Subject-Specific Academic Performance and Criminologist Licensure Examination Outcomes: Implications for Curriculum Enhancement in Philippine Criminal Justice Education

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ABSTRACT:

This research assessed the relationship between the Criminologist Licensure Examination (CLE) results and the subject-specific performance of the BS Criminology graduates of Cagayan State University-Aparri Campus for the School Years 2021 to 2022 up to 2023 to 2024. The study used descriptive-correlational design in analyzing the documentary data of 293 respondents comprised of 84 graduates from Batch 2022, 96 graduates from Batch 2023 and 113 graduates from Batch 2024. The data involved their CLE results across all six subject areas, namely Correctional Administration (CA), Criminology (CRIM), Crime Detection and Investigation (CDI), Criminalistics (CTS), Law Enforcement Administration (LEA) and Criminal Law and Jurisprudence (CLJ). The results of the study revealed that the graduates generally performed at satisfactory to good levels in all subject areas. They performed best in Criminalistics (CTS) and Correctional Administration (CA), which have the highest inter-cohort variability. The graduates' board examination results showed an upward trend across cohorts in CLJ, CRIM, CDI and CA and CTS recorded to have the highest number of failures ranging from 26 percent to 41 percent. The study further found out that CDI predicted CLE performance for batch 2022 based on the regression analysis. CRIM was also found to be a consistent predictor for subsequent cohorts. The study recommends ten measures to enhance the curriculum based on the findings of the study, such as adoption of new teaching methodologies, improvement of laboratory infrastructure, continuous professional development of the faculty and conduct of review programs. These shall form a workable framework for criminal justice education programs toward improved graduate performance in the licensure examination.

Keywords: criminologist licensure examination, criminology curriculum, subject-specific performance, criminal justice education, curriculum enhancement, licensure preparation

INTRODUCTION

The licensure examination performance of the graduates is one of the ways to measure the quality of criminology schools' institutional outcomes. For this, the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) administers a national

standard assessment among graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Criminology called Criminologist Licensure Examination (CLE) provided under Republic Act No. 11131 or the Philippine Criminology Profession Act of 2018. This examination tests the graduates' readiness in six core areas, wherein the passing rate should at least be 75 percent general average without scores below 60 percent in any subject. It is for this reason that school administrators and the members of the faculty should ensure subject-specific performance rather than the general readiness of the graduates to meet the content-based demands of the examination.

Although the relationship between licensure examination performance and academic performance has been established in several areas, Ferrer (2024), Amanonce and Maramag (2020) and Estrada (2016) explain that there is insufficiency of such assessment in the field of criminology in the Philippines, particularly evaluating the congruence of proficiency in the subjects taught in the school and the areas being tested in the CLE, which subsequently refocuses priorities in institutional improvements. The same scenario is true in the case of Cagayan State University – Aparri Campus, wherein graduates' performance in the CLE yields inconsistent results across all subject areas despite the strict and high institutionalized academic standards.

According to Ferrer in 2024, there is a high likelihood of passing the licensure examination among graduates with higher academic grades. This is supported by Mappadang et al. in 2022, who explains that students' performance in individual subjects and their academic engagement help shape their careers or professional directions. Guadamor (2024) also found in her research that the quality of laboratory instruction serves as key determinants of licensure performance, including investigative subjects as mentioned by Albina et al. (2022) and Papsa-Ao (2025). However, there is lack of evidence in terms of the effect of prescribed curriculum in the licensure examination among a variety of cohort respondents.

This study fills the gap along this issue by analyzing the relationship between the board examination performance and the academic performance in the individual subjects of BS Criminology graduates from CSU Aparri Campus, thereby providing evidence-based recommendations for the enhancement of the criminology curriculum. The patterns of the graduates' performance across the six subject areas of the CLE will be determined and considered in suggesting interventions and supplying evidence on the statistical prediction of licensure results.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Setting

This study utilized the descriptive-correlational design in characterizing the subject-specific performance of the BS Criminology graduates from CSU – Aparri Campus and in analyzing the patterns of their CLE results when grouped according to three cohorts. It was conducted at the College of Criminal Justice Education of Cagayan State University located in Aparri, Cagayan, Philippines. This institution offers the Bachelor of Science in Criminology Program prescribed and regulated by CHED CMO No. 05, Series of 2018.

