Stockton University
Compass Fund
Proposal Form

General Application Information

Project Leader Name	**Kimberley Schanz**
Project Leader Email	**Kimberley.Schanz@stockton.edu**
Project Partner(s)	**Jess Bonnan-White, the MACJ program**
Title of Project	**Addressing Student Retention in the Master's in Criminal Justice Program**

I am a:		Student	X	Faculty Member		Staff Member

Project start date: 09/01/2022	Project end date: 06/31/2024

Proposal Category (choose one)

One-Time Project/Event	One-Year Pilot Project		Two-Year Pilot Project
$5,000 or less	$5,000 or less		$5,000 or less
More than $5,000	More than $5,000	X	More than $5,000

Strategic Area of Focus

X	*Inclusive Student Success*
	Diversity and Inclusion
X	*Teaching and Learning*
X	*Strategic Enrollment Management*
	Financial Sustainability
	Campus Community, Communication, and Shared Governance

Goals: select all relevant goals for your strategic area/s.

Inclusive Student Success

X	Offer comprehensive support systems that recognize how a more diverse student body brings a broader range of academic, social, and cultural assets, challenges, and needs.
X	Work continuously to close equity gaps in students' access to learning opportunities, research with faculty, academic achievement, degree attainment, and post-graduate opportunities
X	Build enrollment strategies that position Stockton as a first-choice academic home for a diverse, high achieving applicant pool.
	Increase partnership opportunities for, and with, our growing network of talented and dedicated alumni.

Diversity and Inclusion

	Focus on recruiting, hiring, and retaining a high-quality and increasingly diverse faculty and staff.
	Build enrollment strategies to reach students who have not previously seen Stockton as their academic home.
	Ensure access to sufficient resources so that all students have the opportunity to participate in foundational elements of Stockton's liberal arts education.
	Restructure institutional aid to better address financial need, thereby spreading available funds across a larger population of financially disadvantaged students.
	Intentionally create culturally affirming learning opportunities and spaces that foster a sense of belonging, safety, and wellness for all students.

Teaching and Learning

X	Enhance information about study skills, time management, and adaption to campus life through a variety of venues to start students on the right academic footing.
X	Embrace new academic programs and approaches that enhance teaching and learning, respond to changing social and economic conditions, and prepare students for emerging fields.
	Reinforce our Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) with students and encourage faculty to align curricular and co-curricular activities to create a well-rounded education, relevant to a changing world.
X	Recognize and support the inherent value and contributions of faculty in their courses as well as activities outside of the classroom.
	Support faculty research about, and participation in, professional development opportunities that strengthen the classroom experience.

Strategic Enrollment Management

X	Develop enrollment and retention strategies at the institutional, school, and program levels that account for our mission, market demand, cost, and capacity.
	Continue to strengthen the University's data analytics efforts regarding recruitment, persistence, and graduation, as well as enrollment, placement testing, housing, and financial aid projections.
	Strengthen partnerships with high schools and community colleges through programs.

Financial Sustainability

Coordinate efforts between strategic, academic, and financial planning, including the determination of enrollment strategies specific to academic programs and the financial impact of particular pedagogic strategies.
Implement a University-wide, zero-based budgeting exercise for non-salary expenditures to ensure optimal resource allocations, particularly with respect to discretionary expenses, and an accurate understanding of program costs.
Coordinate with key stakeholders to institute appropriate space- and time-management practices, a capital investment strategy, and an accompanying campus master plan update that aligns with the University's academic and student life goals, and describes new facility needs and appropriate reinvestment in existing facilities, along with information technology and infrastructure.
Create strategies to enhance the University's financial ratios and ensure the integrity of the University's credit rating.
Leverage capital and intellectual assets to optimize revenue-generating operations.
Reallocate existing resources toward uses that strengthen operations, revenue, FTE enrollment, and the University brand.
Maintain and routinely test a multi-year financial planning model.

