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Transitioning from an English major to  
Law Enforcement careers



## Section 1: Opening Statements

I wouldn't blame anyone for looking at an English major and wondering how that person could ever arrive at the conclusion that law enforcement interests that party. If there is one thing about English majors that can't possibly be overstated, it is this: if you think an English major isn't suited to a particular job or industry, you are most likely mistaken. My growing level of interest into law enforcement is partially bred from the level of respect I've always had for those that are watching out for people like myself. Emergency medical personnel, firefighters, and especially, police officers and other positions in law enforcement should be respected until given a reason not to be treated as such. Like other professions such as teachers, they have the stressful job of watching out for others and trying to use their experience and expertise to better serve a particular community.

I have been a huge sports fan for my entire life. So at the beginning of this 2016-17 NFL season, Colin Kaepernick drew significant attention when he became the first football player to take a knee during the national anthem. Being the first athlete to do so coupled with the fact that Kaepernick is an African American and also the quarterback for a history-rich franchise (49ers); this drew an enormous amount of discussion in the sports media community. In today's culture, such a move is going to quickly become a hot topic across a sports-crazed country. Kaepernick's reasoning for taking that knee and lighting that fuse was to protest the inequality that still exists in this country—specifically protesting police brutality against African Americans. In an odd turn of events, Kaepernick quickly became the

centerpiece of a debate that got off topic in a major way. The end result was debating from one end of the country to the other over the grounds to disrespect this country by committing such an act during the anthem. I'm not going to get into whether I feel taking a knee during the national anthem is disrespectful or not, as honestly, I can see both sides of the argument. If my feet were put to the fire, I would say it is a bad look to do such a protest at that particular moment.

However, the issue that was at the center of his protest was police brutality against African Americans in this country. It is important to be fully aware that there are instances of lethal force or violence against not only African Americans, but others as well in America. This is an issue that cannot be swept under our collective rug in order to get it to go away. With so many law enforcement members in the United States, it is delusional to believe that in all those numbers there aren't going to be occasional police officers that give in to their inner racist beliefs or corruption of one kind or another. This is a simple fact of life that echoes the fact that as a country, while being closer to doing so, true racial equality eludes us and will most likely continue to for many years to come. The umbrella of anger over police brutality covers other huge problems. For example, in the city of Chicago, there are horrific numbers of African Americans being shot each year—by African Americans. A quick look at the Chicago Tribune's website gives information that by early September of this year (2016), the city of Chicago had already passed five hundred, and last year's total number. As a country, much more talk is given to police brutality than these issues such as African Americans representing a vast majority of these homicides in Chicago, as both victims and suspects.

This is certainly not meant to sound like a defense of lethal force and brutality used by police officers against citizens—especially those of other races than my own. However, before racial equality and fair and equal treatment between officers and citizens of all colors can be achieved, other huge problems such as these crime waves must also be addressed. Part of this is the police trying to gain or regain trust that may have been lost in these communities. The point to be made here is that police brutality can be used as a convenient scapegoat to overshadow the fact that this lack of fair treatment and equality cannot be piled onto one group.

Police officers are put in a very difficult situation. It is appropriate that an athlete started this controversial discussion months ago, as there can be an important parallel between law enforcement personnel and professional athletes. If we all take a step back and think about it, when do we hear about professional athletes outside of their respective sports? When they aren't excelling at a sport, we hear about them when they are complaining about a lack of involvement in the team's game plan or when there is an altercation with a teammate or opposing player. Unfortunately, we often hear about them in much worse circumstances. Domestic violence, DUIs, being pulled over with assault rifles in the backseat, and more undermine their success (and rightfully so). If they are having good games and being good teammates, we won't hear much about them throughout the week.

This same set of circumstances surrounds police officers. If each man and woman in blue goes about his or her duty to serve and protect, we don't hear anything about him or her, or know the names. In our eyes, we see them as doing their duty and "doing what they are supposed to do." When do you hear about a

police officer? Similarly to athletes, we discover the names when they are embroiled in some kind of corruption or controversy. Of course, we hear about the police when they wrongly use lethal force and act in an overly aggressive manner. This doesn't change the fact that we are not appropriately observing that these men and women are in a no-win situation in many ways. Like I said, if they do things within the bounds of the job, they are simply doing what they are supposed to do. If one or two of them make a huge mistake and this results in the tragic death of a civilian, great outrage follows and the greater community of law enforcement gets painted with the broad brush of police brutality. We've been taught since we were young that it is not right to punish the greater group for the actions of a few. It has become substantially easier to do this with the continued advances of technology. Places like Twitter and Facebook give more and more opportunities to get opinions out there in the open, in many cases hiding behind our valued anonymity.

I understand that this might do very little to quell the question of why the hell would I want to go into this firestorm of continuing controversy and enter law enforcement. After all, it is not a particularly high paying job, it can definitely be dangerous, and many segments and communities in the country don't have high levels of respect and trust for police officers. Simply put, I believe I would find great satisfaction in being in law enforcement. Great appeal lies in the ability to work in a community and show people that those in this profession are there to help and benefit you and yours. Despite a few bad apples, these men and women exist to do exactly what the slogan says—protect and serve. It would be a job where at the end of each day, I could rest my head on the pillow knowing I'm trying to leave the world

a better place than it was when I entered. Potentially, I have possible interest besides being a police officer. A number of other agencies offer ideals and duties that each appeal to me in a different way. That is not to say that if becoming a police officer, I might love it to the point where I want to stay there for my entire career. So following here, I will talk about why each of these agencies and positions holds interest and provided the desire for further research.

### Police Officer

There are multiple reasons as to why police officer is at the forefront of my interest in law enforcement. There is something more intimate about police officers in the sense that they have the opportunity to work in smaller towns and communities. If I were to pursue this course, I could try to work in a department that is local and would allow me to remain close to my loved ones and friends. Besides the chance of proximity, police officer experience appears to be incredibly valuable if I would decide that other agencies still interest me. In the case of these federal agencies, years of experience in law enforcement are one of the areas that these employers really look for, if it isn't actually required (such as SWAT). If other agencies were in play, working and gaining this valuable experience would go hand in hand with being a part of working towards building and strengthening a community. The satisfaction that would come from this aspect would be unique to being a police officer and can't be understated.