Study Population

The respondents of this study were 293 BS Criminology graduates comprised on 84 graduates from S.Y. 2021 to 2022, 96 graduates from S.Y. 2022 to 2023 and 113 graduates from S.Y. 2023 TO 2024, who took the Criminologist Licensure Examination based on PRC's officla list of CLE takers. Non-takers from the same batches of graduates were excluded from the licensure performance computation.

Data Sources

To acquire data on the individual subject grades of the respondents in CA, CLJ, LEA, CTS, CDI and CRIM, the researcher used their academic records from the Campus Registrar's Office. On the other hand, data on their CLE performance categorized per subject area were acquired from the Professional Regulation Commission, particularly from their board rating results.

Data Analysis

Frequency counts, percentages, weighted means and standard deviations were used to describe and analyze the subject-specific academic performance of the graduates. These were further analyzed using the scale below.

97–100% - Excellent

93–96%- Very Good

88–92%- Good

83–87%- Satisfactory

75–82%- Passing

On the other hand, the graduates' CLE performances were analyzed using the scale:

97–100% - Excellent

91–96%- Superior

85–90%- Very Good

80–84%- Satisfactory

75–79%- Fair

74% & below - Failed

The differences among the three groups' CLE performances per subject area were determined as basis in projecting trend variabilities. Regression analysis was conducted to determine which subject area required the most needed intervention or enhancement measures. These altogether can impact specific recommendations for the development of a tailored curriculum based on the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Subject-Specific Academic Performance across Cohorts

Shown in Tables 1 to 6 are the summarized frequency and percentage distribution of the graduates' grades, including the summarized weighted means of all the six subject components of CLE among the three graduate cohorts.

Table 1: Academic Performance in Criminal Law and Jurisprudence (CLJ) by Cohort

Grade Category	B2022 f	B2022 %	B2023 f	B2023 %	B2024 f	B2024 %
93–96% (Very Good)	0	0	0	0	1	1
88–92% (Good)	18	21	14	15	40	35
83–87% (Satisfactory)	65	77	79	82	73	65
75–82% (Passing)	1	1	3	3	0	0
Weighted Mean	86.40		85.58		86.87	
SD	1.58		1.69		1.78	

As shown in the table, Criminal Law and Jurisprudence (CLJ) consistently records satisfactory to good performances among all cohorts with the mean of 85.58 to 86.87 with Batch 2024 having the highest improvement. The standard deviations of 1.58 to 1.78 across the cohorts imply consistency in graduates' grade distribution. Despite this, the prevalence of 'satisfactory' results rather than 'good' grades mean that they may lack enough legal reasoning skills (Albina et al, 2022; & Guadamor, 2024).

Table 2: Academic Performance in Criminology (CRIM) by Cohort

Grade Category	B2022 f	B2022 %	B2023 f	B2023 %	B2024 f	B2024 %
93–96% (Very Good)	1	1	2	2	0	0
88–92% (Good)	60	71	57	59	79	70
83–87% (Satisfactory)	23	27	37	39	34	30
Weighted Mean	88.30		88.04		87.89	
SD	1.63		2.06		1.28	

Grades under the subject area Criminology (CRIM) record the highest means among the six areas garnering means ranging from 87.89 to 88.30. It is evident that most of the graduates

achieved a considerably high level of performance in this subject area. This implies the important role of CRIM in the BS Criminology curriculum, given the strong academic background of the graduates along this area and its being the primary predictor of CLE performance for Batches 2023 and b2024. According to Capunan and Belarmno in 2025, excellence in integrative subjects such as CRIM among students results in better preparedness for professional examinations.

