DEPARTMENT OF VICTIM STUDIES

Chair: Shelly Clevenger, Ph.D.

Contact the Department of Victim Studies:
936-294-4735

Website: Department of Victim Studies (https://www.shsu.edu/academics/victim-studies/)

About

Be a part of the new, path-breaking Department of Victim Studies, the only one of its kind in the nation!

Sam Houston State University's Department of Victim Studies offers one of the most innovative criminal justice programs available to students nationwide. Our experienced faculty provide foundational courses in the areas of victimology, victim studies, and victim services. Our graduate and undergraduate degree programs prepare students for a variety of career paths, ranging from victim advocacy and social justice activism to supervisory positions in victim services. In 2015 and 2016, *U.S. News & World Report* rated our on-line Master's degree programs #1 in the United States. Our Master of Science in Victim Services Management (MSVSM) program was included in this distinguished ranking.

You have a bright future at SHSU! The opportunities in our Department are endless, with flexible course offerings to fit your schedule:

- Recruiters from victim service agencies and organizations visit the center on a regular basis.
- Students receive real world experience by participating in agency tours, internships, and regional/national conferences.
- Courses are offered on-line, daytime, and in the evening.

Mission

The Department of Victim Studies is committed to providing high quality education to students in the field of victim services and conducting cutting-edge victimological research to better inform both policy and practice. Our goal is to produce a population of students prepared to provide exceptional services based on a solid understanding of industry trends and evidence-based practices. Faculty include renowned victimology scholars and esteemed victim services professionals with a combination of extensive education and field experience. Faculty provide opportunities for students to engage in community service work that is dedicated to making a difference in survivors' lives.

Contact Information

Questions on Department of Victim Studies Undergraduate Programs (cjadvising@shsu.edu)
Questions on Department of Victim Studies Graduate Programs (cjadvising@shsu.edu)

Suggested Minors

- Psychology
- Sociology
- Security Studies
- Human Services
- Public Health

Career Opportunities

- Victim coordinators and liaisons in prosecuting attorneys' offices and police agencies
- Victim service professionals operating within the correctional system
- Advocates and administrators in domestic violence, rape crisis, human trafficking, and anti-drunk driving organizations
- Military advocates
- Confidential campus advocates
- Adult and child protective services specialists

Curriculum

Sam Houston State University is authorized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to offer a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Victim Studies. Coursework for these degrees is offered in the Department of Victim Studies. The prefix designation for registration purposes is "VCST".

Program Specific Requirements

Please see the individual degree plans for degree specific requirements.

Code	Title	Hours
Victim Studies Courses		
VCST 3341	Aging, Crime and Victimization	3
VCST 3350	Victimology	3
VCST 3351	Victim Service Delivery	3
VCST 4338	Child Abuse And Neglect	3
VCST 4351	Trauma and Crisis Intervention	3
VCST 4370	Interviewing & Counseling	3
VCST 4376	Independent Study in Victim Studies	3
VCST 4377	Special Topics in Victim Studies	3
VCST 4383	Family Violence	3
VCST 4390	Violence Against Women	3
VCST 4398	Problem Analysis in Victim Studies	3
Total Hours		**33**

Code	Title	Hours
Major (no Minor)		
Core Courses		**15**
Victim Studies Electives		**27**
Total Hours		**42**

Code	Title	Hours
Minor (With Approved Minor in Another Field)		
Core Courses		**15**
Victim Studies Electives		**27**
Minor		**18**
Total Hours		**60**

- Bachelor of Arts, Major in Victim Studies (http://catalog.shsu.edu/undergraduate/colleges-academic-departments/criminal-justice/victim-studies/ba-victim-studies/)
- Bachelor of Science, Major in Victim Studies (http://catalog.shsu.edu/undergraduate/colleges-academic-departments/criminal-justice/victim-studies/bs-victim-studies/)
- Undergraduate Certificate in Victim Studies (http://catalog.shsu.edu/undergraduate/colleges-academic-departments/criminal-justice/victim-studies/undergraduate-certificate-victim-studies/)
- Minor in Victim Studies (p. 1)

Student Organizations and Activities

- Alpha Phi Sigma National Criminal Justice Honor Society
- Crime Victim Services Alliance
- Lambda Alpha Epsilon Criminal Justice Association
- National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice
- National Organization of Hispanics in Criminal Justice
- Phi Alpha Delta Pre-Law Society
- Kats for CASA

Attend some of the many events for students including special guest lecturers at Real Talk with CJ, a career fair, an undergraduate conference, and mock courtroom trials.

