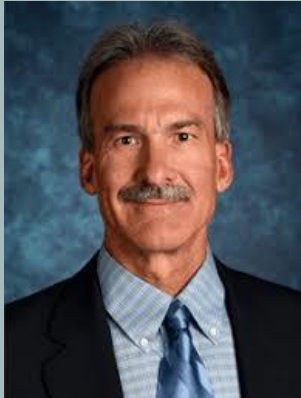


Message from the Department Head



[Dr. Dennis Giever](#)
CJ Department Head

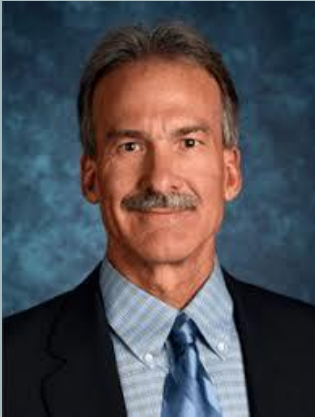
As another academic year comes to a close, I am reminded of how many such academic years of which I have been a part. I still remember sitting in the Pan American Center as a faculty member for the first time in 1995 watching our graduates cross the stage (it is hard to believe that was 30 years ago). I was wearing my newly purchased regalia (having just graduated with my Ph.D. that year). It is fitting to reminisce about that time, as one of the major highlights of this past year was attending both the New Mexico State Police Academy Graduation and the Tulsa Police Academy Graduation. In both of these ceremonies our department was well represented by several outstanding graduates who were being sworn in as law enforcement officers. The pride on their faces and those of their family made those events very memorable. One can't help but be proud of their accomplishments and I am extremely grateful for their service to our communities and to the law enforcement profession to which each have dedicated their lives. Law Enforcement is truly a noble profession.

I am also very thankful to our faculty members, both full-time and adjunct, for their dedication to our students and university. Educators face a myriad of challenges today, and I am thankful for the hard work they put in day in and day out. We truly have an outstanding faculty whom with I am honored to serve.

Our department has never been one to rest on its laurels. We continue to be very innovative having introduced a new minor in Human Rights and have continued our relationship with computer science in their Cyber Security Track. We are also looking closely at the development of a minor (maybe both undergraduate and graduate) in Emergency Management. I would ask our alumni to share any insights they have to improve our program. I am always open to any suggestions, concerns and such.



Message from the Department Head



[Dr. Dennis Giever](#)
CJ Department Head

We as a department, value our alumni and their opinions of our program. Those of you who are in the field know better than most what the future might look like and can help us adapt our program to better prepare our students to enter this dynamic field. I have always enjoyed sitting down with our alumni and discussing their experiences at NMSU, their professions, and most importantly what they feel the future might hold. Our department wants to continue to be at the cutting edge of the criminal justice field and your input and suggestions are critical to this endeavor.

I hope each of you has a wonderful summer and please reach out and let us know how you are doing!!

My best,

Dennis

Dennis Giever

dgiever@nmsu.edu

575-646-1632



New Faculty



[Jesse Williams](#)
College Assistant
Professor



Welcome CJ Faculty

From the Field to the Classroom: Welcoming Jesse Williams

We're excited to welcome Jesse Williams to the Criminal Justice Department! Jesse retired as a Captain from the New Mexico State Police in December 2024, following an impressive 21-year career in law enforcement. We asked him questions to learn more about his journey, the lessons he brings from the field, and how he's translating that experience into a dynamic and engaging approach to teaching.

***What inspired you to transition from a successful career in law enforcement to teaching in higher education?**

From the beginning of my career in law enforcement, I knew I wanted to be involved in teaching and training. After about two years on patrol, I started teaching at the New Mexico State Police academy. When I returned to NMSU for my graduate studies in 2010, I did so because I knew I wanted to pursue teaching once my career in law enforcement had concluded. I've always loved learning and then sharing what I've learned with others in hopes that I can help them. Perhaps even more, I've always enjoyed the exchange of ideas that happens in a classroom. I love learning from others, and I love seeing others learn.

