

Bachelor's Degree Requirement for Police Officers, Inc.

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Open Letter to Criminal Justice University Juniors & Seniors

So, you decided to major in Criminal Justice. For some of you, choosing this major was easy. You probably have a strong sense of fairness and feel compelled to simply help people without looking for something in return. We, the People of the United States, collectively thank you for being true to your calling and for courageously following your dream. Those who have no earthly idea why they chose criminal justice, we understand you too. It is quite common for college students to feel uncertain about their majors. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, college students change their major at least three times throughout their college career. After all, you are dealing with your future, the next 40 to 50 years of work. So, take your time and be sure about what you want to do with your life.

Many of you will soon graduate with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice. You may not want to be a police officer. That is perfectly fine. You could instead work with children, families, or victims of abuse. You could be a social worker, probation officer, victims advocate, or go to law school to be an attorney. A lot of police officers are not like you. They do not hold a bachelor's degree in criminal justice, and many of them do not want one. For many years police officers throughout the United States have argued that a bachelor's degree in criminal justice is simply not necessary to be a good police officer. After all, they got on the force without one. Police unions and even some police commissioners do not believe that a bachelor's degree in criminal justice has any value. Some of them make disparaging remarks about those "snotty-nosed college kids, know-it-alls." Many of these individuals are current police leaders and determine who does and does not get into the police department.

The problem here is that many of these police officers still have the same mindset and normative beliefs they had during their upbringing. This is important because systemic racism in America has existed for over 400 years. Our country was literally founded and built on African slavery. So divisive was the issue of slavery that in 1861, eleven Southern states broke away from the United States and renamed themselves the Confederate States of America. For four years, these rebel states fought a bloody war against the United States to preserve slavery and white supremacy. Under President Abraham Lincoln, the United States crushed the Confederate States and brought the rebel states back into the Union. Although the Civil War ended on April 9, 1865, the whites living in the rebel states did not just disappear. These white Americans did not suddenly begin loving black, former slaves. These whites had an even deeper resentment for blacks and has since fought to deprive blacks of the human and civil rights that the Constitution guarantees to all citizens. During the 1950s and 1960s the American civil rights movement was directly opposed by Southern whites with the erection of many Confederate statues and the naming of US military bases with Confederate generals' names. These monuments were erected as symbols of white supremacy to intimidate local blacks into accepting their place as disenfranchised, second place citizens in American society.

Finally, 155 years after defeating the Confederate States of America, have the people of the United States woke up and begun removing confederate monuments, generals' names from U.S. military bases and the confederate flags from public works. Many white police officers all over the country still align their personal beliefs with the confederacy than with the United States worldview. This is why police brutality against black and brown people is as American as apple pie and is woven into the American legal system. White police officers who brutalize and kill blacks, are very well protected by their fellow officers (wall of blue), local district attorneys and police unions. Only recently, has the notion of white supremacy been challenged by the American public through activist groups like Black Lives Matter. With COVID-19 keeping many Americans at home as a captive audience, America has been forced to slow down and watch videos of blacks being killed by police officers and vigilante whites.

This is where you come in. We are asking you to consider becoming a police officer after you graduate with your bachelor's degree in criminal justice. Our non-profit organization, called BDRPolice.org or Bachelor Degree Requirement for Police Officers,

was formed by a group of everyday citizens ranging from physicians, educators, military veterans, police officers, attorneys, and accountants. We are spread out from coast to coast and operate in all the five regions of the United States. Our mission is to transform American policing by educating our nation's police force. Over the next 10 years, we expect 51% of all police officers hold at least a bachelor's degree in criminal justice. We also expect 100% of all police departments to employ at least two mental-health officers.

We are convinced that having a well-educated police force will significantly improve American policing. We understand that requiring police officers to hold at least a bachelor's degree in criminal justice will not guarantee the end to police brutality. After all, there are plenty of highly educated lawyers and judges who hold white supremacist views. We are not focused biased lawyers and judges because they are not out patrolling the streets with lethal weapons brutalizing or killing minorities.

Yes, you should do well academically and earn good grades in your criminal justice courses. But as a police officer, you will need more than just good grades. You must have good street instincts too. You must know how to deal with hardened criminals, citizens doing criminal things, drunk people, uneducated people, highly educated people, gang members, drug addicts, wayward teens and little old ladies with missing cats. The point here is that good police officers are on-the-spot arbitrator of disputes, problem solvers, dispensers of justice. You absolutely must be just, honest and have a strong sense of personal morality. You must not secretly be a black, white or any other kind of supremacist. The most important tool that you will have as a police officer is personal discretion. Your discretion will allow you to de-escalate situations with black and brown men when other officers would simply use unnecessary, sometimes lethal force.

During your criminal justice studies, you learned a lot about the US Constitution. This is part of the reason we want you to become a police officer. There are many current police officers who have never even read the Constitution. They look impressive and authoritative in their crisp uniforms and dark sunglasses. But underneath their uniform and sunglasses are highly emotional, quick tempered people lacking the psychological development to properly engage our multi-cultural citizenry and de-escalate racially charged, tense situations.

Currently there is no standardized process for becoming a police officer. State and local departments set their own entry standards, usually requiring some college or some military experience, or a stable work history. These applicants go through police academy training, which varies widely in duration from 11 to 36 weeks. During police academy training, an average cadet receives about 600 hours of training. Cadets in Louisiana receive the least number of training hours, approximately 300 hours. Cadets in Washington D.C. receive the highest number of training hours, approximately 1120 hours. After police academy training, new police officers go through field training with an experienced officer, usually from 4 to 16 weeks before being considered police officers.

We expect you to follow through on earning your bachelor's degree in criminal justice before you apply to your local police academy. We understand that you may be concerned about the low salary that entry level police officers earn. But do not worry about this salary. We receive donations from the public and will have our public accounting firm directly deposit money into your bank account to supplement your salary, ensuring that you earn the median salary for the state you live in. When you have obtained your bachelor's degree in criminal justice, completed your police academy training and field training, just click on this [Supplemental Salary Request](#) link and complete the form. We will verify your degree and your employment. Our accounting firm will begin transferring your supplemental income into your bank account every two weeks. We will continue supporting your increased salary until we successfully lobby your mayor to make budgetary changes to pay you at the median salary for your state through the city budget.

Although we encourage you to apply to become a police officer in the local city or town where you live, nobody can tell you where to live. Therefore, please let us know which police department you would prefer to work in. Some police departments are already looking for degreed applicants like you. Click on this [Criminal Justice Police Officer Candidate](#) link and let us know which police department you would like to apply. We will make every effort to facilitate an introduction.