Internships

An integral part of all degree offerings is the opportunity for field placement experience. The College of Criminal Justice Internship Program (http://www.shsu.edu/academics/criminal-justice/services/intern.html) is designed to provide students valuable work experience, on-the-job training, and an opportunity to develop a professional networking base for the future. Students in this program are offered unparalleled opportunities to participate in one of the nation's leading internship programs in the field of criminal justice.

Scholarships

Scholarships are available to criminal justice majors and awarded in the spring of each year at the College of Criminal Justice Honors Convocation for the following academic year. With the exception of incoming freshmen scholarships, a student must have completed at least one long semester at Sam Houston State University. Information on specific scholarships available in the College of Criminal Justice are available through Cutty Gilbert (cutty@shsu.edu) at (936) 294-3755. Graduate students may also apply for scholarships through the Graduate School. Certain conditions apply. For specific information regarding the Graduate School General Scholarship, contact Graduate Studies at: 936.294.2408 or gradstudies@shsu.edu.

Director/Chair: **Shelly Lynn Clevenger**

Lori Ann Albe, MS (laa043@shsu.edu), *Lecturer of Victim Studies*, *Department of Victim Studies*, MS, Sam Houston State University; BS, Sam Houston State University

Breanna Lynne Boppre, PHD (bxb078@shsu.edu), *Lecturer of Victim Studies*, *Department of Victim Studies*, PHD, Univ of Nevada-Las Vegas; MS, Portland State University; BA, Univ of Nevada-Reno

Mary Magdalene Breaux, PHD (mmp019@shsu.edu), *Associate Professor of Practice of Victim Studies*, *Department of Victim Studies*, PHD, Prairie View A&M University; MA, Webster University; BS, Sam Houston State University

Margaret Irene Campe, PHD (mic029@shsu.edu), *Lecturer of Victim Studies*, *Department of Victim Studies*, PHD, Univ of Kentucky; MA, Univ of Minnesota-Duluth; BA, Univ of Minnesota-Duluth

Rebecca J Cary, MS (rcc026@shsu.edu), *Lecturer of Victim Studies*, *Department of Victim Studies*, MS, Sam Houston State University; BS, Sam Houston State University

Shelly Lynn Clevenger, PHD (sxc167@shsu.edu), *Associate Professor and Chair of Victim Studies*, *Department of Victim Studies*, PHD, Indiana University of Pennsyl; MA, Indiana University of Pennsyl; BA, Indiana University of Pennsyl

Kathleen Elisabeth McMahon, MS (keg001@shsu.edu), *Lecturer of Victim Studies*, *Department of Victim Studies*, MS, Sam Houston State University; MA, Sam Houston State University; BS, Sam Houston State University

Melissa Ann Merritt, MS (mam164@shsu.edu), *Lecturer of Victim Studies*, *Department of Victim Studies*, MS, Sam Houston State University; BACJ, Univ of Central Florida

Philip W Mulvey, PHD (pwm010@shsu.edu), *Associate Professor of Victim Studies*, *Department of Victim Studies*, PHD, Arizona State University; MA, Boston College; BS, Univ of Illinois-Urbana

Kathleen Rene Ratajczak, PHD (kxr084@shsu.edu), *Assistant Professor of Victim Studies*, *Department of Victim Studies*, PHD, Univ of Kentucky; MA, Univ of Cincinnati; BA, John Carroll University

Barbara Ann Sims, PHD (bas108@shsu.edu), *Lecturer of Victim Studies*, *Department of Victim Studies*, PHD, Sam Houston State University; MA, Univ of Arkansas-Little Rock; BA, Univ of Arkansas-Little Rock

VCST 3341. Aging, Crime and Victimization. 3 Hours.
Students explore general knowledge about aging in the United States as it applies to information about senior adults? experiences with victimization, offending, and incarceration. Future directions for public policy related to crime and aging are evaluated. Course Equivalents: CRIJ 3341
Prerequisite: CRIJ 2361, CRIJ 2362.

