
РОЗДІЛ VIII. КРИМІНАЛЬНЕ ПРАВО ТА КРИМІНОЛОГІЯ; КРИМІНАЛЬНО-ВИКОНАВЧЕ ПРАВО

УДК 343.9

DOI <https://doi.org/10.24144/2788-6018.2025.06.3.1>

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING PRACTICAL SKILLS IN FUTURE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS DURING THE STUDY OF CRIMINOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES

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Vyshnevskya M.M. On the importance of developing practical skills of future law enforcement officers in the study of criminology disciplines.

In the contemporary context, the Ukrainian legal education system is undergoing significant transformation, increasingly focusing on the development of professional competencies aimed at enabling future lawyers to apply their acquired theoretical knowledge in practical settings, including in the sphere of criminal-procedural relations. Among the legal sciences, criminology as a discipline occupies a particularly important position, as it combines theoretical knowledge with a direct practical component. Criminology education, when effectively integrating foundational theoretical knowledge with practical skills, equips law enforcement professionals to act competently and efficiently in specific criminogenic situations.

The Ukrainian legal education system is undergoing significant transformation, increasingly emphasizing the development of professional competencies that enable future lawyers and law enforcement officers to effectively apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings, including in the sphere of criminal-procedural relations. Among legal disciplines, criminology holds a special position due to its integration of theoretical foundations with direct practical application. By effectively combining fundamental theoretical knowledge with hands-on skills, criminology education equips law enforcement professionals to operate competently in specific criminogenic situations.

Research indicates that criminology education in Ukraine is evolving and possesses substantial potential for integrating international best practices in combining theory and practice into the domestic educational framework. This integration supports the development of professional competencies in future law enforcement personnel. A strong criminological culture, grounded in both theory and practice, is essential for enabling professionals to respond effectively to criminogenic challenges.

The article emphasizes the importance of establishing criminology laboratories and dedicated criminology offices within higher education institutions, implementing dual programs that combine practical experience with academic study, fostering close collaboration between universities and law enforcement agencies, and supporting student academic mobility. Such initiatives facilitate the cultivation of analytical and critical thinking, professional responsibility, and effectiveness in crime prevention and law enforcement activities.

Key words: criminology, criminology education, criminal offenses, criminogenic situations, practical skills, professional competence, analytical and critical thinking, criminological expertise, offender profiling, criminological assessment.

Вишневська М.М. Щодо важливості формування практичних навичок майбутніх правоохоронців під час вивчення дисциплін кримінологічного циклу.

Вказується, у сучасному контексті система юридичної освіти України зазнає значних трансформацій, дедалі більше уваги приділяється розвитку професійних компетенцій, спрямованих на те, щоб майбутні юристи могли застосовувати набуті теоретичні знання на практиці, зокрема у сфері кримінально-процесуальних відносин. Серед юридичних наук кримінологія як дисципліна

займає особливо важливе місце, оскільки поєднує теоретичні знання з безпосередньою практичною складовою. Кримінологічна освіта, ефективно інтегруючи фундаментальні теоретичні знання з практичними навичками, озброює фахівців правоохоронних органів компетентними та ефективними діями в конкретних криміногенних ситуаціях.

Визначається, що українська система юридичної освіти суттєво змінюється, вона все більше орієнтується на формування професійних компетентностей, які мають бути спрямовані на здатність майбутнього юриста використовувати здобуті теоретичні знання на практиці, в тому числі й у сфері кримінально-процесуальних відносин. Серед правових наук дисципліні «Кримінологія» приділяється особливе місце саме тому, що вона поєднує теоретичні знання з безпосереднім практичним компонентом. Саме кримінологічна освіта при ефективному поєднанні фундаментальних теоретичних знань із практичними навичками дозволить правоохоронцям професійно діяти в конкретних криміногенних ситуаціях.

