

**RADFORD UNIVERSITY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE**  
**WRITTEN COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**  
*for the*  
**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

1. You will have one week to complete your work on this examination. The question will be distributed at 9:00am on Friday, and answers are due no later than 5:00pm on Friday. No extensions will be granted and no late examinations will be accepted.
2. This is an independent exercise; **do not** collaborate with others in preparing your response. You are not allowed to seek assistance from anyone, including NetTutor or the LARC, with your exam. Any questions regarding the exam should be directed to Dr. Nicole Hendrix (pnhendrix@radford.edu).
3. Students are allowed, and encouraged, to submit their answer to [www.grammarly.com](http://www.grammarly.com) to check for grammatical/spelling/writing errors before submitting your answer to Dr. Elis. This site will also check for plagiarism. Just make sure to request a plagiarism check when you submit your answer. You will be asked to login, but all you need to do is enter your Radford email address and you'll be able to use the program.
4. Your response must be typed. Your response should have a cover page that includes your name, student number, home address, phone number (work and home), and e-mail address. On each page of your response, you should include a header in the upper right-hand corner that contains your student number.
5. Your response should be clear and cogent; you are encouraged to use section headings in structuring your essays. Take particular care to ensure that you address all sections of the question. Your answer is limited to 30 typed, double-spaced pages (font and margins consistent with APA standards), excluding the cover page and reference pages.
6. You should submit your answer electronically, in a Microsoft Word file, directed to the Criminal Justice Department Graduate Coordinator Dr. Nicole Hendrix (pnhendrix@radford.edu).
7. The grading process takes approximately one week. You will be notified when grading is completed. Your answer will be assigned a grade of "Pass" or "Retake." If assigned a "Retake," you will be provided with further details regarding the nature of the retake.

## Comprehensive Exam

One of the issues that the criminal justice system must confront is offender recidivism. Your task is to explore the topic of recidivism by addressing the following questions in a cogent essay. In framing your answers, be advised that this is not the forum for unsubstantiated emotional arguments. Rather, you should use this opportunity to demonstrate your grasp of scholarly concepts pertinent to criminal justice. You will be expected to cite scholarly resources in support of your answer in proper APA format.

1. One assumption that is present among some academics and practitioners, as well as the general public, is that the increased use of incarceration produces a reduction in crime rates. Review and discuss (a) trends in incarceration and crime rates since the 1970s and (b) the empirical literature that examines whether changes in incarceration rates led to a reduction in crime rates during that time period. Does the empirical evidence support the assertion that increasing the use of incarceration reduces crime/recidivism? Please discuss issues of reliability and validity with regard to the empirical studies you review.
2. Provide an explanation based on one criminological theory for why convicts who are returning to their communities would be likely to recidivate. Explain why the factors included in the theory specifically influence convicts. Be sure to provide a complete explanation of the theory you chose and provide research support for the theory's influence on the likelihood of crime.
3. Relying on peer reviewed, scholarly research articles, specify a quasi-experimental research design that examines the likelihood of recidivism for offenders convicted of drunk driving. Define the concepts and theoretical model upon which you build this design. Articulate an appropriate research question and resulting hypotheses. Be as detailed as possible in your specification of the implementation of your design. Identify an appropriate population from which to draw your sample and describe the sampling method you will use. Discuss the applicability of the concepts of reliability and validity to your study. Describe all data collection instruments used and the type and nature of the data you intend to collect. Explain any ethical issues present in your study and describe how you will address these and protect the human subjects of your research.
4. The data below represent the scores on a risk assessment measure for a group of inmates about to go through a re-entry program. The scale measure scores from 0 to 100, with higher scores representing greater risk of recidivism post-release.

You are an analyst working for the Department of Corrections and have been tasked with completing an exploratory data analysis of this cohort. Using the best EDA practices, complete this analysis and provide a narrative interpretation of each step of your analysis of the cohort.

The analysis should include both tabular and visual analysis. First, examine the data distribution and fully describe that distribution. This description should include measures of central

tendency, measures of variability, a boxplot, and a histogram. Also prepare a bar chart, with error bars, comparing the mean risk for female probationers to the mean risk for male probationers. Do the same with boxplots. In addition, analyze this distribution to determine to what extent it meets the assumption of normally distributed data. Use an appropriate statistical test as well a quantile-quantile plot of the data. Finally, compare the male distribution to the female distribution, again with an appropriate statistical test and a QQ plot for each gender's distribution. Be sure to identify any outliers in the data and comment on how this affects the distribution and what problems it might cause for future analysis.

All tables and figures must be publication ready and comply with the standards set out in the APA Publication Manual, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. Tables and figures should be incorporated into your narrative, NOT included in an appendix. Be sure to appropriately cite any statistical software packages or other resources that you use to complete this task.

Subject No.	Risk Score	Gender	Subject No.	Risk Score	Gender
001	87	Female	011	76	Female
002	99	Male	012	55	Female
003	87	Male	013	64	Female
004	87	Female	014	81	Male
005	67	Female	015	94	Male
006	87	Male	016	81	Male
007	77	Female	017	82	Female
008	89	Male	018	99	Male
009	99	Male	019	93	Male
010	96	Female	020	94	Female

- The town of Radburg has been experiencing a recent increase in crime, including several highly publicized crimes involving perpetrators who were on probation or had been released from prison recently. The mayor of Radburg has instructed his chief of police to meet with the chief of the local probation and parole office and construct a program to monitor more closely the activities of probationers and parolees in the Radburg community. It has been observed that many of these probationers and recently released parolees used handguns in the commission of their crimes. You have been “hired” as a consultant to advise the police chief and probation and parole chief as they work to address these issues. The agencies would like to permit officers from both departments to be as aggressive as the Constitution permits in searching probationers and recently released parolees, as well as their homes for handguns and drugs. You should consult the following Supreme Court cases: Griffin v. Wisconsin (483 U.S. 868, 1987), U.S. v. Knights (534 U.S. 112, 2001), and Samson v. California (547 U.S. 843, 2006). In this section, provide a thorough review and discussion of these legal cases, including the issue considered in each, the holding, and the legal reasoning.

6. On the basis of your above review of court cases for the Radburg chief of police and chief of probation and parole, you have been asked to develop a written policy directive to be issued to local police officers and probation and parole officers. Again, one goal of the policy is to permit officers from both departments to be as aggressive as the Constitution permits in searching probationers and recently released parolees, as well as their homes for handguns and drugs. Provide a detailed description of the policy you would propose to address the situation and to meet the needs of the police department and probation and parole office. In doing so, in addition to describing the policy itself, you should explain how the findings in the above referenced court cases influenced the development of the policy and discuss the steps you would follow to develop and implement the policy. In doing so, you should reference appropriate materials from the policy literature.