

School of Public Service and Justice Narrative

The events of the past year and beyond have raised numerous challenges for our country and society. We are in the midst of the largest public health crisis in over a century, which sparked the deepest recession since the Great Depression. We have witnessed the latest chapter in an ongoing struggle towards racial equality in the criminal justice system and other areas of government. And we have seen growing political extremism, including violent protests and broader questioning of our core civic structures and the legitimacy of our elections and government officials.

Each of these intersecting crises—along with other ongoing societal challenges such as poverty, homelessness, climate change—highlight the importance of renewing our focus on ethical public service and justice. We want to develop our students through classes and training to meet this moment and tackle these challenges through public service and justice.

Our students are already working in each of these areas. We have MPA students and alumni working on the front line in hospitals and emergency management, responding daily to the challenges of the pandemic. We have CJA undergrad students working in policing and public safety, as well as those campaigning for social justice. We have PUB undergrad students working in local government who are facing the challenges of budget cut-backs following the economic recession.

The new School of Public Service and Justice will help us to serve our students, faculty, staff, and the campus better by:

1. Creating a collective sense of mission, identity, and belonging.
2. Improving the visibility, marketability, and awareness of our programs.
3. Elevating and highlighting our Criminal Justice Administration program, which is one of the largest undergraduate programs on campus.
4. Highlighting the public service mission of our MPA program, which will be an important element of reaccreditation.
5. Creating further opportunities for connections with community organizations and sponsorship.

In the accompanying materials, we have provided a detailed proposal, FAQs, procedures Department faculty have undertaken to date, as well as numerous action items that aim to work towards achieving the significant potential of the School of Public Service and Justice.