Доведено, що вітчизняна кримінологічна освіта розвивається та має великий потенціал для інтеграції міжнародного досвіду поєднання теоретичної та практичної складової в українську освітню систему, що сприятиме формуванню професійних компетентностей майбутніх правоохоронців. Саме кримінологічна культура при ефективному поєднанні фундаментальних теоретичних знань із практичними навичками дозволить правоохоронцям професійно діяти в конкретних криміногенних ситуаціях.

Автор статті наголошує на створенні кримінологічних лабораторій та кримінологічних кабінетів у закладах вищої освіти, забезпечити дуальні програми з метою поєднання практики і навчання, налагодити тісну співпрацю між закладами вищої освіти та правоохоронними органами, підтримати академічну мобільність здобувачів. Таке поєднання теорії і практики сприятимуть формуванню аналітичного та критичного мислення, професійної відповідальності та ефективної діяльності у сфері боротьби та запобігання злочинним проявам.

Ключеві слова: кримінологічна наука, кримінологічна освіта, кримінальні правопорушення, криміногенні ситуації, практичні навички, професійна компетентність, аналітичне та критичне мислення, кримінологічна експертиза, особа правопорушника, кримінологічний портрет.

Problem Statement. In the contemporary context, the Ukrainian legal education system is undergoing significant transformation, increasingly focusing on the development of professional competencies aimed at enabling future lawyers to apply their acquired theoretical knowledge in practical settings, including in the sphere of criminal-procedural relations. Among the legal sciences, criminology as a discipline occupies a particularly important position, as it combines theoretical knowledge with a direct practical component. Criminology education, when effectively integrating foundational theoretical knowledge with practical skills, equips law enforcement professionals to act competently and efficiently in specific criminogenic situations.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The issue of developing practical criminological skills in future law enforcement officers has been addressed by both Ukrainian and international scholars, including O.M. Bandurka, O.M. Dzhuzha, V.V. Vasilevich, O.M. Lytvynov, Yu.O. Levchenko, H.Z. Yaremko, N.I. Ustritska, J. Pratt, S. Young, E. Tullo, J. Dealey and others. However, this topic remains insufficiently explored.

In this context, **the aim of the present study** is to analyze the development of practical skills in future law enforcement officers during the study of criminology disciplines.

Presentation of research material and main results. According to global statistics, criminology is a popular discipline in higher education institutions, attracting students primarily due to its practical component, which allows them to engage directly with the study of offenders (criminological profiling) and to apply theoretical knowledge in practical activities. Many scholars consider criminology to be a socio-legal science. For example, in the United Kingdom, criminology is an interdisciplinary social science subject, often taught by staff from various faculties and departments, typically including law, sociology, psychology, and social work [1].

In the United States, there has been a significant increase in the number of students choosing criminology courses among other subjects within the criminal law curriculum [2, p. 523]. In the United Kingdom, criminology is also a popular discipline in higher education, with 164 institutions offering a total of 1,184 undergraduate courses related to criminology and 237 courses available at the postgraduate level [1]. As early as 2011, M. Bosworth and C. Hoyle noted that "criminology is flourishing" [3], and this trend continues, particularly, as D. Palmer suggests, in English-speaking countries [4].

Criminology as a science is not static; it is rapidly evolving. Driven by practical necessity, new innovative subfields of criminology have emerged, such as criminotology, criminofamilistics, digital and cyber criminology, military criminology, clinical criminology, family criminology, terrorism criminology, and others.

In this context, both theoretical and practical training of specialists – criminologists – and their professional criminological literacy are of paramount importance. The task of criminology as a scientific discipline is not merely to provide education, but to foster criminological upbringing of specialists, developing criminological significant qualities within the framework of professional training [5, p. 221].

We share the view of prominent Ukrainian scholars O.M. Bandurka and O.M. Lytvynov that the effectiveness of crime prevention directly depends on the level of scientific support and analytical guidance at all levels, as well as on the intensity of interaction between researchers and practitioners across related scientific spheres in the creation of a coordinated, integrated, and comprehensive scientific output [6, p. 6].