### Border Patrol

The US Customs and Border Patrol agency has its own kind of appeal that makes it unique from these other larger agencies. As far as I can gather, there have

always been some misconceptions surrounding border patrol. The words themselves evoke images of southern rednecks “doing their part” to keep the illegal Mexicans from coming into our country. However, this agency has a lot more to it than the stereotypical image previously described. In fact, they have many duties that are a part of their everyday jobs and responsibilities. Yes, keeping illegal immigrants from gaining access to US territory is one of their priorities, especially for the agents posted along the busy southern Texas/Mexico border. It needs to be given its due that the US Customs and Border Patrol is a much broader organization. Who safeguards the many harbors allowing entry into the country, and thus keeps the really bad people (terrorists) as well as illegal drugs from coming in? Drugs and anti-terrorism operations are just as big a part of border patrol’s responsibilities as keeping illegal immigrants from coming in from Mexico. Another potential benefit of this agency is that it doesn’t have quite the emphasis on prior law enforcement experience. So in comparison to SWAT, DEA, FBI, or US Marshals, the US Border Patrol would be my best chance to join an agency off the bat if I decided I wasn’t quite as interested in being a police officer.

### DEA

The DEA obviously deals with trying to stop the flow of drugs and revolves mostly around stopping drug organizations. If I wanted to specialize in this area, the DEA would become the top priority in that case. Other agencies such as Border Patrol and the FBI also make it a duty to go after drugs and the criminals that try to spread them. However, make no mistake, the DEA is *the* organization that aggressively goes after the drug trade more so than any of the others that interest

me. The DEA works with local, federal, and even international agencies in order to investigate and prosecute the big dogs in the drug kingdom—the large organized criminal organizations.

### US Marshals

The US Marshals is appealing in that they also have a couple duties that make them unique among this group of agencies. A few of their biggest responsibilities involve high profile court cases. In these cases, there might be a need to protect high-ranking judicial members of the court, protect key witnesses who might be in some kind of danger, and even protecting and securing the court rooms themselves. Another key aspect of the US Marshals is their fugitive operations. For example, if a convict were to escape from prison or while in transit, the US Marshals are often called upon and given that responsibility to find and apprehend said fugitive. They will also be involved in the transportation of prisoners.

### FBI

The FBI is the true national law enforcement agency of the United States in the fact that they really investigate just about every type of crime or possible threat that exists. Under this umbrella, they investigate all kinds of thefts, crimes, murders, drug related operations, and terrorist threats. Years ago, they even created a directorate that focuses solely on weapons of mass destruction. This directorate is designed to investigate the potential WMD threats in order to stop them before they can be put into play. The FBI really is the jack-of-all-trades organization that would offer a little bit of everything to interested recruits. If a position as an FBI agent would greatly interest me, that law enforcement experience would be absolutely



crucial in getting my foot in the door for this agency. The FBI has various highly specialized areas of expertise that they look for when hiring new recruits, and years of experience would help an English major like myself find that other avenue of being highly presentable to the employers.

### SWAT

Last but not least are the real bad asses of law enforcement. SWAT is the group that is called upon in the hairiest situations that can be presented in this country. These are the people that are called upon if the time comes to bust down doors and use lethal force with more advanced weaponry. SWAT is the only one of these agencies where years of experience as a police officer are actually required. SWAT's duties are the toughest in American law enforcement and this means that these units have to be the most elite. These harrowing situations could involve hostages being taken, terrorists in planes, buses, or trains, or any serious fortified position assaults, and also those situations where WMDs are found and need to be secured. SWAT has to be the elite police force considering the jobs that are given to them. SWAT is very appealing for the simple reason that to be a part of a SWAT team would mean being accepted into this elite unit and to be working alongside the best of the best.

## Section 2: Career Paths/Agency Duties

### Border Patrol:

For the U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents, the first and most important priority is to keep the worst of the worst out of the United States—terrorists. This highest priority involves not just terrorists, but weapons of mass destruction as well. The U.S. border patrol agency has been in effect since 1924, and since it was founded, has been based on keeping our American borders safe so legal immigrants and goods can be allowed entry into the country, while those that are illegal be stopped. Border Patrol does not operate solely on its own, but works with other law enforcement agencies across the country to put forth its best effort to meet its goals. Border Patrol is very frequently hiring, and the breadth of territory it is responsible for makes sense. It safeguards six thousand miles of Canadian and Mexican borders with the United States. It also protects almost two thousand miles of coastal waterways and monitors our harbors, specifically in the Florida peninsula area as well as waters that surround Puerto Rico.

There has been exponential growth in the U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency since its inception in 1924. From starting as a handful of mounted agents patrolling a small strip of the border, this number of agents has risen to twenty-one thousand as of the close of fiscal 2012. With the constant need for recruits, border patrol aggressively seeks out potential agents to meet the ever-growing demands of so much territory to guard. Border patrol trainees spend thirteen weeks in Artesia, New Mexico, learning the crucial skills for the jobs ahead.

As mentioned earlier, the border patrol's top goal is to watch out for and reduce the likelihood that dangerous people enter the country, especially with significant threats such as powerful weapons that could be used against Americans. In order to protect this country, this involves thorough investigations into potential threats, surveillance and following up these possible leads, following tracks, and responding to aircraft sightings and various sensor alarms. Anti-smuggling operations are extremely vital to border patrol's overall goals, as this goes hand in hand with monitoring the potential immigration of dangerous goods or people. This agency is also responsible for monitoring many traffic checkpoints located at highways that lead away from these borders. The border patrol agents use a wide assortment of transportation methods to work in the varying and demanding kinds of terrain, such as snowmobiles, bicycles, boats, land vehicles such as trucks or SUVs, and on foot. Different types of sensors and night vision scopes will be placed at strategic locations in order to monitor potential hot zones of traffic.

- Linewatch operations consist of watching the international borders and coastlines to prevent the aforementioned threats from gaining access to territory in which the border patrol has jurisdiction. Signcutting is the process that involves keeping a very close eye on the natural terrain to pick up on any irregularities. Any conditions that reflect the possible passage of animals or people that have altered this terrain in any form are watched extremely closely.
- In cases of major highways leading away from U.S. borders, there are traffic checkpoints that exist for two specific reasons—detect and stop illegals from

gaining access to regions further in U.S. territory, and to detect and seize illegal narcotics.

- Transportation checks take place when these methods of movement are meant for the interior of the country—buses, marine craft, freight trains, and commercial aircraft.
- Border patrol relies on over one hundred marine craft to safeguard our interior waterways, as well as coastal territories. Marine patrol takes place in sixteen sectors, and a couple of the vital places watched closely are the coast surrounding Puerto Rico, waterways shared by this country and Canada, as well as the general coastlines of the U.S.
- Horse and bike patrol are pivotal to the border patrol's efforts as well. Bikes help the agents that are tasked with patrolling inside cities. Horse patrol is important as it helps the agents get to spots that are inaccessible to other vehicles.
- In the Southwestern United States, the border patrol continues to be on the front lines as much success has been had in stopping smuggling operations. Especially in this region, the border patrol is the primary force in stopping these operations.