Table 3: Academic Performance in Law Enforcement Administration (LEA**)** by Cohort

Grade Category	B2022 f	B2022 %	B2023 f	B2023 %	B2024 f	B2024 %
93–96% (Very Good)	5	6	2	2	0	0
88–92% (Good)	41	49	46	48	53	47
83–87% (Satisfactory)	38	45	33	34	58	51
75–82% (Passing)	0	0	15	16	2	2
Weighted Mean	88.01		86.88		87.27	
SD	2.67		3.91		2.00	

It can be gleaned in Table 3 that the most of the graduates have 'good' grades in Law Enforcement and Administration (LEA). Among the members of Batch 2022, 49 percent got 'good' grades, 45 percent performed 'satisfactorily' and only 6 percent have 'very good' grades. Batch 2023 records almost similar results with 48 percent having 'good' grades, 34 percent with 'satisfactory' grades, 16 percent with 'passing' grades and 2 percent with 'very good' grades. Batch 2024, on the other hand, account for 58 percent 'satisfactory' grades, 53 percent 'good' grades and 2 percent 'passing' grades.

The weighted means ranging from 86.88 to 88.01 project a decreasing trend but with slightly widening variability based on the standard deviation values of 2.00 to 3.81.

According to Celik and Anderson (2021) and Ferrer (2024), the students' hands-on experiences on administrative situations may affect the differences of their performance in LEA. Administrative skills are better acquired through experiential learning and instruction focused on leadership. These results emphasize that there is a need to further promote scenario-based or experiential learning strategies in LEA courses.

Table 4: Academic Performance in Criminalistics (CTS) by Cohort

Grade Category	B2022 f	B2022 %	B2023 f	B2023 %	B2024 f	B2024 %
93–96% (Very Good)	3	4	4	4	0	0
88–92% (Good)	38	45	16	17	32	28
83–87% (Satisfactory)	42	50	57	59	81	72
75–82% (Passing)	1	1	19	20	0	0
Weighted Mean	87.61		83.18		86.73	
SD	2.12		3.23		1.51	

In Criminalistics, the three cohorts show the widest differences in their grades. For instance, there is a substantial drop from a weighted mean of 83.18 of Batch 2023 compared to the weighted mean of 87.61 of Batch 2022 and 86.73 of Batch 2024. It is noteworthy that 20 percent of Batch 2023 are barely 'passing' in this subject area. According to Guadamor in 2024, performance in CTS may fluctuate due to its heavy laboratory-based nature, including the quality of instructional delivery.

Table 5: Academic Performance in Crime Detection and Investigation (CDI) by Cohort

Grade Category	B2022 f	B2022 %	B2023 f	B2023 %	B2024 f	B2024 %
93–96% (Very Good)	0	0	0	0	0	0
88–92% (Good)	56	67	32	33	63	56
83–87% (Satisfactory)	28	33	56	59	50	44
75–82% (Passing)	0	0	8	8	0	0
Weighted Mean	88.08		86.32		87.73	
SD	1.47		2.53		1.60	

Presented in table 5 is the graduates' performance in Crime Detection and Investigation (CDI). It reveals that a larger portion of Batch 2022 graduates record grades ranging from 88 to 92 and that the remaining members have grades ranging from 83 to 87. Batch 2023 record 83 to 87 grade range for most of its members while fewer members have 'passing' grades. Batch 2024, on the other hand, has majority of its members getting 88 to 92 percent while others got 83 to 87 percent.

Generally, the graduates show strong performance in CDI based on the weighted means ranging from 86.32 to 88.08 and with the standard deviation values from 1.47 to 2.53. this means that the graduates have mastered investigation skills and the investigation process. Recent studies confirm this recognizing investigative subjects as the key aspects that influence licensure examination performance related to their practical use (Albina et al., 2022; Papsa-Ao, 2025). Hence, students need to continually acquire investigative skills and knowledge to remain prepared for the licensure examination.