Let us turn to the experience of leading countries in implementing practice-oriented methods of teaching criminology disciplines. In the United States, Clinical Legal Education (CLE) is widely applied, where students are involved in handling real criminal cases under the supervision of professionals. Problem-based learning (PBL) has also been introduced in criminology education [7], which helps develop analytical thinking and problem-solving skills among higher education students.

In British universities, considerable attention is paid to the development of research skills. Students undertake internships in collaboration with local law enforcement agencies, facilitating the integration of academic knowledge with real-world practice [8]. Multimedia resources, including videos, interactive simulations, and online platforms, play a significant role in supporting this process.

In Germany, within the framework of dual education (Duales Studium), higher education is combined with practical work in law enforcement agencies. Students have the opportunity to receive a salary and even social insurance [9]. Thus, they gain hands-on experience directly in the workplace.

Australia integrates criminology with psychology and sociology, promoting an interdisciplinary approach. Australian universities combine traditional academic instruction with practical experience, aiming to prepare students for professional careers. The Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) program, implemented through practical workshops or internships, enables students to gain hands-on experience while acquiring specific knowledge and skills. This program is highly popular across higher education institutions in the country, as it effectively bridges theoretical learning with professional practice.

The Bridge of Hope Innocence Initiative (BOHII) at RMIT is an innocence project that, since its establishment in 2014, has provided students with an innovative, applied work-integrated learning (WIL) experience while simultaneously raising public awareness of errors in the criminal justice system. BOHII functions as a multi-disciplinary, on-campus workplace, enabling students to investigate claims of wrongful convictions.

Through participation in investigations and exposure to issues surrounding wrongful convictions in Australia, students develop competencies in ethics, professional communication, critical thinking, case analysis methodologies, resilience, and self-care, thereby gaining authentic learning experiences and transferable, work-ready skills.

BOHII stands as the only Australian innocence project designed as an internship model for criminal justice and criminology students. While other similar initiatives exist as WIL opportunities, they are typically offered through clinical legal education programs, such as the Griffith University Innocence Project, the University of Toronto Externship Innocence Canada, and the California Western School of Law Innocence Project. The internship-based WIL model is particularly significant within the context of criminological education [10].

An interesting area of study is the Canadian experience in the practical training of criminology students using evidence-based models, which could potentially be adapted for implementation in higher education institutions in Ukraine. To analyze various crime indicators, students work with multiple criminal data sources, including: Statistics Canada (Crime and Justice) [11], General Social Survey Victimization (GSS Victimization) [12].

Students utilize analytical software and methodologies such as SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), Python, geospatial analysis (GIS), and other tools to process and interpret complex datasets.

Several Canadian universities, including Simon Fraser University and the University of Ottawa, maintain criminology analysis laboratories, where collaborative projects with law enforcement agencies are conducted. Within these projects, students examine preventive measures and crime control strategies and provide evidence-based recommendations.

In the framework of socially-oriented initiatives, students, together with law enforcement personnel, conduct surveys, assess the safety of specific neighborhoods, and develop recommendations aimed at maintaining public order. Such experiential learning enables students to acquire both theoretical knowledge and practical skills that are directly applicable to contemporary criminological practice.

Within the framework of criminological research on offender behavior, geographical profiling has gained popularity in Canada, notably developed by Professor D. Kim Rossmo. Future law enforcement

professionals utilize GIS (Geographic Information Systems) to analyze serial offenses and construct offender profiles. Geographic profiling explores this cutting-edge investigative methodology for determining the most probable area of an offender's residence by analyzing the locations of a series of connected crimes. Geoprofiling allows police detectives and law enforcement officers to prioritize suspects, focus their investigations, and manage information overload [13].

Contemporary criminology in Estonia also integrates theory with practice through academic or procedural training, internships in law enforcement and human rights organizations, government ministries, and other institutions. Estonia has introduced and is actively developing a modern subfield of criminology – digital criminology – which focuses on the study of cybercrime for the purposes of investigation and prevention of criminal offenses in cyberspace. This development has been supported through the establishment of the e-Crime Unit, a specialized division within the police and prosecution services.