## Border Patrol



DEA:

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) fights the war on drugs more so than any other law enforcement agency. The DEA's top mission is to enforce the U.S. regulations and laws against narcotics, and to prosecute criminals that infringe on these laws. Individuals or organizations that deal in distribution, manufacturing, or growing illegal drugs, in or intending to bring them into the United States are targets of the DEA and their investigations.

- At the interstate or international level, the DEA prepares and investigates for the prosecution of the major violators for the laws against controlled substances in the United States.
- Prosecute and investigate those that do harm to our communities. Whether it is drug gangs or criminals, those that intimidate and harm communities through fear and perpetuate the cycles of violence and drug use will be targeted aggressively by the DEA.
- The DEA employs a constant national intelligence program on drugs. To do this, the DEA works with local, federal, state, and even foreign officials to collect and analyze this intelligence information. This intel is used to modify and create strategies to go after criminals that perpetuate this cycle.
- Any assets that can either be traced back to the sales of illegal narcotics, intended to be used for drug trafficking, or derived from said trafficking will be seized and processed by the DEA.

- The DEA also deals with the control of controlled substances, not just the illegal substances. It is vital to monitor the provisions regarding these controlled substances as far as distribution and manufacturing. It is important to make sure that these legal controlled substances are being sold and used in their intended ways.
- The DEA coordinates and cooperates with officials from local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies on mutual drug enforcement operations. Through international and interstate investigations, this mutual cooperation with other agencies works to bypass either local or limited jurisdiction to continue investigations.
- Once again working together with local to international agencies, the DEA works to coordinate on matters of controlling the availability of drugs considered being abuse-type drugs. This can be done through methods such as training of officials, substituting crops, or eradicating certain crops.
- The American Secretary of State and U.S. Ambassadors use the appropriate policies to help the DEA and their responsibilities for drug related law enforcement programs in foreign countries to bring these foreign agencies up to speed on policies, but also to make sure they are at the highest possible level for employing these drug enforcement policies.
- The DEA is constantly liaising with international and foreign organizations such as Interpol or the United Nations, on all kinds of matters relating to the international drug control and prevention programs.

Drug Enforcement Administration





## US Marshals:

Federal US Marshals illustrate that this agency is the longest running federal law enforcement agency in the United States, as US Marshals have been active since 1789. The US Marshals are an extension of our federal courts, and are called upon for virtually every federal initiative in need of law enforcement. There are presently over three thousand seven hundred Deputy Marshals that are involved in the process of apprehending the majority of federal fugitives.

- Courthouse security and the protection of judicial members of the court system is one of the biggest priorities of the US Marshals. Judicial members to be guarded are jurors, attorneys, and judges. The Marshals service has a Court Security Office program that trains agents to have full law enforcement authority to maintain the safety and security in courthouses. Over four hundred court systems and more than two thousand currently active judges are under the protection of the US Marshals. When it comes to the construction of courthouses, the Marshals oversee this entire process to ensure the public and all court personnel are protected.
- The US Marshals have gained a deserved reputation for their pivotal role in fugitive operations. Just in fiscal 2015, thirty-three thousand federal fugitives were apprehended by the US Marshals. Local and state fugitives are also apprehended by the Marshals service, with the aid of local agencies up to and including other federal agencies. The Marshals also deal in

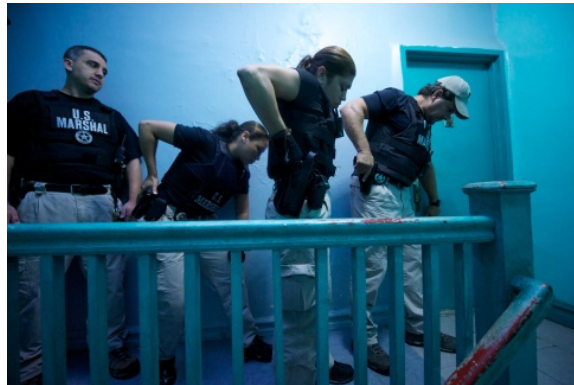
deportations and extraditions of foreign fugitives that are hiding and residing in the United States, while working with international agencies. The US Marshals has four foreign field offices—Columbia, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and Mexico.

- The US Marshals is also the agency that is in charge of witness protection when it is required. This protection is given to witnesses for the government, as well as the families of these witnesses. The Marshals are the backbone of this country's Witness Security Program, and have helped over eight thousand witnesses by giving them new identities since 1971.
- The US Marshals cooperate with local and state governments so that they can rent jail space for the fifty thousand detainees that the Marshals service houses in the country. The Marshals also have a program where in cases of extremely scarce jail space, they contribute funds to help expand these prisons while receiving the guarantee that they can use a certain amount of the space to house their prisoners (federal prisoners).
- The Justice Prisoner and Alien Transportation System is a program that was created to help make prisoner transportation more efficient. The Marshals service operates the JPATS, and this system of air and ground transport manages over two hundred and sixty thousand aliens and prisoners on average in a given year.
- The US Marshals service is in charge of over three billion dollars worth of property resulting from asset forfeiture. The Marshals is the agency responsible for disposing of the property seized from criminals through

their criminal operations. As far as the seized property in their possession, the Marshals' goal is to get the best possible net financial result from selling this property. The money that is gained from the sales of this property is put directly back into law enforcement agencies.

- Deputy US Marshals take part in hundreds of special tactical missions that are carried out each and every year. These operations will very often deal with judicial security or other law enforcement responsibilities. Inside the US Marshals service exists another level of elite agents—the Special Operations Group. This is a specially and extremely highly trained group of US Marshals agents that will be called upon to respond in situations where federal law is being violated. These SOG agents will be stationed throughout the districts of the United States, and these special agents are on call twenty-four hours a day. These agents also give assistance to the U.S. Air Force as well as the Department of Defense in situations when sensitive material such as cruise missiles needs to be moved to another military base.

