



NSU HOME

GETTING STARTED

ADMISSIONS

CAMPUS LIFE

ACADEMICS

OUTREACH

NEWS

Campus News

Learning

Arts & Culture

Athletics

Outreach

Alumni News

CALENDAR



## NSU's degree completion programs address needs of adult learners

Recently established to allow working adults with accumulated college credit to pursue bachelor's degrees, the degree completion programs for Northeastern State University are proving a remarkable success.

The degree completion program is a model developed by NSU. In partnership with other institutions, NSU provides opportunities for students and working adults to earn a bachelor's degree in criminal justice-legal studies, health care administration or human and family sciences without leaving the cooperating campus. Approximately 125 students are enrolled in the three programs.

"We are anticipating close to 50 students in the human and family sciences programs by fall," said Claudia Sauer, university representative for the HFS program. "Our largest block of students is in the Poteau area. The area has many adults eager to finish their degree and complete it on their own time. The dynamics of this program help it succeed."

DCP courses are designed to meet the needs of adult learners. The blended or online formats permit the time flexibility often demanded of adults with job or familial responsibilities.

The format is an accelerated eight-week program with six more credit hours being offered each summer term. The classes are a mixture of blended and online courses. A student with an associate's degree can earn 12 hours per semester and six more each summer and complete a program in two years.

To enter a DCP program, students must hold an associate's degree or have accumulated a significant amount of college credit, including all general education requirements.

"Many who enter criminal justice-legal studies work for some kind of criminal justice agency," said Sherelle Jones, university representative for the CJLS offering. "We have older law enforcement officers who, in anticipation of retirement, want a bachelor's degree to pursue other careers. We have younger officers who are seeking a degree while working full-time. Others are students who just want to stay near home, family and their jobs."

While administered from Tahlequah, the degrees are offered in collaboration with other institutions on their campuses. Human and family sciences is offered at Northeastern Oklahoma A&M in Miami, Okla., Eastern Oklahoma State College in Wilburton and Kiamichi Technology Center in Poteau. Criminal justice-legal studies is available at NEO, KTC and NSU-Connors State College in Muskogee. Health care administration courses can be taken at NSU-Connors and the metro campus of Tulsa Community College.

Students enrolled in the criminal justice-legal studies curriculum number about 34. Enrollment in human and family sciences is 36 and approximately 55 are pursuing the health care administrator degree.

"HCA is popular because there are so many ways it can be applied," said Jordan Rozell, university representative for the HCA program. "It can help one enter hospital management, nursing home administration or home health care. One could also be a health care lobbyist, work for the FBI or investigate health care fraud."

Careers where a criminal justice-legal studies degree can be applied include ATF, bailiff, CIA, compliance officer, corrections officer, court clerk, court reporter, customs agent, DEA, FBI, ICE, paralegal, police detective, private investigator, private security, probation officer, Secret Service, sheriff and U.S. marshal.

A human and family sciences degree can be applied to careers in Head Start, preschool, day care, infant and toddler

specialist, WIC counselor, DHS licensing, social services, government and adoption agencies, family consultant, child life specialist and extension services.

Visit NSU's [degree completion programs](#) for more information.

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