ACADEMY OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SCIENCES

FALL 2026

TEACHING, LEARNING & SCHOLARSHIP SECTION

TLS Newsletter

Spread the word about our section!

ACJS · TLS SECTION

WELCOME REMARKS

Now continuing into the fourth quarter of 2026, we as the ACJS TLS executive board wanted to connect with the ACJS community through our newsletter. Already looking forward to the 2027 national convention, while reflecting on successes within our organization from 2026 we hope that together we can continue to increase membership numbers as well as the quality of membership experiences in ACJS.

ACJS 64TH ANNUAL MEETING

Orlando, Florida · March 30 – April 3, 2027

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Greetings, fellow members!

This newsletter will highlight ACJS TLS award winners, provide information on how to apply for future awards, a spotlight of one of our executive members, a member spotlight, and information on our 2027 annual meeting.

This newsletter also outlines a variety of ways in which you can get involved as an officer or as a member of one of our committees. Whether new to or renewing your ACJS membership, you have the unique opportunity to influence the development of our section as we continue to increase membership and shape our policies and traditions. If you have any interest in any officer or other leadership role, contact the committee program coordinator to get details on how to be more involved (Tiffany Kragnes – Tiffany.Kragnes@yc.edu).

Thank you for your continued membership, and support of our section. Please continue to advertise us to your colleagues, and students. Friendly reminder: student membership is free, and is a tangibly rewarding way for students to get involved.

ABOUT OUR SECTION

The purpose of this newsletter is to bring together ACJS members to serve as a multifaceted resource to assist faculty, practitioners, students, administrators, and involved citizens in their integration of innovative and effective teaching and learning techniques, and the scholarship of teaching within the field of criminal justice education and training.

Executive Board

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Tiffany Kragnes
Yavapai College
Term ends March 2027

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Term ends 2027

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GRADUATE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE
Timothy Gary Bentzinger (Ben)
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

SECTION AWARDS

2026 TLS Award Winners

The TLS section awards recognize outstanding contributions to teaching, learning, and scholarship in criminal justice.



TLS INNOVATIVE DESIGN · 2026 WINNER

Dr. Molly Block

Indiana University Bloomington

The TLS Section is proud to honor Dr. Molly Block with the Innovative Design Award.

TLS OUTSTANDING GRADUATE STUDENT AWARD · 2026

Dr. Chandlier Hulse

Indiana University

Chandlier was hired this Fall 2026 semester as the Assistant Professor of Criminology at Heidelberg University in Tiffin, Ohio. She is finishing her dissertation surrounding police perceptions of people experiencing homelessness and mobility at Indiana University while working at Heidelberg. Chandlier teaches courses (FA 2026) such as Introduction to Criminal Justice, Modern Issues in the United States, Research Methods and (Spring 2027) Crime Mapping, Death Penalty, and Victimology.

The TLS Section is proud to honor Dr. Chandlier Hulse with the 2026 TLS Outstanding Graduate Student Award.

Congratulations Dr. Chandlier!



TLS SECTION AWARDS

Call for Nominations

DEADLINE
January 11, 2027

The TLS section awards recognize outstanding contributions to teaching, learning, and scholarship in criminal justice. Members are encouraged to nominate colleagues that have exhibited dedication to innovative and evidence-based teaching and learning methods that result in research-based expanded student learning. Self-nominations are welcomed. For consideration of all awards, nominees must be current members of the TLS section. **Deadline: January 11, 2027.** Please send all nominations to TLS Chair Tiffany Kragnes at tiffany.kragnes@yc.edu.

TLS Fellow Award

$100 CASH AWARD · PLAQUE

In recognition of distinguished contribution to criminal justice education. This award honors a criminal justice faculty member who has demonstrated outstanding contributions to teaching and learning. It requires at least five years of teaching criminal justice, criminology, or related courses. The TLS Fellow Award is considered the highest honor of the Section and reflects long-term and substantial contributions to the fields of teaching and learning. The application must include: 1) Cover letter reflecting your contribution to criminal justice education; 2) a CV; 3) two letters of support (1 to 3 pages). Optional materials are encouraged. Examples include: a syllabus and other supporting documents (published or non published) related to the pedagogical method.

TLS Innovative Design Award

$50 CASH AWARD · PLAQUE

In recognition of an outstanding and innovative pedagogical method in criminal justice. Ideal submissions should include evidence of success such as student evaluations or assessment of the method (formal or informal).