## US Marshals



## Federal Bureau of Investigation:

- The FBI's top priority is to investigate and stop terrorist threats before they can be carried out against either Americans, or those that are a part of our interests—domestic and international terrorism.
- The FBI heads a massive Joint Terrorism Task Force that is comprised of highly trained members from numerous agencies. These highly trained cells are America's frontline defense for terrorism, and there are over one hundred of these joint task forces across the country.
- The National Joint Terrorism Task Force (NJTTF) has been around since 2002, and the number of task forces practically doubled soon after the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attack in the U.S.
- All of these task forces are designated to perform constant surveillance and monitor possible terrorist threats, analyze these threats, track down evidence, share this intelligence with other agencies, make arrests, provide security for special events, manage training programs, and more.
- The national task forces (NJTTF) have many missions and operations that they are involved in including: operations where intelligence is shared with other partner agencies to monitor and if necessary to identify terrorist sleeper cells in America, and there is a military support team inside the FBI that looks at terrorist threats specific to militaries.
- The FBI Counterterrorism Fly Team is a specialized group of counterterrorist investigators that at a moment's notice can be ready to fly

and respond to terrorist attacks that are not only across the country, but also anywhere in the world. This counterterrorism fly team has responded to many threats over the years. A few recent incidents include the U.S. consulate attack in Benghazi, the World Cup bombing in Uganda, and the recent marathon bombing in Boston.

- Another major responsibility of the FBI is its counterintelligence program. Once again, the FBI leads the way in law enforcement's campaign to monitor all kinds of espionage and intelligence activities. This counterintelligence is not only concerned with American government and military secrets and information being stolen and given to foreigners. It is also monitoring and preventing physical parts and materials being sent overseas to people that wish to use them against Americans by building bombs or any kind of weapons of mass destruction.
- A few of the goals of this counterintelligence program are protecting America's critical technology, monitor foreign spies and counter their activities in order to protect the secrets of our people, and of course, monitoring threats to make sure advanced and deadly weaponry doesn't fall into the wrong hands.
- It is not just physical crime and attacks that concerns the FBI, but cyber crime as well. Considering the terrorist threats and dangers present from physical attacks and the way that the FBI expanded post 9/11, the same is happening to combat the growing threat of cyber crimes and cyber terrorist activities. Each year billions of dollars are lost through these cyber attacks.

These computer and network intrusions that are increasing in frequency and complexity can range from a lone computer hacker, to a business trying to steal valuable information, to criminal organizations looking to steal and sell sensitive data on the black market, to spies or terrorist organizations that may be attempting to launch cyber attacks.

- At the FBI's headquarters, a large Cyber Division exists with its sole duty to aggressively seek out and prevent these threats.
- Each of the FBI's fifty-six field offices has teams that are specifically trained and dedicated to stopping these crimes, and there are also New Cyber Action Teams that at a moment's notice are prepared to travel around the world in order to stop or investigate such threats against the U.S.
- The FBI is also out to fight the battle against public corruption, which can take many different forms. Border corruption is very dangerous considering the sheer amount of border that the government is responsible for—thousands of miles. The FBI hunts down corrupt American officials that take bribes and allow illegals or narcotics into the country. This threat can be even more detrimental to the country's security when you consider that one of these corrupt officials may allow illegal aliens in, not realizing that they are a part of a terrorist cell.
- Election crimes also fall under this investigative category of corruption. This can involve matters such as voter fraud, any public official that is abusing his or her duties, someone donates more than the allotted limit of funds to a political candidate, any kind of civil rights violations such as those

attempting to prevent a certain minority or group from participating, and ballot or voter fraud.

- The FBI monitors corruption in the prison system as well. This relatively new initiative looks for corrupt prison officials that are getting bribes and other kinds of gratuities, help prisoners smuggle in contraband. Prison corruption can occur and manifest itself in many ways. One such way is prisoners monitoring and learning the habits of guards and officials they see regularly. By doing so, they can identify the officials that might be more susceptible to bribery or intimidation.
- Inside the FBI, there is an International Corruption Unit (ICU) that focuses on all of the potential forms of corruption extending outside the U.S. and into foreign territory.
- Hundreds of civil rights cases are investigated and opened up by the FBI each and every year. The FBI's Civil Rights program can be divided into the following categories: Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act, Color of Law, Human Trafficking, and Hate Crimes.
- Color of Law violations that must be investigated include numerous areas concerning government officials (law enforcement) and their operations within their power, or exceeding these bounds. Excessive force falls under Color of Law, meaning that if it is shown that an official uses excessive force when it is not required, that individual will be in violation of federal law. Sexual assaults fall into this same category and can occur in any scenario when an official uses the power of his or her position to coerce another



individual into some form of sexual compliance. Fabrication of evidence or false arrests are also serious Color of Law violations that are investigated.

The U.S. constitution protects the individual and his or her rights to no unreasonable seizures or searches, as well as the right to due process.

- The FACE Act was created out of the disturbing number of threats and incidents of violence carried out against health care providers and workers at health clinics. This FACE Act made it a federal crime to perform such acts as making threatening phone calls to these health care personnel, burglary, murder, and assault. These protection laws also carry over to the buildings where health care is provided.
- One of the FBI's biggest and most consistent crimes to investigate is hate crimes. The FBI looks at hate crimes as such when it involves a criminal acting out towards a victim based on their bias towards that person on the grounds of his or her sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity, religion, race, disability, or gender identity.
- The FBI deploys teams of agents and investigators that are responsible for finding and putting a stop to human trafficking. Human trafficking is thought to be the third biggest criminal activity in the world. This crime includes: commercial sex trafficking, domestic servitude, and forced labor. The Anti-Trafficking Coordination Team (ACTeam) includes numerous law enforcement agencies and works to investigate and prosecute those dealing in human trafficking crimes.

- Organized crime is still a major concern for the FBI today. Many countries are still involved in organized crime that concerns the domestic United States. These following groups have a strong presence here and are targeted by the FBI: Eastern European nations like Romania and Hungary that have organized criminal organizations here, Asian crime rings, African country criminal organizations that traffic drugs or attempt financial scams, and Russian mobsters that fled the Soviet Union at the time of its collapse. The largest threat comes from the fact that these foreign organizations have started to cooperate and work together to target American citizens from overseas. These global organized criminal enterprises are thought to annually cause more than one trillion dollars worth of damage to the economy.
- The FBI works with many groups to try and stop white-collar crimes in the U.S. These crimes include health care fraud, corporate fraud, money laundering, bank fraud, mortgage fraud, commodities fraud, and many more.
- Despite the ever-growing national presence that the FBI has, crimes in local communities and cities are still a huge priority for this agency. When investigating and prosecuting criminals that commit these violent crimes, this refers to: threats against public government officials and especially the President, serial killings, mass killings, kidnappings, stolen property and motor vehicles, and government property pertaining to its destruction, and so on. Also investigated by the FBI are crimes that occur on Native American reservations, missing persons, fugitives, and crimes against children.