Table 6: Academic Performance in Correctional Administration (CA) by Cohort

Grade Category	B2022 f	B2022 %	B2023 f	B2023 %	B2024 f	B2024 %
93–96% (Very Good)	6	7	2	2	0	0
88–92% (Good)	67	79	28	29	23	20
83–87% (Satisfactory)	11	13	44	46	85	75
75–82% (Passing)	0	0	22	23	5	4
Weighted Mean	89.90		85.34		85.78	
SD	1.92		3.76		2.10	

Presented in Table 6 is the grade distribution of the graduates along Correctional Administration (CA). It shows that most or 79 percent of the Batch 2022 graduates attain 'good' grades, while 13 percent have 'satisfactory' grade and 7 percent have 'very good' grades. Among Batch

2023 graduates, 46 percent attain 'satisfactory' grades, 29 percent have 'good' grades, 23 percent have 'passing' grades and the remaining 2 percent attain 'very good' grades. For Batch 2024 graduates, majority of them or 75 percent attain 'satisfactory' grades, 20 percent have 'good' grades and 4 percent have 'passing' grades. The weighted means scores range from 85.34 to 89.90 and the standard deviation range from 1.92 to 3.76, which means that there is a slight difference in the distribution of their overall performance.

The differences of the graduates' performances in CA simply means that many of them are challenged to employ management concepts and correctional policies in actual situations. This is considerably the case because CA, according to Reyes et al. (2025), is best learned through analysis of policies and the review of actual scenarios. These results lead to the enhancement of teaching strategies that expose the learners to real-life applications of the policies and concepts.

Subject-Specific Licensure Examination Performance

The CLE ratings of the three cohort respondents along the six subject areas consolidated for comparative analysis are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: CLE Subject-Area Passing Rates by Cohort (%)

CLE Subject	B2022 Pass%	B2022 Fail%	B2023 Pass%	B2023 Fail%	B2024 Pass%	B2024 Fail%
CLJ	64	35	61	20	73	18
CRIM	58	40	69	13	80	12
LEA	77	21	68	14	77	14
CTS	63	36	43	41	65	26
CDI	75	24	73	8	81	11
CA	83	0	61	20	74	17

Note. Pass% and Fail% computed from examinees only (non-takers excluded). Figures rounded to nearest whole number.

As gleaned from the table, there are critical patterns that emerge based on the performances of the different cohorts on subject-specific ratings. Firstly, Criminology (CRIM) garnered the most prevailing improvements across batches with 58 percent from Batch 2022 to 80 percent from Batch 2024, a staggering 22 percent increase. This result emphasized the major role of CRIM in affecting licensure readiness. Secondly, CTS recorded the highest percentage of failures among the six areas, especially among the graduates of Batch 2023 with 41 percent failed, suggesting that performance in this subject area can change across different groups depending on instructional continuity, focus of the review program and laboratory access. Thirdly, Correctional Administration (CA) has the biggest decrease in performance from zero percent failure of Batch 2022 to 2o percent failure rate of Batch 2023. Fourth, the most stable performance across all three cohorts was attained in Law Enforcement Administration (LEA) and Crime Detection and Investigation (CDI) with passing rates ranging from 68 percent to 81 percent.

The same pattern is observed in terms of the weighted means. The highest CLE mean score ranging from 77.11 to 82.37 is observed in the subject area of CDI confirming that graduates have the highest proficiency in this area. In the same manner, CLJ also garnered mean ranges of 74.83 to 79.64, which also shows consistent increase while CT has mean range of 72.71 to 75.94, slightly below the passing benchmark,

which means that this area needs immediate remediations.

Comparative Analysis: Academic versus Licensure Performance Gaps

There is a big difference between the CLE scores and the academic grades of the graduates in several subject areas. Those who's grades In CLJ and CTS, which are satisfactory to good do not always perform well in CLE, which means that the assessments done in the classroom may not fully prepare the students to be licensure ready. This is supported by Ferrer in 2024 who observed that not only the grades achieved but also the type of learning activity can project performance in licensure examinations.

