



Brae Young

College: Criminology and Criminal Justice

Program: Criminology

Degree: Doctorate

Why FSU?

I chose to attend Florida State for graduate school for several reasons. I was an FSU undergraduate student and loved my time here! However, the main reason I chose FSU was because it is home to one of the top criminology programs in the country. It is hard to beat the quality of education and mentorship offered in this department.

Motivation to pursue a graduate degree

As an undergraduate student, I picked up criminology as a second major and fell in love with this field of study. I felt that a few years of courses on this topic was not enough and that I needed more. So, I applied to the graduate program in [Criminology and Criminal Justice](#). The rest is history.

Importance of research and work

A lot of my research to date, including my dissertation, has focused on understanding how family-related factors may improve the lives of incarcerated youth. My main area of research has been on family visitation during confinement. One question I am exploring in my dissertation is whether visitation reduces recidivism among incarcerated juvenile offenders. This is a critical question because within a year of release from confinement, nearly 70% of youth will be rearrested and 20% will be re-incarcerated. So there is a pressing need, from both an economic and humanitarian standpoint, to identify programs that might reduce these figures. Visitation is a great place to start. Every juvenile facility in Florida offers a visitation program, and these programs are relatively inexpensive to operate.

Career aspirations

After graduation, I am hoping to obtain a position as an assistant professor where I will continue to teach undergraduate students and pursue my research interests.

Advice for prospective students

I would say that if you are considering graduate school, do it. And if you do go to graduate school, make the most of your time. Get involved—whether that be in student organizations, research, or teaching—and get involved early. Find mentors—both professors and fellow students—who can help guide you through your program. Read everything. And above all, be willing to learn. Graduate school is challenging but so rewarding. You will learn so much, and, if you are as lucky as I am, make lifelong friends along the way.

Accomplishments during graduate career

I am really proud of what I have accomplished during my time in graduate school. I have a handful of publications in respected peer-reviewed journals, and [my work](#) has been spotlighted by the university. Something I am especially proud of has been my efforts to disseminate my research to policy-makers. I have been asked to present my work on juvenile visitation to the [Florida Department of Juvenile Justice](#) and other organizations comprised of policy-makers and researchers. One of my goals as a scholar is for my research to effect change, and I believe that these presentations are an important first step. I am also proud of my work as an instructor. I have had the pleasure of teaching several undergraduate courses and have loved my time in the classroom. I love meeting new students and spreading my love of criminology and criminal justice to future generations of potential scholars and practitioners!