- Ten years ago, the FBI created the Weapons of Mass Destruction Directorate. This specialized group's sole focus is on the prevention of WMDs and their usage. This group uses coordinated efforts to investigate and stop threats including radiological, biological, chemical, or nuclear threats. A weapon of mass destruction can be defined in multiple ways. Officially, the following can be considered a WMD: a missile with an explosive charge greater than one-quarter ounce, a grenade, a bomb, a rocket with explosive charge greater than four ounces, a weapon that involves an organism of disease, any weapon that can release dangerous radiation levels to humans, or any number of devices that function in explosives, incendiary, or poison gas.

FBI Agents



## Special Weapons and Tactics:

SWAT teams are deployed by the FBI and deployed in situations that require their expertise and highly elite nature. Simply put, SWAT is *the* elite branch of law enforcement. The U.S. Attorney General classifies SWAT as a Tier One response group, which signifies the types of missions they undertake as well as their importance to this country. In the military, Tier One operators are the elite of the elite, the men that conduct secret missions or deal with the most strenuous situations, such as hostage rescues. SWAT utilizes special advanced equipment and weapons to deal with tense situations such as:

- Hostage rescue
- Vehicle stops
- Aircraft, train, and bus assaults
- WMD operations
- Fugitive pursuit
- Fortified position assaults
- Personnel protection
- Airplane hijackings
- Sniper operations

SWAT teams are a part of and assigned to the fifty-six field offices located across the United States. As the most used first response team inside the FBI, SWAT can be called upon in a moment's notice to deploy here, and even outside of the country. Those who are in SWAT are volunteers and are not full-time.

When they are not on missions, they are still performing their duties as FBI agents. To be a SWAT officer, it is required to have at least two years of experience as an FBI special agent. A SWAT team can have as many as forty-two members that fulfill special roles such as:

- Breachers
- Assaulters
- Medics
- Snipers
- Fast Rope Specialists
- Tactical Air Operations Officers

Special Weapons and Tactics



### Section 3: Training Requirements

#### **U.S. Border Patrol Requirements:**

Basic Qualifications for Border Patrol agents:

- Must be a United States citizen
- Possess a valid automobile driver's license
- Must take and pass the official entrance examination, which is a three part test that covers logical reasoning skill, an assessment of achievements and job-related experiences, and an assessment of Spanish language comprehension, or a test that predicts ability to learn Spanish
- All necessary transcripts, grade-point calculations, and all other necessary documentation must be submitted to CBP Minneapolis Hiring Center
- Must pass a urine drug test
- Must be younger than thirty-seven at time of selection
- Must appear before an oral interview panel

For the entry-level positions in the U.S. Border Patrol agency (GL-5 level), applicant must have work experience that demonstrates particular law enforcement skills that this agency looks for, *or*, a four-year college degree can substitute for this work experience and qualify a candidate for the GL-5 entry-level job. There are certain medical requirements that must be met to receive a job in this agency. Vision and hearing must be at the acceptable levels. For vision, it must be close to 20/20 vision or correctable to something very close. For hearing, in the 500-2000 Hz and over 3000 Hz ranges, certain standards must be met without the use of a hearing aid.



There are certain conditions of employment and things that Border Patrol employees must be willing to do. These are:

- Undergo extensive background check
- Meet with oral interview panel and pass the CBP interview
- Accept appointments at any location on U.S. southwestern border
- Work rotating shifts, many of which may be at night
- Work long and irregular hours, possibly during holidays or weekends
- Work alone
- Learn the Spanish language
- Adhere to grooming and dress standards
- Carry, maintain, and use a firearm
- Work under hazardous conditions such as inclement weather, rough terrain, heights, moving trains, high-speed chases, and armed encounters
- Operate a variety of motor vehicles
- Submit to a physical examination, fitness testing, and drug testing
- Fly as a passenger/observer in various types of aircraft
- Maintain self-control and composure under extremely stressful conditions
- Bear initial travel and uniform costs
- Undergo intense physical and academic training
- Work on operations away from home for extended periods, 35 days or more

In the hiring process for Border Patrol, applicants must take and pass a structured interview where they demonstrate the skills necessary to performing in this line of

work. There is a pre-placement medical examination that must be passed. There are two physical fitness tests to be passed. Test 1 requires at least 20 push-ups in one minute, 25 sit-ups in one minute, and a 14" step test requiring 120-steps/per minute in a five-minute time frame. Test 2 requires a 220-yard run in 46 seconds, 25 sit-ups in a minute, 20 push-ups in a minute, and a 1.5 mile run completed in 15 minutes or less. There is an extensive background check, and a polygraph test must be taken as part of this interview process. An e-QIP form must be electronically filled out, that gives information such as a complete work history, contact information, previous addresses, and so on.

### **Border Patrol Training:**

- 66 days of training in Artesia, New Mexico
- During this training, interns receive full pay and benefits
- This basic training includes: instructions in law, operations, driver-training, physical techniques, firearms, as well as specific scenario-based training
- There is a Spanish examination and if it is not passed, a 40 day period of Spanish based language training occurs immediately following 66 day basic training
- Well over 100 Border Patrol stations in the US, these are offices for the agents as well as temporary holding areas for people apprehended



### **U.S. Marshals Requirements:**

The US Marshals training occurs at Glynco, Georgia, at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC). Some of the subjects during training at the academy are:

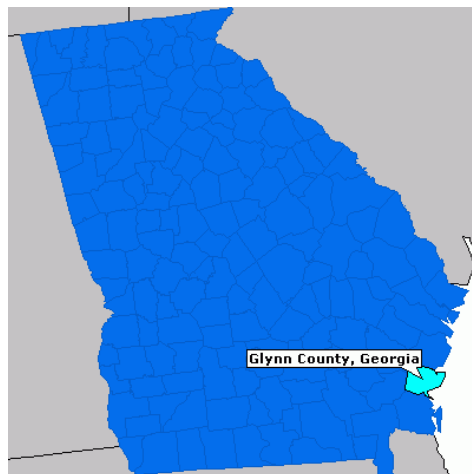
- Legal training
- Defensive tactics
- Driver training
- Courtroom evidence & procedure
- Court security
- Officer survival
- Search & seizure
- Protective service training
- Firearms training
- Physical conditioning
- First aid
- Prisoner search & restraint
- Computer training
- Building entry & search
- High threat trials
- Surveillance

Prior to attending the academy, recruits must pass a physical fitness examination within six months prior to attending training. Because of the stressful requirements to be a US Marshal, trainees must arrive at FLETC in excellent physical condition.