TLS Outstanding Scholarship Award

$50 CASH AWARD · PLAQUE

In recognition of an outstanding article on teaching or learning in criminal justice published within the past two years. Topic must be criminal justice focused but journal is not limited. The application must include a copy of the published article.

TLS Outstanding Graduate Student Award

$50 CASH AWARD · PLAQUE

In recognition of an outstanding current graduate student who is actively engaged in course development, instructional techniques, and involvement with students in the classroom. Examples include: 1) creation or use of new and innovative teaching methods and course materials and 2) creation of challenging and/or innovative courses. Nominations must include: 1) two letters in support (1 to 3 pages); 2) a letter from the nominator that provides rationale and evidence for why the nominee has advanced learning through pedagogically sound and innovative curriculum design; and 3) a syllabus and other supporting documents related to the pedagogical method. Evidence may include design research indicating enhanced learning, persistence, or student evaluations.

All winners receive a cash award and a plaque of recognition, and will be honored at the annual TLS Section General Business Meeting.

MEMBER NEWS

Accomplishments from Some of Our TLS Members

This section is to be dedicated to accomplishments of our ACJS TLS members. If you have a success/accomplishment that you or another member of our section would like to share please email the accomplishment you would like featured to our chair and we will be sure to include it in our upcoming newsletter.

PROMOTION

Ellen Cohn from Florida International University was recently promoted from Associate Professor to Professor. Congratulations Ellen!

NEW BOOK

Dr. Martin Alan Greenberg has published a new book titled, *Underprivileged Youth in the Nation's Capital*. The subject of this book is the District of Columbia's Metropolitan Police rookie Oliver A. Cowan's proposed youth engagement program known as "Junior Police Corps" in 1942.

Congratulations on this accomplishment Dr. Greenberg and thank you for your continued contribution to criminal justice academic content!

If any of our newsletter recipients are interested in purchasing Dr. Greenberg's book it is for sale here: bloomsbury.com/us/engaging-underprivileged-youth-in-the-nations-capital-9781978772205

NEW FROM A TLS MEMBER

Underprivileged Youth in the Nation's Capital

Martin Alan Greenberg

ABOUT THE BOOK

"In 1942, with urban youth violence on the rise, District of Columbia Metropolitan Police rookie Oliver A. Cowan proposed a novel solution: a youth engagement program called the "Junior Police Corps."

At the time, Washington, D.C., was governed by a Congress dominated by segregationists, and most Black residents of the nation's capital lived under the constraints of Jim Crow–era discrimination. Despite these barriers, Officer Cowan created an integrated program that harnessed the talents and energy of local youth while drawing support from civic-minded citizens, community organizations, business leaders, athletes, and entertainers who volunteered their time and resources.

Assigned to one of the city's most impoverished precincts, Cowan accomplished what many thought impossible: he persuaded leaders of some of the area's most notorious youth gangs to help build a program focused on recreation, citizenship, and personal development. As juvenile crime rates declined, Cowan's program was adopted throughout the city.

Martin Alan Greenberg chronicles Cowan's story and traces the evolution of youth engagement programs from the Progressive Era through the end of the twentieth century while also exploring broader themes of civil rights, juvenile justice, and the major social and political events that shaped the century."

424 pages · 41 illustrations

Review by Dr. Robert M. Worley, Lamar University

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TEACHING & LEARNING · ESSAY

How a Criminal Justice Professor Learned to Read

By Martin Alan Greenberg

> *The human body is an incredibly complex structure, with cells, tissues, and organs assembled into highly organized systems that work together to perform an astonishing array of functions —from seeing and hearing to breathing and digesting food to running, playing a musical instrument, and problem-solving.*
>
> —Kara Rogers (2026)[1]

While working as a criminal justice professor at Ulster County (NY) Community College, it took me more than 10 years to complete the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree in Criminal Justice from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. The program has been housed at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice since its inception. I attended the program from 1987 to 2001. I was fortunate to have had the benefit of kind program administrators who renewed my enrollment from semester to semester after I had exceeded the traditional time period for program participation. I also benefited when I received double time to complete the foreign language reading exam. I was 57 years old when I traveled to New York City to submit the requisite copies of my dissertation and to receive the registrar's letter indicating that I had earned the degree as of September 7, 2001. Without question, it was the major educational milestone of my life. Nonetheless, the late start in my academic accomplishment was more than likely influenced by a couple of youthful missteps which had occurred decades earlier.