Campus Community, Communication, and Shared Governance

Collectively evaluate our academic and administrative structures to ensure we are as efficient and effective as possible.
Renew our commitment to shared governance and transparency.
Regularly share institutional updates and collaboratively assess our strategic planning process.
Empower our staff, alongside our faculty, students, and administration – to share in the governance of our institution.
Embrace vigorous conversation in an atmosphere of collegiality and respect.

Please provide a narrative summary of your project.

The Master's program in Criminal Justice (MACJ) has acknowledged that the largest barrier to success for our incoming students is their under preparedness for academic success at the graduate level. The two main areas that the program has highlighted as problematic to their students' success are 1) their (inaccurate) expectations for graduate work and 2) their writing skills, which are a key skill to their future careers. Many of our first semester students are struggling in the transition from undergraduate to work to graduate work, with 6 out of the 12 (50%) first semester graduate students achieving at least one grade lower than a B (the required minimum grade of MACJ program classes) or withdrawing from a class due to low grades in the Fall 2021 semester. Anecdotally, MACJ precepting faculty report students specifically citing inaccurate expectations for work quality and time commitments as main sources of their difficulties in the transition. Additionally, Appendix A consists of a sampling of student writing assignments with instructor feedback inclusive of multiple types of classes (core courses vs. track electives), professors, and types of assignments (research papers, position-taking papers, etc.). Across the provided assignments, there are central issues highlighted by the instructions: issues with logical argument structure, APA format, claim-evidence support, conciseness, empirical evidence interpretation, and grammar/sentence structure. All of these issues are essential to appropriate writing in the criminal justice discipline and, the program believes, a key element of the MACJ program's mission. To support this belief, results from our most recent Alumni survey respondents indicated that the ability to write clearly and effectively was very important to their current or former criminal justice employment position (see Appendix B). In fact, the MACJ program, in their most recent Five-Year Report, highlighted under-preparedness of the students as a threat to the success and quality of the MACJ program as a whole. As a result, we need to address the gap in expectations of graduate-level work and writing skills that currently exists at admission to the MACJ program.

The MACJ program proposes that we develop and implement a one-day workshop designed to address the gaps in student preparedness within the first four weeks of their first semester in the program. This workshop will be required for all students in their first semester of MACJ classes. When they attend orientation, as is required prior to the start of their first classes in the MACJ program by the program itself and the Office of Graduate Studies, they will be given the date of this workshop and informed of its mandatory nature. The workshop will be held sometime during weeks 3-4 of the semester, so students will be given ample time to accommodate the workshop into their schedules.

The MACJ program faculty want this workshop, since it will be mandatory, to be as accessible as possible to all students. This is why we do not want to make the workshop credit-bearing (and thereby requiring tuition costs and fees) and why we are requesting to provide all materials as well as food and drink for the students attending the workshop. It is essential to the MACJ program faculty that we provide this opportunity for students in a way that requires from them no more than their time and attention. We as a faculty also do not want to require extra time of our students unless we are sure that what we are requiring is effective at its stated goals, hence the need for this pilot study. We recognize that other programs have created credit-bearing courses for this purpose for their students, but given our lack of scheduling flexibility (with core and track elective courses that must be taught, along with the service to the undergraduate program our teaching provides), we felt this was the most cost-effective and time-efficient option for both students and the university.

This workshop will address the following topics:
- the difference in expectations between undergraduate and graduate programs,

- the different types of writing and relevant skills needed for each
- the skills needed to choose an appropriate paper topic (e.g., creating an argument structure, connecting claims to empirical evidence) and begin gathering sources for it,
- APA style and format necessary for writing in the discipline,
- How to write an integrative "power" paragraph, and,
- How to use rubrics and apply them to writing and peer review.