Students are *strongly* encouraged to be in top physical shape prior to US Marshal training.

**US Marshals Training:**

- 21 and ½ weeks training in Glynco, Georgia
- All meals and housing are provided for the trainees during this period, academy also provides transportation for trainees if need be to get to and from classes
- There are 7 exams during training period, and training covers areas such as protective service training, surveillance, building entry & search, firearms training, first aid, prisoner search and restraint, court security, and more. Each exam must be passed with 70% score or higher.
- During training, students will often be required to run distances ranging from 1.5 to 10 miles. During these runs, there will often be sections dealing in vigorous calisthenics such as push-ups, sit-ups, obstacle courses, sprints, and other conditioning exercises.



## **Drug Enforcement Administration Requirements:**

The DEA employs a rigorous and lengthy hiring process that can take up to twelve months. This hiring process has many parts that include the following:

- Qualifications review
- Written assessment and panel interview
- Drug testing
- Medical examination
- Physical task assessment
- Polygraph examinations
- Psychological assessments
- Full-field background investigation

Similar to these other agencies, requirements for the DEA consist of skills and experience in many areas. Similarly to other agencies, if the individual does not yet have work experience that demonstrates proficiency in areas crucial to DEA work, a bachelor's degree with a GPA of 2.95 or higher is a possible requirement that can fully or partially work around the lack of field experience. Some requirements for being a DEA agent outside of those listed above are:

- Must be at least 21 years old, and no older than 36 at time of appointment
- U.S. Citizenship
- Have a valid U.S. driver's license
- Willing to relocate anywhere in the United States
- Able to obtain and retain a top secret security clearance
- Excellent physical condition

- Willing and able to carry and handle firearms

### **DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration) Training:**

- Like the FBI, the DEA training program also takes place at Quantico, Virginia
- 18 week training program, where approximately 60% of the trainees comes into training with previous law enforcement experience, this training program emphasizes skills such as leadership, ethics, report writing, law, drug recognition, and more
- Part of this training involves 122 hours of firearm training (basic marksmanship, weapon safety, tactical shooting)
- The DEA training academy includes housing for students, a multitude of varied classrooms, a large cafeteria space, mail room, laundry, nurse's station, banking facilities, and more



## **Federal Bureau of Investigation Requirements:**

The FBI-specific training includes over eight hundred hours in four major concentrations—case exercises, operational skills, academics, and firearms training. In this tough training program, the trainees are supported by his or her fellow classmates, trainers, and instructors that are both tough on them, while also providing necessary support.

- **Academics training:** this area includes basic as well as advanced interrogation and forensics techniques, behavioral techniques, running and managing counterterrorism operations, ethics, law, weapons of mass destruction training, report writing and interviewing skills, criminal investigations, and cyber crime. Covering all these disciplines has the objective of creating well-rounded recruits. Trainees will visit the Martin Luther King Jr. memorial in Washington D.C. with the goal of gaining perspective on the continuing civil equality landscape. They will also tour the Holocaust memorial in Washington D.C. to observe what can happen when law enforcement loses sight of its core values.
- **Operational Skills:** this concentration includes everything from defensive skills such as grappling and boxing, to surveillance and physical fitness, disarming techniques, weapon retention, and safe driving techniques. Over ninety hours of training focuses on: operations planning, tactics, cooperating with informants and witnesses, undercover operations, carrying out arrests, nighttime and daytime surveillance, and more. Trainees use paint guns to test tactical skills when acting out real-world scenarios such as kidnappings,

assault on a federal officer, various compliant as well as armed and dangerous arrest situations, and even real-life bank robbery scenarios. The FBI is the first law enforcement agency to use VirtSim, a virtual reality training program. VirtSim is a simulator that allows recruits to try many scenarios while simulating the actions of hostages and aggressors through their avatars. More than one hundred and twenty virtual scenarios can be acted out through this virtual reality training. A few examples are barns, airplanes, restaurants, office complexes, and schools.

- **Case Exercises:** these exercises are designed to mirror real-world situations that trainees can expect to deal with during his or her time in the field. One example is that students will be given a case scenario. This begins with receiving a tip, and ends with the arrests of multiple suspects. This mock case plays out in Hogan's Alley. Hogan's Alley is a fake town created at the FBI academy, in which hired actors play the parts of terrorists and criminals. Trainees will also have the chance to present evidence in a moot court case.
- **Firearms training:** FBI firearm training consists of many hours of training with pistols, shotguns, and carbines issued specifically by the academy. The FBI puts top priority on the skills of marksmanship, orientation with weapons systems, weapon skills and handling, firearms safety, and live fire training putting further emphasis on marksmanship and shooting techniques. Trainees are required to qualify with both the pistol and the carbine. Familiarization with shotguns is also important and is a part of the twenty-eight sessions that equals one hundred and ten instruction hours.



- This training program takes place at Quantico, Virginia and lasts for 20 weeks.
- FBI agents never truly finish their education and training. They will frequently return to Quantico to receive additional or more specialized training.

### **Police Officer and SWAT training and requirements:**

For both police officers and SWAT officers, there is no national set of requirements dealing with training. In both cases, there are many districts and states that have some level of control over the training routines in their academies. There are very many consistencies between academies though. For SWAT officers, the following expectations need to be met:

- Ability to maintain optimal mission capability through operations of extended duration
- Monitor and gain intelligence about an incident through electronic or other forms of surveillance
- Develop a response strategy to major crisis like hostage taking, hijacking or armed standoff
- Pursue, track and apprehend fugitives and criminals
- Conduct investigations at crime scenes in order to provide intelligence to FBI analysts
- Detect, disrupt and neutralize terrorist or WMD operations

- Maintain peak physical and mental readiness while off-duty through aggressive training programs
- Perform admirably as a Special Agent case worker
- Travel to locations for training and mission deployment
- Employ the latest evidence gathering technology and methodologies to rapidly obtain intelligence
- Interview and extract information from witnesses and bystanders
- Provide medical treatment and assistance to team members and injured bystanders

For police officer training, it is the same story with training and requirements falling under the jurisdiction of states and academies. However, there are still a lot of guidelines and training that is consistent along with these other agencies. Some training and information about police academies is:

