



Prior to joining the MFMH program, I completed the Bachelor of Social Science in Criminology at UNSW. In my three years of study, I was educated in policing, security, crime prevention, human rights, restorative justice, youth justice, Indigenous crime, and the history of crime. There is an emphasis on social research and creating policy. On a broader level, I also participated in two major research projects – the first looking at the financial problems of students; the second an Australian-first investigation into the domestic sex work industry. There is no doubt that the wide range of topics and broad education provided by the Bachelor left students well-placed upon graduation.

The Master of Forensic Mental Health program has allowed me to explore the area of mental health in great detail. Crucially for me, the program doesn't just focus on mental health trends and issues; it also allows me to expand on the skills and knowledge gained through my criminology and social science studies. Indeed, the core courses on Law expand on the Criminology courses devoted to Criminal Law; the Administrations course, on the other hand, describes ways of enhancing the current forensic system in NSW, and seeks to compare these services to international best-practice. Adding to this are detailed, targeted studies on issues that are particularly pertinent to forensic mental health – namely violence, substance abuse, and sexual behaviour. The knowledge gained from these courses can be used to shape policy and debate around mental health – both of which are central to the Social Science (Criminology) degree.

The MFMH course on Mental Disorders is also worthwhile for students without a clinical background or experience in the forensic field. Overall, the MFMH program allows me to expand on the prior knowledge gained from my Criminology degree, and further enables me to contribute to critical research and policy debates on mental health. Whilst the MFMH itself provides a detailed understanding of mental health issues and the forensic field, it is certainly beneficial having a Criminology degree prior to entering the MFMH program. To that extent, I would recommend the MFMH program to anyone interested in either mental health or criminology in general (and certainly as an extension of criminological studies).