On the other hand, the strong performance of the Batch 2022 graduates in CA with the weighted mean of 89.90 and wherein 79 percent achieved 'good' grades did not correlate with their CLE scores with the weighted mean of 76.14. This indicates the probability of mismatch between what is taught in the courses along this area and what transpires in the licensure examination. This necessitates better alignment between the curriculum and the CLE contents. Te licensure examinations' coverage, assessment formats and cognitive evaluation levels need to be incorporated in the curriculum.

Evidence-Based Curriculum Enhancement Recommendations

The recommendations below are based on the analysis of subject-specific performance data of the respondents, the regression analysis results and the review of relevant literature. These are organized in themes intended for implementation by the faculty members, program administrators and curriculum planners of Cagayan State University – Aparri Campus and which may also be adopted by other criminology institutions.

1. Deepening Legal Reasoning Instruction in CLJ

The graduates' performance in this area is considerably low wherein graduates only attained 'satisfactory' rating even in CLE. Instruction along this area should include scenario-based teaching strategies, moot court simulations and analysis of jurisprudence by the Supreme Court in a more comprehensive and advance levels across the three cohorts. Students should be exposed to the CLE format of examination and faculty-led revisions of the legal competencies aligned with the CLE should be done, especially in fourth year. Also, common difficulties in CLJ should become the focus of review sessions. Albina et al (2022) also found that students with more exposure to law-related activities and who have higher reasoning skills have better chances of passing the licensure examination.

2. Sustaining and Deepening CRIM as an Integrative Core Subject

Being that CRIM emerged to be the best predictor of CLE performance across batches, its importance should be considered in pedagogical practices. Teachers should use multidisciplinary and problem-based approaches to increase students' capacity to analyze and synthesize laws, society, criminal investigation and administration. There should be a continuous review of the course content of CRIM based on PRC examination guidelines and CHED standards. Lastly, the performance of students in this area should hint possible measures to increase their chances to pass the licensure examination focusing on their weaknesses. All these interventions are supported by Capundan and Belarmino in 2025, emphasizing the value of integrative academic preparation.

3. Expanding Experiential Learning in LEA

Performance in law Enforcement Administration may still improve, although it has been stable across cohorts with the SD range of 2.00 to 3.91. To do this, strategies such as scenario-based administrative exercises, case analyses and leadership simulations should be used as context of study. Immersion activities with partner law enforcement agencies and expert lecturers from the partner agencies may also bridge the theoretical and content gaps. Competency-based assessment formats should be adopted to align with outcomes evaluated in

CLE as cited by Ferrer (2024) and Garcia and Orilla (2026).

4. Reducing CTS Performance variability through Infrastructure and Remediation

Criminalistics should receive the most immediate interventions due to the high failing rate and variations in the performance of the different cohorts. The institution should ensure state-of-the-art and adequate laboratory facilities, instructional resources and forensic equipment. Second, students should learn through hands-on exposure. Third, interventions that assist low performing students in CTS should be conducted and this can be done through small-group laboratory tutorials. Finally, there should be a review on CTS as part of the review for the board examination. Albina et al. (2022) and Estrada (2016) both highlight that review and academic support can increase performance in technical areas of the licensure examination.

5. Strengthening CDI through Investigative Skill Integration

Crime Detection and Investigation emerged to be the highest predictor of licensure examination at the same time has the highest mean score, especially with Batch 2022, which emphasizes its major role in CLE success. To sustain this, case reconstruction activities, simulated crime scene exercises and performance-based investigative evaluations compliant to CLE standards should be conducted. CDI may be closely integrated with CTS in terms of curriculum sequencing to enhance forensic skills in the context of criminal investigation. Papsa-Ao in 2025 and Guadamor in 2024 support this integration approach, identifying competency in investigation as the major predictor of CLE performance.