**Police Academy Training/Info:**

- Each state has its own police academies, Illinois for instance has numerous police academies that provide basic law enforcement training, and many additional units that further the training for law enforcement agencies with further training and education (for active officers), Chicago Police and Illinois State Police both have their own academies
- Each state and jurisdiction has their own training requirements, no national set of requirements

- There are many skills that are standard to any police academy, such as firearm training, non-lethal weapon training, community policing, human relations, criminal law, domestic violence, problem-solving, and more
- Field training follows the academy training (final component to training), here you will likely be paired with a training officer and will accompany him or her on their routine patrol, this field training generally lasts over a period of 180 hours, or many weeks or even months depending on the department

#### Section 4: Ranks and Advancement

There will be many opportunities for advancement through police departments, assuming an officer exemplifies the morals and ethics that show potential, and skills that are desired. Ranks in police departments will vary a little based on the specific department, but in Chicago's Police Department, the ranks are as follows starting with the entry position and advancing as far as possible:

- Police Officer
- Police Officer/ assigned as: Detective, Youth Officer, Gang Specialist, Police Agent, Major Accident Investigator (Chicago Detectives are not considered ranking officers, instead assigned to specialized units such as Internal Affairs Division, Narcotics and Gangs, Robbery, or Violent Crimes)
- Field Training Officer
- Sergeant
- Lieutenant
- Captain (usually Executive Officers of Districts)
- Commander
- Deputy Chief
- Chief (typically in charge of a bureau)
- First Deputy Superintendent
- Superintendent (appointed by mayor of Chicago)

Even though I have some level of interest in other federal agencies that would come after years of law enforcement experience, there is a lot of room to grow and advance through police departments. I want to make it perfectly clear that if I

become a police officer and love where I'm at and what I'm doing, there is a great deal that can be accomplished by making a career out of being a police officer. These other agencies also have advancement opportunities inside their organizations.

- Inside the Drug Enforcement Administration, a select group of exemplary DEA Agents can be chosen to become DEA Special Agents. There are over five thousand special agents that take part in prosecuting major drug criminals on U.S. soil and also abroad.
- Inside the US Marshals service, there is the opportunity to excel and join the Special Operations Group (SOG). SOG is comprised of full-time Deputy US Marshals that are constantly on call and can be called upon to respond to emergencies anywhere in the country, or its territories. This is a specially trained tactical unit that is a self-supporting response team that undertakes the toughest and most demanding missions given to the US Marshals service.
- The FBI also allows for many varied careers, and this also includes advancement opportunities inside the FBI. FBI Special Agents are the elite branch of the FBI tasked with its toughest missions. These Special Agents are mission-centric units that can be a part of the following teams:
  - Hostage Rescue Team (HRT)
  - Special Agent Bomb Tech Program (SABT)
  - SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics)
  - Evidence Response Team (ERT)
  - Technically Trained Agent (TTA) Program
  - Operational Medic Program

To join one of these elite tactical units in the FBI, requirements for the Tactical Recruitment Program (TRP) must be met. TRP candidates that apply need to have several years of FBI experience. The chance to become an entry level FBI agent is greatly improved if you apply with years of law enforcement experience. So, you can see a vast level of progression and how years of police officer experience helps someone move up this ladder.

## Section 5: Interviews/Questions & Answers

In my two interviews with Christopher Williams, the department chair of the Criminal Justice department and a professor at Bradley University, I asked him some basic law enforcement questions:

- I'm an English major, so would this put me at a disadvantage going into law enforcement without a criminal justice education?
- For law enforcement, if I wanted to be a police officer or in a larger more federal agency, would I be looking at further education?
- Are there certain skills that are crucial for any kind of law enforcement position?
- For local law enforcement departments (such as police departments), is there a certain way to reach out to them?
- If I have interest in agencies such as the U.S. Marshals, FBI, U.S. Border Patrol, and so on, would it be worth it to try and reach out to them now, or would it be crucial to already have that experience in law enforcement?

Here is some of the great information that came from these talks with Mr. Williams:

- It depends on the agency or department, but some people don't encourage a CJ (Criminal Justice) degree from potential hires. A degree such as an English major gives the foundational skills, and time in the respective academies would teach the job-specific skills for that agency.

- Some of the pivotal skills for anyone going into law enforcement are communication skills, the ability to listen, critical thinking, and above all else, an open mind.
- Just because you aren't in the criminal justice program, don't discount the knowledge that can be gained from looking at and possibly buying criminal justice textbooks. This certainly isn't necessary, but could be helpful.
- Begin applying sooner rather than later if you know what agency or agencies you are interested in. These types of places do not follow typical hiring schedules. That is to say, they aren't going to be hiring during certain times of the year. If they need new recruits, they will be hiring. The hiring processes for law enforcement agencies can be pretty lengthy as well.
- For larger and more federal agencies such as U.S. Marshals, DEA, FBI, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (Border Patrol), and many more, first and foremost check out their official websites. You'll fill out applications on these sites, and this will always be the best and most reliable way to get information.
- Once you are ready to begin this application process, the written examination will be the first step.
- A Master's degree is certainly not required, but could potentially help someone move up the ladder at these organizations and advance.
- As far as the requirements go for these agencies, the FBI for example, has six different areas of expertise that they look for in trainees. In a case like mine where I don't have the expertise in these areas, the answer would be to get



some law enforcement experience under my belt. So if I would really become interested in the FBI, I would probably want to get at least a few years of police officer experience before trying to apply.

- Make sure not to limit yourself as far as the number of agencies and organizations you look into for your research. There are so many out there and I've really looked closely at a handful of them. Look into plenty of them to try and find those that would be a good fit.
- Something that would always be beneficial would be to try and get in touch with former students that have transitioned into law enforcement careers.
- Narrow down your research into possible goals that you have. If there are certain areas that you would be interested in, such as working to stop narcotics, weapons of mass destruction, stopping illegals from gaining entry into the country, seeking and apprehending suspects, or whatever your interests might be, this will funnel your research towards specific agencies.

Through Dr. Prescott, I was able to talk to an active officer of the Peoria Police Department, Officer Douglas Walton. Here are the questions I asked Officer Walton:

- What police academy did you attend? Can you tell me a little bit about your experience in the academy, as far as your training you received? How long was your training?
- What skills are instrumental to your typical day as an officer?
- What is the hiring process like for police departments? How lengthy of a process was this for you?

- What made you realize this is the career that you wanted?
- Are there certain aspects of your job that you particularly enjoy, more than other aspects?
- Were there any particular reasons why you chose police officer over other law enforcement agencies?