***You've had such a diverse career—from complex investigations to launching training initiatives like the Youth Academy. Which part of your career are you most proud of?**

The part of my career I am most proud of is the time I spent as a criminal investigator. It was, without question, the season I most enjoyed. Helping others who were unable to help themselves was a priceless honor. Advocating for the victims in my cases has always been my highest interest and priority. The system is far from perfect, but there are times when victims can be at least partially healed when someone who hurt them is held accountable. I was blessed to have a role in holding those criminals accountable.

How do you see your real-world experience influencing your approach to teaching criminal justice students?

As I near the close of my first semester teaching at NMSU, I'm even more convinced that I need to do a better job at passing along lessons learned from my experience that will support the principles I'm teaching. A few years ago, I started writing about my police career with the purpose of describing what my experiences taught me. I hope to share those experiences with my students so that they can see the real-world application of what they are learning.

New Faculty



[Jesse Williams](#)
College Assistant
Professor

Welcome CJ Faculty

From the Field to the Classroom: Welcoming Jesse Williams

Additionally, I hope that my experiences will encourage students to achieve their goals of working in the criminal justice field. I hope to share how exciting and meaningful a career in this field can be. It is still possible to make a difference!

***What are you most excited about as you start your teaching journey at NMSU?**

I'm most excited about influencing the rising generation to take up the valuable work of improving our criminal justice system. Public safety concerns are always at the top of political agendas because they are at the top of citizens' agendas. People have real concerns about their safety and the role of the criminal justice system in our society, and these complex issues demand the attention of competent professionals. I hope to contribute as much as possible to the development of that competence in our students.

***Are you most passionate about teaching or researching particular topics or areas within criminal justice?**

The topic I am most passionate about is constitutional law. I am fascinated by the application of due process in all areas of criminal justice. I enjoy reading case law because it provides insight into how the constitution is interpreted in unique situations. It is continually evolving, and I love trying to keep up!

***Given your extensive experience in leadership and ethics training, what advice would you offer to students who aspire to work in criminal justice fields today?**

The advice I would give to students aspiring to work in criminal justice is that they need to develop a strong "why" statement for themselves. Why do they want to pursue this work? I would encourage them to really think about this question and memorialize their response so they can refer to it later. This is because there will be many times when they will question whether it was the right decision.



New Faculty



[Jesse Williams](#)
College Assistant
Professor

Welcome CJ Faculty

From the Field to the Classroom: Welcoming Jesse Williams

Sometimes, they will question whether they are making a difference. There will be times when they will forget their “why.” Sometimes, the career becomes a job, and they will start to lose their passion for it. These are the times when it is critical to re-connect with why they began their career in the first place. So, I would pass along the recommendation of leadership guru Jim Collins, who said that we should “identify the truth in [our] ambition.” For me, that means deeply connecting with your “why.”

***Outside of teaching, what are some activities or hobbies you enjoy, especially with your family?**

I enjoy reading, writing, golf, good food, and uplifting or funny entertainment. I enjoy watching competitive sporting events, especially football. When I’m not too hobbled, I also enjoy playing basketball. I have a busy family life, and watching my children grow up is just delightful. I would call that a hobby as well!

***Is there a piece of advice or a motto that has guided you throughout your career?**

The idea that we have the freedom to choose inspires me. We are in charge of our lives. I’ve tried to stay away from a victim mentality as much as possible. It is so tempting to blame others for our life situations, and I’ve just found that to be extremely unhelpful. The motto that best encompasses this for me is “Be 100% Responsible.” Blaming others, making excuses, and justifying mistakes are self-defeating and erode our capacity to truly act for ourselves; these tendencies hamper our ability to realize the positive life outcomes we seek. They keep us from taking control of our lives. On the other hand, power, dignity, and life satisfaction result when we embrace and act on the idea of being 100% responsible.

Welcome, Jesse



New Faculty



[James F. "Jim" Breckenridge](#)
College Assistant
Professor

Welcome CJ Faculty

Teaching with Purpose: Jim's Journey from Federal Agent to Professor

This semester, Jim started as the College Assistant Professor after starting his NMSU teaching career in August 2022.

