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COD to offer criminal justice bachelor's with Lewis U.

By ROBERT SANCHEZ

College of DuPage students can earn four-year degrees in criminal/social justice beginning this fall as part of a cooperative effort with Lewis University.

The program is the result of a partnership officials with COD and Romeoville-based Lewis plan to announce Wednesday.

"It's a very significant accomplishment for the College of DuPage to have this type of academic partnership with a baccalaureate institution the caliber of Lewis University," said Glenda Gallisath, COD's associate vice president of academic affairs.

COD President Robert Breuder called the agreement "an exciting, innovative approach to traditional transfer programs."

"We're extremely pleased to be at the forefront of this developing trend in higher education," Breuder said in a written statement.

Graduates who earn a bachelor's degree in criminal/social justice will do so "at a fraction of the cost of equivalent programs," officials said.

After paying COD tuition rates for their first three years, students will be charged 60 percent of Lewis University's normal tuition for the final year.

Ray Kennelly, Lewis University's vice president for enrollment management, said one of the goals is to give students "an affordable opportunity" to earn a degree that could help them land a job in law enforcement, possibly as a police officer or corrections officer.

"Both schools focused on the students and how we could best serve them," Kennelly said. "When you come at it from that perspective, something really good is coming out of it."

Kennelly said Lewis University's criminal/social justice program is one of the school's "real strength programs," with more than 200 undergraduates.

Meanwhile, COD officials said their Glen Ellyn campus provides training for a variety of criminal justice and fire science careers.

COD is constructing a new Homeland Security Education Center that will consolidate the college's Suburban Law Enforcement Academy, fire science, criminal justice, emergency medical technician and forensic science programs into one building.

When the 65,000-square-foot structure opens in the fall, officials said, it will house a full-scale, 4-D tactical village, an emergency operations command post, advanced forensics technology and cybercrimes laboratories, and a lecture hall that also will serve as a mock courtroom.

Discussions about the partnership began about six months ago, officials said. Kennelly said the

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Homeland Security Education Center was one of the reasons Lewis agreed to send instructors to COD to teach.

“The commitment that College of DuPage has made to this sort of training and academic program — and attractiveness of that facility to the educational experience — was a real motivation for us,” Kennelly said. “And because criminal/social justice is one of our long-standing programs it was a real nice fit for us.”

As part of the 128-credit-hour program, students will complete 92 credit-hours of COD courses during the first three years. The fourth year, students will complete 36 credit-hours of course work taught by Lewis professors at COD.

To participate, students must first receive an associate in arts degree or an associate in applied science degree in criminal justice from COD.