6. Contextualizing CA Instruction within the Philippine Correctional Policy Landscape

The high failure rate in Correctional Administration demands curricular attention, particularly based on the 20 percent failure rate among Batch 2023 graduates and 17 percent failure rate among batch 2024 graduates. Remediations such as alignment of the course content with the Philippine correctional system may be done through case-based and policy focused teaching approaches. Instruction may focus of administrative problem-solving exercises, case analyses\ and policy critiquing tasks to deepen understanding and not mere memorization. The contents of CA course must be regularly aligned with reform initiatives, updated correctional laws and the PRC examination coverage. The faculty members may initiate workshops that analyze policies to enhance the applicability of the laws in actual situations, which is a measure also recommended by Reyes et al. (2025).

7. Institutionalizing GPA-Based Academic Monitoring and Early Intervention

GPA can very well be adopted as a reconning measure of how fair graduates will become successful in taking the Criminologist Licensure Examination because the findings of this study established a very strong correlation between GPA and CLE performance of all three cohorts included in the study ($r=0.450$ to 0.564, $p <0.01$). The school may implement a monitoring system that track the ongoing cumulative GPA of students and record their subject grades vis-à-vis the required benchmarks of the licensure examination. This leads to academic consultations with faculty, tutorials, and mentoring interventions focusing on students determined to be falling below standards. Low-performing students may also receive individualized instruction, which is one that is reflects a good academic retention principle suggested by Tinto (2017 and the early intervention strategies by York et al. (2015).

8. Implementing a Data-guided, Multi-Stage Licensure Review Program

The school may institutionalize formal and structured review programs which align with learning outcomes tested in CLE and which focus on the uniqueness of the subject areas. Pre-tests and post-tests may be administered before and after the review program to determine and monitor weaknesses, such as on areas that yielded high failure rates such as CLJ,

CRIM and CTS. Real time monitoring and group-based assessments throughout the review program should be conducted to allocate needed resources to the most pressing needs in the content areas. Barlizo et al. (2025) highlight the value of data-driven review programs in nursing licensure preparation, which is a model transferable to criminology.

9. Sustaining Faculty Professional Development

Faculty of instruction which continually progress professional competencies and updated with outcomes-based teaching strategies, well-aligned assessment measures and adoptive to CLE standards ensures high quality instruction across the CLE areas. The teachers may be trained on competency-based teaching, development of formative and summative assessment tools and updating of current trends in criminology practices. They may engage in research and licensure analysis and share best instructional practices between high performing subjects like CDI and the underperforming subject areas like CTS. This will solve the disparity of the effectiveness of instruction across different groups consistent with the findings of Çelik and Anderson's in 2021 on the impact of teacher capacity building on student performance.

10. Establishing Systematic Curriculum Review and Quality Assurance

For the preceding recommendations to be fully effective, the institution must ensure sustainable implementation strategies. A common review of the curriculum among stakeholders, which includes the faculty members, alumni, law enforcers and PRC board advisers may be conducted to align instructional content and assessment design with CLE competency standards. This can be guided by the results of this study in terms of what areas to focus and conduct closer monitoring. The responsiveness of the program and its commitment to quality assurance towards national competency standards are key towards the attainment of mandates through CHEd CMO No. 05, Series of 2018 and the broader provisions of RA 11131.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on this study's subject-specific analysis of both academic and licensure performances of the three cohorts of BS Criminology graduates from CSU Aparri Campus, some strengths and weaknesses were identified in the institutions' delivery of the program. Criminology (CRIM) emerged to be the most reliable predictor of CLE performance, and it is also where most of the graduates attained the highest academic performance, which greatly reflects the institution's strength in this area. The two areas that have strong potential for improvement are Criminalistics (CTS) and Correctional Administration (CA) due to the balanced performance of the graduates in these areas. The increasing trend of CLE passing rates across subject areas, particularly in CLJ and CRIM, imply that the institution's curricular and instructional efforts have resulted in positive outcomes, but the high failure rate in CTS reflect the need for improvement in this area.

CSU Aparri and other criminology schools may adopt the ten-evidence-based curriculum enhancement recommendations proposed in this study to strengthen its performance in the Criminologist Licensure Examination. Future research may evaluate the effectiveness of these interventions through longitudinal studies and broader scope involving more cohorts or criminology institutions across the Philippines.

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