I have extremely enjoyed this opportunity to help influence the future for students wanting to pursue careers in the Criminal Justice field. I have taught students living in Germany, Japan, Alaska and across the United States. Building upon my teaching experience every semester, and as a graduate of the NMSU Teaching Scholars program, I have tried to blend practical experiences, student perspectives with the academic insights for students so they can critically think about the areas of study.

Also, as another milestone in my life, after more than 25 years as a federal law enforcement officer, 17 years with the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Inspector General, and 8 years with the U.S. Secret Service, I am retiring at the end of April. My career has allowed me to work with and lead some of the most amazing, smart, and compassionate people working to achieve justice and protect the American public. My career has given me opportunities to have experiences and visit places around the globe that I would not have otherwise been able to do. I am grateful and humbled to have served the American public in this role and am looking forward to beginning a new career protecting and serving the people of New Mexico as a Special Agent with the New Mexico Department of Justice at the end of May.

Welcome, Jim



Student Success Story



Jennifer Sherman

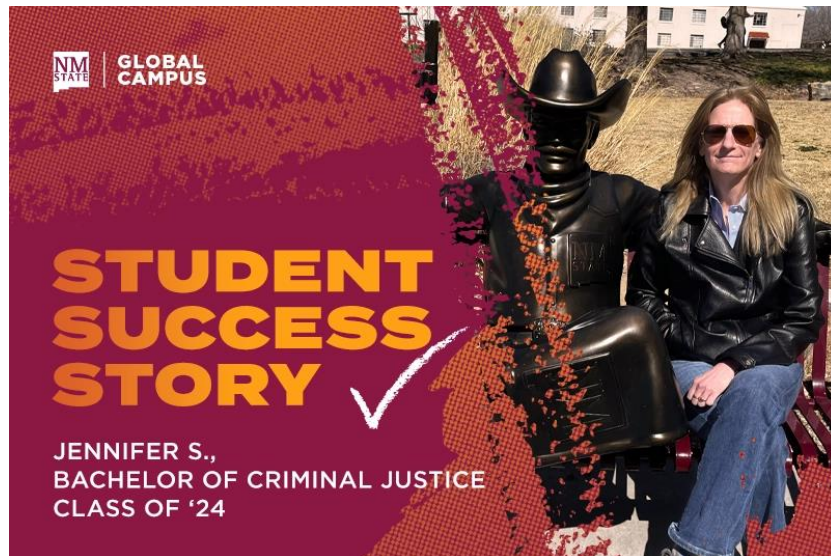
"I was thrilled when I was accepted and immediately started taking classes."

Jennifer S., Class of '24



Student Success Story

Jennifer Moves Once a Year — Our Online Bachelor's in Criminal Justice Came With Her



After 32 moves in 32 years, Jennifer returned to college full-time. She completed her bachelor's in criminal justice tuition-free and 100% online. In this interview with the NMSU Global Campus Blog, our proud grad shares how she overcame personal hurdles and achieved her academic goals.

Initially, Jennifer balanced a full-time job while attending in-person classes, all while relocating frequently for her husband's work.

"We've had 32 different residences in 32 years of marriage," she recalls. But in 2022, the [New Mexico Opportunity Scholarship](#) opened the door to a tuition-free undergraduate degree for *all* eligible state residents. Jennifer saw it as the perfect moment to rededicate herself to finishing her degree.

Read more at [Jennifer's Success Story](#)

**Congratulations
to Dr. Cho and
Dr. Natividad**

**CJ Faculty Focus
Promotion & Tenure Recipients**

Congratulations to CJ Faculty: Dr. Ahram Cho and Dr. Nicholas Natividad for receiving promotion and tenure awards!

Thank you for all of your contributions and hard work, which allows the Department to provide the best education for our students.



Congratulations
**PROMOTION &
TENURE RECIPIENTS**



Congratulations Professor Ida D'Antonio



Professor Ida D'Antonio receives Donald C. Roush Award for Teaching Excellence and Truly Innovative Teaching Award

Professor D'Antonio-Hangen, whose work focuses on criminal justice theory, policy and practice, is praised for her commitment to mentorship and student development through her approach to real-world problems.

