

Public Criminology:
Feasibility and Challenge to Institutional Expectations

Hoan N. Bui
University of Tennessee

Criminology is the scientific study of the nature, extent, causes, control and prevention of criminal behavior. Criminology in a broad sense includes criminal justice studies, which focus on the organization of crime control. The past several decades observed a substantial increase in students' interests in this field and a tremendous growth of criminology and criminal justice programs in either profit or non-profit, public or private colleges and universities. At the same time, public misperceptions about crime and crime control still persist. This paper discusses public criminology as a practice aimed at improving public understanding of crime and crime control with a focus on the feasibility of practicing public criminology as well as its challenge to academic institutional expectations.