The MACJ program has two overarching goals for this workshop. The primary goal of this workshop is to provide the baseline level of accurate expectations and skills that incoming students need to be successful and can then build upon in their MACJ classes. By providing incoming students with appropriate expectations, they will have the opportunity to adjust their approaches to the program and its classes accordingly, increasing the likelihood that they will successfully meet those expectations. As these expectations are reinforced and discussed in every MACJ class, this workshop will provide incoming students a head-start towards working towards meeting them. Additionally, by spending time reviewing writing skills, the workshop will serve as the universal equalizer for our incoming students as we understand that students from a variety of backgrounds and paths to our graduate program may have a variety of undergraduate writing skills. While each class in the MACJ program is required to include some writing practice and/or instruction, this practice and/or instruction is aimed towards elevating students' skills from high quality undergraduate writing to high quality graduate writing. In order to maximize the ability of our faculty to achieve this, we need to ensure that all students coming into the MACJ program have a minimum level of writing skills that they can base their future learning on. We also anticipate that if students are introduced to basic concepts and expectations early in the program (and that this program is continued with subsequent cohorts), faculty can spend their efforts in writing practice and/or instruction emphasizing higher-order critical thinking and writing skills. The workshop is designed to both reinforce the skills that some students may already have been exposed to create high quality undergraduate writing and to teach those same skills to other students who may not have been exposed to them. Since this workshop is not aimed to provide a four-year degree's worth of writing skills, but is instead to reinforce and tailor those to be improved upon in later classes, a day-long workshop, the skills from which will be reinforced in each class the students take, will be enough to address the current gap, in the program's opinion.

The secondary goal of this workshop is to provide a cohort-based experience, the only of its kind in the program currently. Other graduate programs at Stockton use a cohort-model and have acknowledged its benefits. This workshop, done in cohorts, would be the first opportunity that our program would have to encourage the cohort-format and its benefits in our program. The MACJ program argues that both of these goals will not only enhance student success, but it will also enhance retention in the program for all students who come to Stockton, regardless of their academic backgrounds.

Strategic Impact
- How will this project clearly address the strategic area/s of focus and the goal/s chosen above?
- What will be the institution-wide impact of this project?

This project will address the three relevant strategic areas of focus as follows:

Inclusive Student Success – As the majority of the students who enroll in the MACJ program are Dual Degree Criminal Justice students, and the Dual Degree program just enacted more inclusive admissions criteria, this workshop will directly provide discipline-specific support and skill building for the incoming students, resulting in a reduction of the equity gap in academic achievement and degree attainment. In the same turn, the workshop is also designed to orient "new" students to Stockton University (students enrolling in the MACJ program from external institutions) who may not have had the same emphasis of writing in their undergraduate educations. One aim of the workshop is to create a "cohort" mentality so that students start viewing themselves and their colleagues as additional resources for academic achievement in ways that replicate job market expectations. We expect this

workshop to increase the quality and success of our students, which will, in turn, increase the quality of the MACJ program, making it more attractive to potential students from multiple markets.

Teaching and Learning – This workshop is proposed as a pedagogically innovative way to enhance students' opportunities to develop their study, writing, and time management skills as well as adapt more effectively to the transition to graduate-level learning. By providing students with this opportunity at the outset of their admission to MACJ (and continuing to reinforce the content throughout their education in their individual classes), we can increase student retention in the program and increase student degree attainment and post-graduate success.

Strategic Enrollment Management – This workshop is a strategy for faculty to be directly involved in the process of ensuring the retention of students admitted into the MACJ program. By providing additional learning opportunities to students to build the skills directly related to their academic success, we are ensuring that not only will the program be more attractive to incoming students, but those who do enroll are likely to persist to graduation.

With the expansion of programs, graduate students are increasingly key members of the Stockton University community. These students serve as graduate research assistants for program faculty and also contribute to interdisciplinary projects as faculty collaborate across schools and programs. Developing writing skills produces students not only better prepared for writing requirements of entry-level criminal justice positions, but also better positioned to take advantage of scholarship and discipline-specific and interdisciplinary mentoring opportunities at Stockton. For example, the MACJ program currently has, through the Office of Graduate Studies, the opportunity through Graduate Assistantships (GAs) to involve graduate students directly in research. However, out of the 9 full-time, regularly teaching graduate faculty, 6 report not applying for GAs due to their concerns about graduate student under preparedness and/or writing skills, and 8 report being hesitant to apply for GAs for the same reasons (see Appendix C for full results). Should students have the opportunity, through this proposed workshop, to jump start their skills, by the time they are eligible for a GA position, they will likely be better prepared and faculty will be more willing to directly include them in their research. Additionally, this workshop model, should it prove to be effective, could serve as a model for all graduate programs at Stockton who are likely dealing with similar student issues. The MACJ program faculty are dedicated to helping other graduate programs create and develop workshops similar to the one we are proposing using the methods that we'll be pilot testing in this workshop. If we can show that this workshop is effective, then we will be happy to work with other graduate programs as well as the Office of Graduate Studies to expand our successes / challenges to other FACULTY who may be interested in replicating a similar model in their own program.