Here is the information that Officer Walton was kind enough to give from these questions:

- Officer Walton received his law enforcement training at the Police Training Institute (PTI) located in Champaign, at the University of Illinois's campus. His training here lasted for three months, and some of the concepts taught at the academy were basic law principles, the basic procedures for police officers dealing with what you can and can't do in the line of duty, defensive tactics, control tactics (controlling suspects), traffic stops, and extensive amounts of firearms training.
- The skills that are crucial for being a police officer are knowing what works for you, remembering the skills and techniques that you learned at the academy (in Officer Walton's case, what he learned at the PTI), knowing and remembering your general orders, being able to talk and communicate with people, and most importantly, dealing with people in general.
- The hiring process can be a lengthy one. The whole process to get hired to the Peoria Police Department took Officer Walton six months. He mentioned that it is important to keep your resume up to date. The beginning of the

hiring process begins with an examination that is taken. Officer Walton made sure to mention that this exam is not too difficult. The department sends you a packet in the mail, and there will be multiple tests to take during this process. There are physical tests that vary based on the specific department, but in this case it involved obstacle courses, push-ups, mile runs, and so on. This can lead to a conditional job offer that is given if you pass all these tests. There will still be medical tests that need to be passed, as well as extensive background checks.

- Once you graduate from the academy, you will ride with a training (senior) officer and shadow him or her for a certain amount of time. Again, this period of time varies from one department to another. Officer Walton rode with a training officer for six months. Peoria has a lengthier period here compared to a lot of other departments. The goal here is that the new officer will be ready and comfortable to work on his or her own after this time. If not, there are always officers that you can go to for help. However, if you are not comfortable by this point, it might not be the right career for you.
- As far as being a police officer, Officer Walton had considered this career when he was younger. He didn't attend college and after his time in the U.S. Air Force, he needed to find a good-paying job. It helps that he really enjoys the work of being a police officer.
- Despite the enjoyment he gets from his job, he admits that it is a thankless job a lot of the time. He referenced the southern end of Peoria being a section of the city where a lot of people aren't happy to see the police even though

they are there to help. Places like these where people don't have a lot of trust in law enforcement can be tough places to work. At the end of the day, he enjoys the work at the local level. Recently, he came across a suicidal friend that he knew since high school. He was able to help his friend get the help that he needed. Moments like these are what make the work that he does on a day-to-day basis worth it.

- Officer Walton said that he just applied to this one department and got hired on his first attempt. Overall, he seems to be very happy in his position and enjoys the role that he plays in serving his local community.

A couple short sit-down talks with Dr. Prescott yielded a very interesting read and source for someone interested in law enforcement. Here is the link for this source:

<http://www.gallup.com/poll/196610/americans-respect-police-surges.aspx>

- Gallup has conducted this poll nine different times since the year 1965. The new results are surprisingly in favor of law enforcement. Three in four Americans (76%) say that they have a great deal of respect for officers in their area.
- This number is up 12% from last year alone. This is also one percentage point lower than the all-time high (77%) result from 1967. Just last year, this confidence was at an all-time low. This is up for both whites and nonwhites.
- Only 7% of people that participated in this poll had hardly any respect for law enforcement personnel. So, 93% of people at least have some or a great amount of respect for local police officers (17% have some respect).

### A couple closing thoughts

So after talking with the department chair of the Criminal Justice department at Bradley University and an active police officer from the Peoria Police Department, it has become clear to me that being an English major is no detriment at all to this career path. In fact, quite the opposite is true. You have to look no further than the crucial skills that were consistent between both interviews. Talking to people, having an open mind, being able to think critically, and so on. These are skills that become second nature for us English majors, and thus make us very hireable.

So I know what a lot of people would think about transitioning from an English major at Bradley University to a possible career in law enforcement. What? You don't want to be a teacher? What can you do with an English degree? To simply answer those questions, I don't have any interest in being a teacher. I have great respect and admiration for teachers, while realizing that it isn't something that would be a good fit for me. Also, like all other English majors, we can parlay our English degree and the skills that are developed along with it, into just about every imaginable career. For a law enforcement career, I feel pretty confident by now that an English bachelor's degree from Bradley University would look pretty solid on a resume.

## Sources Used and Consulted

### Secondary Sources

Each of these secondary sources was extremely useful in my research. These are the official websites for these law enforcement agencies. After talking with Professor Christopher Williams, the department chair of the Criminal Justice department at Bradley University, he stressed that these websites for the agencies would be the best place to get information and do research. Going straight to the source, you're going to get up to date information and it will also be accurate down to every last detail. For anyone interested in any of these agencies, these websites should and will probably be the first place to look in your research. The duties and different careers will be laid out in full detail, information about applying and the hiring process (such as background checks and medical requirements), hiring requirements and the things they look for in recruits, and many other relevant facts and statistics reside here. For many of the federal agencies, in order to apply for a position, you will fill out your application and begin the process on these sites.

<https://www.fbi.gov> (Federal Bureau of Investigation)

<https://www.dea.gov/index.shtml> (Drug Enforcement Agency)

<https://www.usmarshals.gov> (United States Marshals Service)

<http://www.fbiagentedu.org/careers/tactical-operations/fbi-swat/> (SWAT)

<https://www.cbp.gov> (US Customs and Border Protection)

<http://www.peoriagov.org/peoria-police-department/> (Peoria Police Department)

<http://www.gallup.com/poll/196610/americans-respect-police-surges.aspx>

## Primary Sources

While secondary sources in this case are extremely beneficial, being able to talk to those involved in the industry of interest is incredibly valuable. Prof. Williams was able to answer a lot of law enforcement questions I had and helped to focus my research and make suggestions. Prof. Prescott was able to give me the name of an active police officer in Peoria's police department to get into contact with and ask questions. He also supplied me with a link to a website that delved into the current community approval ratings for police departments and their officers. With an interest of becoming a police officer, the opportunity to talk to an active police officer is an opportunity that would not have been possible without the mention from Prof. Prescott. Do not be afraid to talk to your English department faculty, as you never know where and from whom contacts and research can follow. Primary sources will always be more personal and allow for multiple interviews or talks, and in the best cases will have an ongoing dialogue where you can revisit those interviews with additional questions.

Christopher Williams (Department Chair & Professor)

- Criminal Justice Department, Bradley University (Two interviews)

Robert Prescott (Associate Professor)

- English Department, Bradley University (Advising Input)

Douglas Walton

- Active police officer, Peoria Police Department