The award highlighted the importance of high-caliber teaching and the positive influence that dedicated faculty members have on students' academic and personal growth. Professor D'Antonio was nominated by her peers and recognized for her exceptional ability to engage and inspire students.

Read [NMSU Article](#)

The Teaching Academy Advisory Board selected Professor D'Antonio as the 2025 Truly Innovative Teaching Award winner for her innovative use of VR headsets in her online Forensics course. By incorporating VR in CJ courses, D'Antonio is taking virtual learning to the next level, offering students an immersive, hands-on experience in forensic science. Watch the [VR Meta CJ video](#)



Professor D'Antonio, Dean Dr. Enrico Pontelli, Dr. Dennis Giever



Expanding Opportunities: Micro-credentials

The Criminal Justice Department is excited to announce the development of two new microcredentials designed to enhance both academic and career readiness: Human Trafficking and Writing for Law Enforcement.

These stackable, skills-based credentials were created in response to student interest and evolving needs in the field, offering focused learning opportunities that can be completed independently or alongside a degree.

In addition to launching these microcredentials, the department has also established international partnerships with Future University and Hyperion University in Romania. These collaborations will open the door to global perspectives, virtual exchanges, and expanded learning opportunities for our students.

NMSU Microlearning

Human Trafficking in a Globalized World

EXPLOITATION

FORCE

COERCION

VULNERABILITY



Writing Reports that Count: Mastering Accuracy and Clarity in Law Enforcement



New Human Rights Minor – starting Fall 2025

The Criminal Justice Department is launching the Minor in Human Rights. The program includes eight newly developed courses that examine human rights issues across cultures, systems, and institutions.

The very first course, HMRT 2110G: Introduction to Human Rights, will be offered this fall and serves as the gateway to the minor. This Gen Ed course is open to all students and is a great way to start engaging with increasingly vital topics in today's world.

For more information, please contact Dr. Nicholas Natividad at ndn@nmsu.edu

Register for
**Undergraduate Minor
Human Rights**
STARTING FALL 2025

Open to all Majors ♦ 18 Credit Hours ♦ Multidisciplinary Program

For more information [CLICK HERE](#) or contact: Dr. Nicholas Natividad ndn@nmsu.edu

Keep your Major and get a Minor in Human Rights. Explore contemporary global, national, and local human rights challenges and efforts for social change.

Join us to make a difference!

NM STATE
BE BOLD. Shape the Future.®
New Mexico State University

NM STATE Undergraduate Minor in Human Rights

Open to All Majors - 18 Credit Hours - Multidisciplinary Program
The Minor explores the foundations of human rights and focuses on global, national, and local human rights challenges

For more information contact : Dr. Nicholas Natividad ndn@nmsu.edu

1 Required Course: HMRT 2110G: Introduction to Human Rights

| Human Rights Elective Choose 1 | Law Elective Choose 1 | General Electives Choose 3 |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">HMRT 2125G: International Rights of ChildrenHMRT 2175G: Border Justice and Human RightsHMRT 3996: Issues in Human RightsHMRT 4550V: Skills & Ethics for Human Rights WorkHMRT 4580V: International Environmental Law and JusticeHMRT 4720V: Space Law and Human Rights | <ul style="list-style-type: none">CJUS 4750V: International Criminal Law, War Crimes, Genocide, & Crimes Against HumanityHMRT 2175G: Border Justice and Human RightsHMRT 4580V: International Environmental Law and JusticeHMRT 4720V: Space Law and Human RightsPOLS 396: International Law | <ul style="list-style-type: none">CASJ 429: Immigration and JusticeCASJ 433: Women and JusticeCASJ 434: Human TraffickingCASJ 4750V: International Criminal LawECOR 324F: Developing NationsGNOR 402: Transnational FeminismsHNRS 400: Human CapabilitiesHNRS 430: Interfaith DialoguePHIL 1345G: Philosophy, Law and EthicsPHLS 1130GH: Personal Health & WellnessPHLS 2130V: Global Environmental HealthPHLS 4640: U.S.-Mexico Border Health IssuesPOLS 386: International LawSOCI 3800V: Social ChangeSOCI 4300: Social Movements and ActivismSOCI 4335: Digital Media and ActivismSOCI 4335V: Activism and Environmental BacklogsSOCI 4430: International MigrationOR (choose any HMRT Course) |