In 1979, when I was serving as a criminal justice instructor at Hawaii Community College, I had to fly to San Francisco for my first surgery for a detached retina in my left eye. Subsequently, during the COVID-2019-2020 outbreak I went completely blind in my right eye due to another retinal detachment. On September 1, 2026 I underwent surgery again in my left eye for a macular hole. As I write these sentences, my vision is about 20/50 in my left eye; it was about 20/400 just prior to surgery. Why all this medical history? Poor vision has plagued my life and from the days of my youth has diminished some career options in the field of criminal justice as well as my ability to read so I thought it best to provide this information out front. It was something I hid from my family, classmates, and friends throughout most of my elementary school years!

Probably, my troubles began on the very first day of the second grade when my teacher, standing in the front of my classroom, raised her hands in front of her holding two reading workbooks. They each had different colored front covers and titles. I believed I could clearly see the colors of the books, but not the titles from my rear classroom seat. Perhaps, one was green and the other orange or red. While I have no precise memory of the exact colors (I am now 82 years old), I most certainly did not see any wording on the covers. When I was about 20, I discovered I was color blind for gray and orange. Back in the second grade, my teacher asked everyone in the class to simply raise their hands to indicate the workbook that was used in the previous grade. It seems the entire class chose the first grade reading workbook

except for one child—me. I insisted that I had used the workbook of the other color which was apparently labeled second grade. This turned out to be a big mistake on my part—I simply hadn't correctly remembered or discerned the color of the book which had been used. The mistake only became apparent around the last day of the school year. On that day, my second grade teacher asked me to come to the front of the classroom and read for the first time aloud to the entire class in order to demonstrate my superior reading skills. Prior to that day, I had served as the "student reading tutor" for all my classmates, but never read aloud myself. Throughout the year, when urged by my teacher, I would go from desk to desk to hear other students read. In fact, I likely just listened to each student reading as I paraded around the room —so I never read anything throughout the entire school year! I likely cried as I tried to read when I got to the front of the class. Alternatively, I might have stated when I stood in front of the room that I didn't know how to read. Perhaps, I did all three of these actions. From the third grade to the beginning of the sixth grade, I was placed in a remedial reading group as I was at least two grades behind in my reading ability during this time period. I also developed a stutter which may have lasted for a year or more around the time I was placed in the reading group. Academically, my reading difficulty placed me behind several friends I had made. They were able to be placed in special progress classes when we completed elementary school together and transferred to Junior High School at the end of the 6th grade. My friends were able to skip the 8th grade. I not only lost out on this opportunity solely because of my reading score, but was placed in (or rather tracked into) slower learning classes from the 7th through 9th grades.

PS 3, my elementary school in Forest Hills, Queens, NY, was a small school. It had a dedicated classroom for each grade from K to 5 and two rooms for the 6th grade. Thus, many of the same students attended classes together and had the same teachers. As the school years came and went, I became aware that my vision must be impaired. As had occurred in previous years, it was soon announced in early October of the 6th grade that "Health Day" would soon be held and all students must attend. I feared the arrival of this day for more than a year or two, but when the day finally came, I had arrived at a decision. I would take on the risk of being called "four eyes" by some students. On some occasions, the only other child wearing eyeglasses in my class had been bullied with this label. Since he was a short and quiet fellow and didn't standout much, I believed that my tall and animated persona would result in greater attention. It was now clear I needed eyeglasses to correct my nearsightedness. From around the 3rd or 4th grade I was aware that I could not read the 20/20 line on the eye chart placed at the back of the room during "Health Day." My vision was so poor that I couldn't read the signs in store windows or even the store names, yet I never complained to anyone. It turned out that the chart was to the rear of my seat and each year my teachers would ask me to hold a ruler under the normal vision line for each student to read as they came to the front of the room. I was always the last to read the line. At first, perhaps unconsciously, I simply stated the six or seven letters from memory when this first happened, but in subsequent years I made an effort to memorize the line when it was my turn. It was now the last year in my elementary school and the only way out of this morass that I could think of was to wait for my turn and inform all present that I only could see the big "E". When I did exactly this, my teacher was shocked or amazed at this news as she instantly began writing a little note for my parents which I was instructed to bring home. After doing so, I was taken to a local optometrist by my mother and within a couple of days was fitted with my first eyeglasses with tortoise shell frames; they provided me with 20/20 vision. It was a big improvement, since I needed correction for my uncorrected vision was

20/200. I can still recall what the doctor said: "You will be seeing a whole new world."

