

Facilitates research that improves societal issues



Caroline Bailey

College: Criminology and Criminal Justice

Program: Criminology

Degree: Doctorate

Why did you choose to attend FSU to pursue a graduate degree?

Florida State University is a wonderful place to pursue a graduate degree because of the opportunity to conduct and be a part of high-level research. Specifically, FSU has one of the best criminology programs in the country. The faculty in the [College of Criminology and Criminal Justice](#) are among the best in the world. They have contributed greatly to the field in a number of ways, particularly in their scholarly productivity. As such, the thought of being able to work alongside such accomplished scholars was extremely appealing.

Motivation to pursue a graduate degree

I was motivated to pursue a graduate degree to seek advanced knowledge in the field of criminology and criminal justice. Moreover, I wanted to use the knowledge gained to do impactful research that contributes to the existing literature and informs policy. Graduate school has allowed me, through acquired knowledge and experience, to accomplish these goals.

Importance and impact of research

My research agenda focuses on the following: 1) how the legacy of historical conditions in the United States, particularly slavery, perpetuates racial and ethnic disparities in victimization, punishment, and social control; 2) the culture of control and punishment that characterizes many of the societal institutions in the United States; 3) how social control, punishment, and victimization operate across race and ethnicity; and 4) how contextual effects influence the nexus between race and ethnicity, deviance, and punitiveness. My research provides empirical evidence that sheds light on disparities that exists within the criminal justice system. Because contact with the criminal justice system has a number of deleterious effects, a better understanding of the causes of such negative effects is especially beneficial for identifying salient trends and patterns as well as making policy recommendations that may effect change.

Accomplishments during graduate career

As a graduate student, I am most proud of the fellowships that I have received. Early in my academic career, I received the [McKnight Doctoral Fellowship](#) from the Florida Education Fund. In addition to the McKnight Fellowship, I was recently awarded the [Ruth D. Peterson Fellowship for Racial and Ethnic Diversity](#) by the American Society of Criminology. The goal of these fellowships is to help racial and ethnic minorities successfully matriculate through doctoral programs by easing the financial burden incurred by graduate students. Collectively, these awards are important to me because they have allowed me to accomplish my goal of receiving my PhD. I will be forever grateful to both organizations for their help and support.

Advice for anyone considering graduate school

Graduate school is a rewarding experience that aids in intellectual development. It requires great commitment and work ethic. It also requires individuals to be open to learning in a more nuanced way. This challenges the way we think. I would advise anyone considering graduate school to not take criticism as an indictment of you as a person but rather as an opportunity to grow, learn, and strengthen your own ideas. This process ultimately makes for a better scholar.

Career aspirations

Upon graduation, I hope to become a tenure-track faculty member. I want to shed light on disparities within the criminal justice system and mentor students to become the next generation of scholars.