CJ Master's Degree – Tied 52

New Mexico State University is starting the new year with another outstanding performance in the 2025 U.S. News & World Report's Best Online Programs rankings, the most in-depth evaluation of U.S.-based degree-granting programs that are designed to be administered online.

NMSU earned multiple spots in the top 100 best online programs, including bachelor's in psychology (tied 25), bachelor's for veterans (tied 46), **master's in criminal justice (tied 52)**, bachelor's in business (tied 68), master's in information technology (74-97), and bachelor's programs overall (tied 84).

[Read more](#)

Celebrating Graduation through the TPD Partnership

We had the honor of congratulating Jessica Salazar, the first NMSU CJ student to graduate through our Tulsa Police Department and NMSU partnership. Jessica not only completed the TPD Academy, but also earned her Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice. We were in Tulsa on April 11 to attend the Tulsa Police Academy graduation ceremony to present Salazar with her NMSU diploma.

Dr. Dennis Giever had the privilege of presenting her degree in person—what a proud moment for us all!

The Department of Criminal Justice began the Tulsa Police Department partnership last year. Tulsa Police provides a paid internship, offering students hands-on law enforcement experience while earning the final 15 credit hours needed to earn their bachelor's degree in criminal justice. Other NMSU students and alumni were there such as Keyla Herrera, including Wyatt Greene, who served as NMSU's Pistol Pete, and earned his master's degree in criminal justice last year and is now employed with Tulsa Police, along with other criminal justice alumni.



Humans for Humans (H4H) Student Organization

This spring, NMSU's CJ [Humans 4 Humans](#) student group has been actively raising awareness about human trafficking through a series of powerful outreach efforts. Some of the events:

- Visited **Community of Hope** in Las Cruces to educate residents on recognizing the signs of trafficking and shared resources, including handmade bracelets that discreetly display the National Human Trafficking Hotline. That same evening, the group hosted a screening of *8 Days*, a film based on real-life trafficking events, to further spark conversation and awareness.
- The group led a hands-on educational session with **10th graders at Gadsden High School**, where students engaged in interactive activities to better understand human trafficking and how to protect themselves. Many were curious about the CJ program, and recruitment materials were shared as well.
- Humans 4 Humans visited **Sleep Inn and Comfort Suites** in Las Cruces to educate hotel staff on how to spot and respond to trafficking situations. Employees were given literature, the human trafficking hotline, and missing children photos to keep at their desks. Some even shared past experiences where they had seen signs of trafficking but didn't know what to do — until now. These efforts reflect the group's continued commitment to their motto: **#NotOneMore**. As *Proverbs 31:8–9* reminds us, *"Speak up for those who can't speak for themselves, for the rights of all who need an advocate. Speak up, judge righteously, defend the cause of the poor and the needy."*



Insights from Our Alumni: An Interview with Ron Hust



Ron Hust –B.S. Police Science, 1982, Criminal Justice, NMSU

***Looking back at your time at NMSU, what stands out most about your experience as a Police Science major?**

I was so impressed with Ron Pincomb. He was 🙏 in for his students.

***What inspired your shift from applying to the FBI to pursuing a career in aviation through the U.S. Air Force?**

I have always wanted to work in law enforcement. When I was a teenager, we had a family friend in Alamogordo. He used to take me for Ride Arounds when I was 14-16 years old. Jimmy Stewart made a huge impression on me early, making me want to do law enforcement. I wanted to pursue it, but I wasn't selected by the FBI. My sister was dating a Fighter Pilot at Holloman AFB at that time. I'd hang out with him and his pilot buddies on the weekend. Great Times. I found my path. Though I still to this day wish I had a career in law enforcement.