By the 5th grade, my reading help involved reading aloud lists of words that I would review as nightly homework. In all instances, I was encouraged to sound out each syllable. After I received my first eyeglasses in the 6th grade, I was able to advance two reading grade levels in about two months and I began to routinely visit a local library to find books of interest—an activity I never had previously enjoyed.

By the time I completed my first year or two of college, I became conscious of the fact that while I enjoyed reading, it was rather time-consuming since I was sub-vocalizing all the words. I still do this. Needless to say, as a full-time teacher for more than three decades I have endeavored to emphasize the development of reading and writing skills in all of my classes and oftentimes tell my story about my first eyeglasses, seeking to encourage students to get regular vision checks. ■

NOTES [1]Rogers, K. (2026). Human body systems. Retrieved October 2, 2026, from https://www.britannica.com/science/human-body-systems-2237111

INSIDE DR. GREENBERG'S NEW BOOK

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GRADUATE STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

We Learn to Research, But Do We Learn to Teach?

Reflections on Teaching Practicums and Preparing Future Professors

Sophia Constantinidis Chagas
University of South Florida Doctoral Student

As doctoral students, we spend years learning how to become researchers. We develop research questions, collect and analyze data, write manuscripts, and present our findings at conferences. Yet many of us will eventually find ourselves standing at the front of a classroom, responsible for teaching the next generation of students. This raises an important question: Does knowing our subject make us prepared to teach it?

Before enrolling in my teaching practicum at the University of South Florida, I believed my experience as a graduate teaching assistant had already provided me with a solid foundation for teaching. I had assisted with several online courses, worked in an in-person course with approximately 300 undergraduate students, and delivered guest lectures. Still, the practicum showed me another side of teaching that I had not fully appreciated.

At USF, doctoral students take a teaching practicum during their second year, alongside a professional development course. Through this experience, we learn about course development, syllabus design, instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement. It allows us to begin thinking like instructors before becoming independently responsible for our own classrooms.

One of the biggest lessons I am learning is that knowing the material and knowing how to teach it are two entirely different things. Teaching requires breaking down complex concepts for students encountering them for the first time and finding ways to make the material engaging. I am also learning that students nodding along does not necessarily mean they understand. How do we encourage students to ask questions without putting them on the spot? How do we design assignments that encourage students to apply what they learn rather than simply memorize information?

One moment that stood out involved a group activity in which a student was left without a partner. Although the solution seemed simple, it made me consider how even small instructional decisions can affect a student's classroom experience. I had to think about how to make the student feel included rather than singled out. It reminded me that teaching requires flexibility, awareness, and thoughtful decisions in real time.

Working in a course with approximately 300 students has also shown me how much preparation happens behind the scenes, from coordinating assignments and guest speakers to organizing classroom activities. The practicum has helped me approach these responsibilities from an instructor's perspective, considering how each decision contributes to students' learning.

Being a teaching assistant exposes us to teaching. A teaching practicum intentionally prepares us to become instructors. Through opportunities to practice, reflect, and receive feedback, doctoral students can develop important skills before assuming full responsibility for a classroom.

The practicum has not taught me everything about being an educator, nor do I expect it to. But it has shown me the importance of preparing for these responsibilities before entering my first faculty position. The first time we independently lead a classroom should not be the first time we learn what it means to teach. Preparing future professors means preparing them not only to contribute to knowledge, but also to inspire, challenge, and educate the next generation. ■

GET TO KNOW THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Andrea Krieg

Executive Counselor · Elmhurst University

The ACJS TLS executive board member we will be recognizing in this newsletter is Andrea Krieg.



Andrea Krieg is an Associate Professor of Criminal Justice in the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice at Elmhurst University, where she has taught since 2018. She has served as a TLS Executive Counselor since 2021 and was re-elected last year. Beyond TLS, she is a Topic Chair for the 2027 ACJS Annual Meeting, serves on the ACJS Assessment Committee, and works with the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) as a Commons Ambassador Fellow and Teaching Practitioner.

Andrea is an optimist at heart, and her teaching centers on helping students see themselves as change makers rather than bystanders to problems that can feel too big to tackle. Two goals guide her courses. The first is humanizing people involved in the justice system, often through narrative and "Book Club" discussions of books, podcasts, and film. The second is giving students practical skills they can carry into their careers. Her senior capstone brings both together. Students take on the role of employees at a police department, law firm, or nonprofit, write a full grant proposal to a fictional foundation, and then pitch it to a mock funding board. She also launched the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice Field Week, and she is building post-graduate partnerships with institutions across Chicagoland so students can see their career options up close before they graduate.