Assessment Plan
- How will you know if your project is a success?
- What are your anticipated outcomes and specific measurements for success?
- What is your project's "finish line"?

The MACJ program has acknowledged that students are coming to the program under-prepared for graduate study for multiple years. After our two-year pilot of this program, we will compare academic outcomes between those who completed the program as compared to those who did not from the two years prior and will also examine participants' attitudinal responses to the curriculum. Additionally, we will prepare a survey for program faculty examining their perceptions of student preparedness that will be administered pre-implementation of this workshop and after each semester it is implemented as well as after the end of the pilot study.

Budget Summary – Compass Fund Requested Funding Only

	Item	FY2022 July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022	FY2023 July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023	FY2024 July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	Notes/Comments (stipends, supplies, hospitality, etc.)
1.	Faculty Compensation - Workshop	2160.00	2160.00		Three faculty will run the workshop (8 hrs) at a rate of $90/hr.
2.	Faculty Compensation – Preparation	2160.00	1080.00		Three faculty will develop the workshop (8 hrs) in FY 2022 and make needed adjustments (4 hrs) in FY 2023 at a rate of $90/hr.
3.	Food	512.00	542.00		Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack will be provided for 20 students and 3 faculty (cost changes accounts for potential price increases from one year to another).
4.	~~MACJ paraphernalia~~	~~345.00~~	~~345.00~~		~~MACJ paraphernalia will be provided to create a cohort-common keepsake.~~
5.	APA Publication Manuals	685.00	685.00		Provide APA Publication Manuals to all workshop participants as it is a large part of the workshop and their future work in the program.
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10		5517.00			
	Total	~~5862.00~~	4812.00		

Please note: a proposal can only receive support from the Compass Fund for two fiscal years. Compass Funding cannot be used to fund full-time/part-time salaried positions or office computer equipment. Compass Funding cannot be transferred to other budgets.

Compass Funding Budget Questions

What department or academic school will your budget for this project reside?	SOBL/CRIM
Who will be the Budget Unit Manager (BUM)?	Dr. Marissa Levy
Who will be the budget processor?	Denise Green

If you are requesting funding to hire a TES or consultant, is that person a current Stockton employee?	Yes, currently paid as a/an: ___ Adjunct ___ Faculty ___ Staff ___ TES ___ Student	_X__ No
Will you need Compass Funds for immediate use to begin your project?	Yes, date needed: _8/01/2022__	___ No

Additional Funding from Other Sources

Are you receiving any other University funding for this project?	___ Yes	_X_ No
If so, from where?		
If so, what is the amount and purpose of this additional funding?		
If so, has this additional funding already been secured or is it just anticipated at this time?		

How will this project sustain itself after Compass Funding concludes? (You only need to answer this question if you are seeking support beyond a one-time project or event)
The MACJ program hopes that, should this workshop prove to be successful, that regular funding will be provided either via the School of Behavioral Sciences and/or the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Additional Support Questions

Will your project require support from Information Technology Services?	___ Yes	_X__ No
If yes, please provide details:		
Will your project require support from Plant/Facilities & Operations?	___ Yes	_X__ No
If yes, please provide details:		
Will your project require support from any other unit or division?	___ Yes	_X_ No
If yes, please provide details		

Divisional Executive Approval/Support

Have you discussed and received endorsement of your Compass Fund proposal from your Divisional Executive? Please include an email or memo from your Divisional Executive with this application or send the documentation to CompassFund@stockton.edu	Yes (see Appendix D)