

Public Safety Department Proposal

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The Faculty of the Bakersfield College Public Safety Training program, along with the programs of Administration of Justice, Criminal Justice, and Corrections, are formally requesting to form a new department to be under the Dean responsible for the Public Safety Pathway. This change would align law and corrections with the existing Public Safety Pathway as well as provide a more efficient communication and reporting structure under a single Dean and Department Chair.

Current Department Structure

The Administration of Justice, Criminal Justice, and Corrections programs are currently located under the Behavioral Science Department, along with Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, Human Services, and Public Health. The disciplines of Fire, Emergency Medical Training, Paramedic, and Law Enforcement comprise the Public Safety Training program.

History

Fire Technology, specifically the Fire Fighter Academy with the City and County Fire departments, was the only discipline within what was known as the Fire program. Based on community need, the Emergency Medical Training and Paramedics programs were later added to form the Public Safety Training program. More recently, Law Enforcement, including the Bakersfield Police Academy as well as the modular in-service training courses and the Bakersfield College Law Enforcement Academy currently in development have also been added to the Public Safety Training program. As a result of this rapid growth with Public Safety, the coordination of support staff and resource allocation has become more complex as many responsibilities between Public Safety and Behavioral Science with Administration of Justice, Criminal Justice, and Corrections are shared.

Specifically:

- A DAIII, with restricted access for needed clerical responsibilities, is the only support staff currently allocated to Public Safety Training
- No Department Chair is designated to assist with necessary scheduling and important Faculty communication from staff and administration
- Administration of Justice, Criminal Justice, and Corrections often overlap with the needed curricular and personnel needs of the Law Enforcement Community
- Needed financial allocation often overlaps between Public Safety and Behavioral Science as Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, Criminal Justice, and Corrections often collaborate in community relations, work experience, internships, continuing educational opportunities, and shared community events.

Proposed Departmental Structure

Combining the Administration of Justice, Criminal Justice, and Corrections departments with the Public Safety Training programs would provide a seamless administrative structure for the Public Safety Pathway and would provide new opportunities for further growth of the Public Safety programs. Currently these disciplines are under the leadership of two Deans, one who leads the Behavioral Science Completion Pathway, and the other who leads the Public Safety Completion Pathway. In addition, the programs under consideration for a Public Safety department focus on education and employment in career and technical skills. Placing all these programs, which are already under the Public Safety Completion Pathway, within one Department and under a Department Chair and one Dean would simplify scheduling, improve strategic planning, facilitate interdisciplinary initiatives, and provide clarity on resource allocation and organizational structure for our industry partners.

Additionally, Faculty could explore the development of new certificates of achievement to assist in achieving greater student success and increase student awards for the department. As a standalone department, there would also be greater flexibility in improving existing university articulation agreements and pursuing new agreements for the department.

Public Safety Faculty Chair

The current Faculty Chair of the Behavioral Science department would become the Faculty Chair of the new Public Safety department as a Criminal Justice Faculty member. Currently, the Behavioral Science Faculty Chair receives 0.8 reassigned time and 33 extra duty days, above and beyond any other Faculty Chair due to the increased growth of the programs within the Behavioral Science department.

The Faculty Chair for the proposed Public Safety department would receive 0.5 reassigned time and 15 extra duty days, aligning with the current majority of the other Faculty Chairs. However, with the growing number of Academies, including the FireFighter 1, Firefighter 2, US Wildland, and Bakersfield Police Academy, the number of Professional Experts would also factor into the compensation for the Faculty Chair in the proposed Public Safety department.

Behavioral Science Department

The other programs from Behavioral Science – Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, Human Services, and Public Health – would remain as a department. As previously mentioned, collectively these programs are seeing upward trends in growth. Each program has ongoing growth initiatives as well.

Conclusion

Since the Administration of Justice, Criminal Justice, and Corrections programs are built on courses based in Law Enforcement and are part of the Public Safety Training Pathway, creating a separate Public Safety Training Department would provide for more efficiency and would also bring increased visibility for the programs and increased growth potential for our College and needed CTE programs for our community. We appreciate your consideration in this important and much needed alignment of programs.