Much of her scholarship grows out of the classroom. Recent work includes two articles in the *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*, one on Book Club as a teaching tool and one on programmatic learning outcomes in Illinois criminal justice and criminology programs. She also wrote a chapter on teaching social structure in *Teaching Introduction to Sociology* (Edward Elgar), has a forthcoming article in *Sociological Teaching* that applies the sociological literacy framework to unemployment, and published a study of youth transitioning out of homelessness in *Children and Youth Services Review*. Keep an eye out for her upcoming textbook on criminal justice policy.

What Andrea loves most about TLS is the camaraderie and low-key vibe. It's a group of people who love to teach and genuinely enjoy their students, the good and the bad of it. She is always happy to share materials or bounce ideas around, and she encourages anyone looking for that kind of conversation to check out the TLS roundtables at the annual meeting.

Outside of work, Andrea is a mom and wife, and her family loves exploring everything Chicago has to offer. If you haven't visited the Windy City, her top tip is to take an architecture boat tour. Her guilty pleasures are Judge Judy, Thai food, and diamond painting.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Timothy Gary Bentzinger (Ben)

Graduate Student Member · University of Nebraska-Lincoln · Hickman, Nebraska



Our member spotlight for the Fall Newsletter is Timothy Gary Bentzinger (Ben). Ben is from Hickman, Nebraska and a current graduate student member of ACJS with a bachelor's degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice from the College of Public Affairs and Community Service at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln & Omaha. He is currently in his second year of a master's program in Community and Regional Planning at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Ben has applied to a PhD program and Juris Doctor program with intentions of continuing his higher education after graduation with eagerness to complete both a doctorate and juris doctor degree. While completing his bachelor's education Ben interned with the Nebraska State Unicameral where he was introduced to the positive changes happening in the state of Nebraska and within the field of criminal justice through local policy and state legislation. This has cultivated his desire to continue in the field of criminal justice (with added interest in law) through academics, research, and eventually serving as a state senator in addition to a profession yet to be chosen likely within academia and/or law. During the completion of his undergraduate education Ben was a member of Alpha Phi Sigma Criminal Justice Honor Society and the Association of Blacks and Browns in Criminal Justice. He feels fortunate to have served in a rural fellowship during the summer of 2026 where he was able to complete research in the field of Community and Regional Planning. Although not yet published, he plans to publish academic research in the future.

In his free time Ben enjoys exercising, being involved in the local community, and service with the church including missions work.

MUSINGS

"I am grateful for the support I have had in the criminal justice community both within and outside of my educational degree completion. I hope that through my continued education, contributions to research, academia, academic research and mentorship similar to that which I have received from professionals within the criminal justice and legal fields that I can continue to contribute to the betterment of criminal justice, law, academia, and policy which is influential to the progress of these areas of academia, profession, and research. Thank you for being part of this ACJS community where we can continue to inspire one another by serving as part of a network of criminal justice professionals as well as mentors for the next generation of criminal justice professionals."

2027 ACJS 64TH ANNUAL MEETING

Orlando, Florida

The 2027 ACJS 64th annual meeting will be held in Orlando, Florida at the Gaylord Palms Resort and Convention Center on March 30th – April 3rd, 2027.

DATES
March 30 – April 3, 2027

VENUE
Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center

EARLY BIRD
Registration available through February 12

Register for the Annual Meeting	https://members.acjs.org/ap/Events/Register/XqFEO6mt7CDCz
Reserve at the Gaylord Palms	https://book.passkey.com/gt/221324400?gtid=5da867d3f59a64839ce004135e088618
For more information	https://s5.goeshow.com/acjs/annual/2027/index.cfm

GRADUATE STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

Know a graduate student we should feature?

Do you know a graduate student you'd like to nominate for the TLS Graduate Student Highlight? Please contact Chair Tiffany Kragnes at Tiffany.Kragnes@yc.edu.

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Contribute to the next newsletter

We welcome any & all contributions (job ads, calls for papers & book chapters, new book ads, teaching and research articles, spotlight features, etc.) for the next TLS section newsletter. If you are interested in contributing, please contact Timothy Gary Bentzinger (Ben), tbentzinger2@huskers.unl.edu.

Spread the word about our section!

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP IS FREE