

## **Course Description:**

Introduction to Criminal Justice is an introduction to crime and society's responses to it. The course examines the nature and causes of crime, the criminal law, constitutional safeguards, and the organization and operation of the criminal justice system including the police, courts, jails, prisons, probation and parole departments, and community corrections agencies. The course also covers the history of the criminal justice system, terminology and career opportunities.

## **Topics :**

- Define the parts of the criminal justice system, describe the principal duties of each part, and explain how they collectively function as a system.
- Describe the major steps in the criminal justice process and explain the role of constitutional protections in each step.
- Explain criminal procedure using legal cases.
- Describe how social scientists collect and analyze information about the nature and frequency of crime as well as the characteristics of its perpetrators and victims, and how they use this information to postulate theories of causation and strategies to prevent and control crime.
- Define criminal behavior and identify the major categories of crime.
- Describe the history, mission, organization and operation of the police and examine major legal, social and political challenges facing them.
- Describe the history, mission, organization and operation of the courts at the federal, state and local levels of government.
- Explain the different types of sentences and compare and contrast the major philosophies of sentencing.
- Describe the history, mission, organization and operation of probation, parole and community corrections agencies and examine legal, social and political challenges facing them.
- Describe the history, mission, organization and operation of prisons and jails and examine major legal, social and political challenges facing them.
- Describe urban policing and its challenges.
- Discuss policies and police reform.
- Describe career opportunities in the criminal justice system, including position duties and qualifications.