Students studying criminology have the opportunity to participate in practical training modules within law enforcement agencies, where they analyze digital crime traces, examine methods for preventing cybercrime, and assess information security risks.

Ukrainian scholars also emphasize that the study of criminology is an important component of professional training not only for lawyers but also for sociologists, psychologists, economists, political scientists, educators, and other specialists. Criminological knowledge is essential for personnel of the National Police of Ukraine, the judiciary, the prosecutor's office, the Security Service of Ukraine, correctional institutions, and other agencies. Without the ability to apply contemporary criminological knowledge, it is impossible to develop and implement effective crime prevention measures, creatively utilize positive international experience in this field, or apply international legal instruments, considering the organized and transnational nature of crime [14, p. 9].

The theoretical component of criminology is essential for studying scholars' perspectives and positions regarding the elements of the discipline, as well as for shaping students' scientific worldview. During the study of the discipline, future lawyers become acquainted with classical theories of crime, including the works of C. Lombroso, E. Durkheim, R. Merton, and D. Garland, which establish the foundational approaches to understanding the causes of criminal behavior [15, p. 88].

However, contemporary criminology requires not only the acquisition of theoretical knowledge but also its effective application in real-world situations. The practical component is an integral part of criminology education for higher education students, aimed at developing skills to analyze real-life situations.

Effective methods for practical classes include case studies (solving, analyzing, and evaluating real criminological situations); debates and roundtable discussions; analysis of statistical indicators regarding criminogenic situations in different regions of the country; study and analysis of judicial practice; mastering skills in conducting criminological expertise of criminal legislation; and creating offender profiles using modern profiling software.

It is advisable to devote special attention to the development of student projects on relevant criminological topics, such as criminological profiling, modeling the behavior of specific types of offenders, criminology, cybercrime, criminological victimology, and others. Contemporary criminologists and law enforcement officers use criminal profiling as an investigative method, which employs behavioral and psychological analysis to generate predictions about the characteristics of the most likely suspects in a crime [16, p. 365]. The basis of criminological profiling lies in anthropological and behavioral concepts of the causes of criminal behavior. Accordingly, the sources for profiling include studies conducted by criminologists, psychiatrists, and criminal psychologists [17, p. 183]. Criminal profiling involves the examination of criminal case materials and the interpretation of evidence. The outcome of a profiler's work is the preparation of a criminal profile – a legally significant document that describes the personality and behavior of both the offender and the victim in the context of a specific crime or series of crimes [17, p. 184].

The participation of future lawyers, together with law enforcement officers, in surveys, observations, and various trainings and seminars on crime prevention and deterrence also contributes to the effective mastery of the discipline.

Practical training in law enforcement agencies plays a significant role in the acquisition of criminological knowledge by higher education students. Future lawyers have the opportunity to apply and expand their theoretical knowledge in practice, interact with professionals, and participate in specific activities related to the prevention and deterrence of various types of crime, including "community policing" as a model of police-community interaction. It is advisable to involve students during their internships in law enforcement agencies in the analysis of individual criminal cases, preparation of offender and victim profiles, risk assessment, and the development of strategies for apprehension.

Conclusions. In summary, domestic criminology education is evolving and has considerable potential for integrating international experience in combining theoretical and practical components into the Ukrainian educational system, thereby contributing to the formation of professional competencies in future law enforcement officers. A strong criminological culture, achieved through the effective integration of foundational theoretical knowledge with practical skills, enables law enforcement professionals to act competently in specific criminogenic situations.

Drawing on international experience, emphasis should be placed on establishing criminology laboratories and dedicated criminology offices in higher education institutions, implementing dual programs to combine practice with academic study, fostering close collaboration between universities and law enforcement agencies, and supporting student academic mobility. Such integration of theory and practice promotes the development of analytical and critical thinking, professional responsibility, and effective performance in crime prevention and law enforcement activities.

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