VCST 3350. Victimology. 3 Hours.
Students engage in a survey of the literature, research, and current trends concerning the victim in the criminal justice system. Particular attention is given to victims' rights and compensation, fear of crime, measuring victimization, and the impact of victimization on individuals. Course Equivalents: CRIJ 3350, CRIJ 4380 .

VCST 3351. Victim Service Delivery. 3 Hours.
Students analyze the provision of social and criminal justice services to victims of crime. This is accomplished by examining community and individual services that are afforded to crime victims. The material covered also includes how victim advocacy is positioned within the formal systems of criminal justice and addresses the social and legal issues that impose upon victim service delivery and the theories that explain these impediments to service provision. Course Equivalents: CRIJ 3351
Prerequisite: VCST 3350.

VCST 4338. Child Abuse And Neglect. 3 Hours.
Students develop knowledge concerning key concepts and terminology related to child abuse and neglect, including related laws, and court procedures, investigative techniques, and intervention and prevention programs. In addition, this course provides a foundation for students who may enter professional careers that place them in a position to address and/or investigate suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. Course Equivalents: CRIJ 4338 .

VCST 4351. Trauma and Crisis Intervention. 3 Hours.
Students focus on understanding and effectively assisting victims of traumatic events. Students learn how the context in which trauma occurs can affect the cognitive, affective, behavioral, and neurological functioning of an individual. Multicultural aspects that either impair or facilitate recovery are assessed. Crisis intervention models and the pertinent legal and ethical issues for service provision are evaluated. Prerequisite Junior standing and VCST 3350. Course Equivalents: CRIJ 4351 .

VCST 4370. Interviewing & Counseling. 3 Hours.
Students explore counseling psychology as applied to counseling and interviewing victims of crime. Particular emphasis is placed on principals and procedures; the theoretical foundations of therapeutic psychology; and the therapeutic process and its techniques. Course Equivalents: CRIJ 4370 .

VCST 4376. Independent Study in Victim Studies. 3 Hours.
Students examine a topic related to victim studies. Under the direct supervision of a faculty member, the faculty and student formulate a course of study which could include reviewing relevant literature, engaging in research, exploring professional practice, or conducting other forms of inquiry appropriate to the course of study. The course may be repeated for credit.
Prerequisite: Department Approval.

VCST 4377. Special Topics in Victim Studies. 3 Hours.
Students examine special topics in the field of victimology and victim services. This course is designed to give advanced undergraduate students academic flexibility. Students may repeat this course for credit when topics differ.

VCST 4383. Family Violence. 3 Hours.
Students explore theoretical and sociological issues, both past and present, associated with family violence victimization in society. Specific attention is given to the impact family violence has on the victim and society, legal aspects of family violence, key factors associated with recognition of family violence, and pertinent research on sub-types of family violence. Course Equivalents: CRIJ 4383 .

VCST 4390. Violence Against Women. 3 Hours.
Students analyze the deeper social context in which violence against women occurs. Topics to be covered may include intimate partner violence, rape and sexual assault, sexual harassment, and media depictions of violence against women. Attention is given to the ways in which violence against women affects women, men, and children. In addition, the ways that the criminal justice system responds to these types of crimes, including how the criminal justice system and social service agencies may better address the needs of victims and offenders. Course Equivalents: CRIJ 4390
Prerequisite: VCST 3350.

VCST 4398. Problem Analysis in Victim Studies. 3 Hours.
This course serves as a capstone for Victim Studies undergraduate students. Students use skills and knowledge from prior victim studies courses to address victimization issues. The course consists of the application of research skills and analytic techniques to address facets of victimization including intimate partner violence, family violence, violence against women, elder abuse, and child abuse and neglect, stalking, and human trafficking. Attention is also given to victim service delivery and evaluation. Course Equivalents: CRIJ 4398
Prerequisite: Senior standing and VCST 3350.