***You've had an incredible aviation career. Can you share one or two memorable moments from your time flying for the military or Southwest Airlines?**

It was my Honor to serve our amazing country for 13 years in the United States Air Force. I served from 1982, when I got out of OTS, until 1994, when I got off active duty. Then I did one year in the Colorado Air National Guard. The Military taught me how to become a better person. It was an Amazing and fun experience. Though I was gone a lot, something I'll never regret. Southwest Airlines was also amazing. I got hired in 1996. My official retirement date was August of 2024. It was a great time until September 11, 2001. Everything changed that day forever.

***You've flown across the globe in different aircraft and roles—what advice would you give to students today about embracing unexpected career paths?**

No matter what your career goals are, don't ever give up. It's amazing how something will come across your path out of the blue. You've completed the most important step in your life. Keep plugging away.

***What message would you like to share with current CJ students or recent graduates?**

I've recently connected with NMSU again after living in the Phoenix area for years. You are absolutely in one of the best environments to make your goals come true. No matter what adverse events come your way in life, you've made an outstanding choice. I'm counting 🙏 in your amazing future.

Thank you Ron!

ONLINE PROGRAMS



GLOBAL CAMPUS

NMSU Global Campus. With You Every Step of the Way

<https://global.nmsu.edu/>

Lead the Way for Those You Love



With over 70 online degree and certificate programs, and an ever-expanding range of microlearning courses, we are serving adult learners through accessible, affordable, 100% online education. With our flexible course offerings, students can continue working and raising their family while they earn their degree, grow in their field, and build the kind of relationships that last a lifetime. Behind every student is an invaluable network of support – families, communities, and generations invested in your success.

At NMSU Global Campus, we're proud to be part of that network, guiding and cheering you on, providing diverse opportunities and holistic resources to support you during your studies, and beyond graduation.

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Through NMSU Global Campus, we offer 100% online [bachelor's](#) and [master's](#) degrees in criminal justice that will prepare you for a meaningful career in the field. To support your journey, we have implemented a \$250/credit hour for active-duty law enforcement and military students who are looking to earn or complete their degree. To learn more about these programs, go to <https://global.nmsu.edu/degree-programs/>. For tips and tricks on how to apply, student success stories and more, [check out our blog](#).

Want more information on our online programs? Reach out to us here: <https://global.nmsu.edu/request-info/>



[Andreia Jaramillo-Nellist](#)
Administrative Assistant

[Bachelor of CJ Global Campus](#)

[Master of CJ Global Campus](#)

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Criminal Justice Spotlight

Andreia Jaramillo-Nellist

Andreia Jaramillo-Nellist, Administrative Assistant in the Department of Criminal Justice.

Andreia is a consummate professional who always has a positive attitude toward all those with whom she interacts. What sets Andreia apart is her positive can-do attitude toward all undertakings and interactions. It should be of little surprise that working in an academic environment can be challenging.

Dealing with the differing idiosyncrasies found among highly intelligent persons can be demanding at best.

Andreia has been able to carefully navigate these issues while still providing support to the diverse faculty in the department. One critical factor that sets Andreia apart is her attitude toward our students. She always treats each and every student with the utmost respect. In fact, she always has our students' best interests in mind.

She is truly a vital asset to NMSU and the Department of Criminal Justice.



Criminal Justice Department



Be Bold. Shape the Future.
College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Criminal Justice



[Andreia Jaramillo-Nellist](#)
(Administrative Assistant)



Liz Oquendo
(student work/administrative assistant)

Thank you Andreia and Liz for taking care of student and faculty needs. Your personal touches and caring for each individual student is absolutely noticed. Thank you both!

Please touch back to us and let us learn about your career and what you have done since you graduated.

Please send a short note or email briefly describing your careers. We might include these in future Newsletters or on our website. It would be nice for our alumni to hear from others and what they have been doing since they left NMSU.

Please check our [alumni success webpage](#)
[Newsletters page](#)
Connect with Us on [LinkedIn](#)

Please visit the [CJ Giving Page](#) to see how you can contribute to the future success of Criminal Justice Students.