law practitioner (e.g., a public defender's officer, a private criminal defense attorney, or a prosecutor's office) or a policy organization that works on criminal law issues (e.g., the American Civil Liberties Union).

Students are advised to consult with the program Directors as soon as they are able to confirm that their internship or externship meets this requirement.

7. The Certificate Application Requirement:

Candidates for the Certificate in Criminal Law and Policy must complete a certificate application form during their last semester of law school. Each semester, the program Directors will send an announcement to students enrolled in the program to inform them of the application due date. Certificate application forms are available on the Center's website at: <http://www.tjssl.edu/criminal-law-policy>.

The Review Process

Each semester, after the deadline for Certificate applications has passed, the Center Directors will conduct an initial review of the applications, in consultation with the Registrar's office (who is responsible for confirming compliance with the units and GPA requirements). Because some of the requirements can only be confirmed with certainty *after* graduation (for example, the GPA requirement), the initial review only determines whether or not a student is on track to satisfy the requirements and earn the Certificate. A student is considered to be on track to earn a Certificate if it appears reasonably likely that the student will have satisfied all of the Certificate requirements upon graduation.

The Directors will notify each applicant of their status, typically within 2 weeks of the application deadline.

Graduating students who the Directors determine are on track to satisfy the Certificate requirements are eligible to wear a Center for Criminal Law cord during Commencement. The Center Directors will supply the names to Student Services, which distributes the tassels.

The actual Certificate will be awarded and issued only if and when the Registrar certifies, after graduation, that all requirements were in fact satisfied.

Waiver Applications

In extraordinary circumstances, the Center Directors may waive one or more of the above requirements for a student who can demonstrate good cause as to why he or she should be granted a waiver.

A student who does not meet one or more of the above requirements should submit a letter requesting a waiver at the same time as he submits his Certificate application. The letter should explain why good cause exists to grant the waiver.

Because the Certificate program was first established in Fall 2015, good cause may exist for students who are graduating in December 2015, Spring 2016 or December 2016, even in the absence of extraordinary circumstances. The Center Directors understand that a student graduating in December 2015, Spring 2016, or December 2016 may not have been able to complete one or more of the requirements simply because there was insufficient notice. The Directors will take this fact into account when deciding whether to grant a waiver request. However, the decision to grant a waiver remains in the discretion of the Directors.