My name is Shani Wilfred, but most people call me Shá (pronounced Shay). I will be teaching for the Criminal Justice Program in the College of Safety and Emergency Services. I believe that one of the expected outcomes of teaching is the provision of tools to students to help them successfully progress through this journey we call life.

Knowledge on a variety of subjects (e.g., critical thinking, self-respect, professionalism, researching, and responsibility) is one of the most valuable tools teachers can provide students. I also believe that learning is a journey guided by epiphanies that are fueled by new found knowledge. Both teachers and students actively participate in every aspect of the journey assisting each other along the way. Thus, I attempt to challenge students intellectually to move beyond their current understanding of knowledge (e.g., community involvement, participation in university lecture series, and in-depth class discussions). I also try to provide students with access to the tools that will help them meet their academic requirements (e.g., online posting of course materials, instruction on the use of course relevant computer software, and practice exercises). Finally, I work to accommodate the different learning styles students possess and provide special assistance to students with disabilities. While I have an expectation that students will act as responsible adults and complete course requirements, I also understand that there are larger issues outside of the course, beyond the course material that will affect students’ abilities to learn and appropriately participate. Therefore, as much as possible, I make accommodations that facilitate learning.

I attended two universities to obtain my degrees. I graduated from Taylor University with a BS in Criminal Justice. I earned a MA in Criminal Justice and a Ph.D. in Criminal Justice from Indiana University. As an undergraduate student I interned with juvenile probation and worked for pretrial diversion services. As a graduate student I worked as a research assistant and worked with local schools to develop violence reduction plans, and with local police and probation departments to evaluate the correlates of violence in their communities and the effectiveness of violence prevention efforts implemented in their communities. As a graduate student I also taught criminal justice classes. Since I received my Ph.D., I’ve continued teaching and conducting research with criminal justice agencies. As a faculty member, I enjoy teaching all types of criminal justice courses. However, some of my favorite courses to teach are research methods, statistics, juvenile justice, criminology and corrections.

As a faculty member my current research interests include Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) and their involvement with offenders and the criminal justice system, juvenile justice issues (i.e., juvenile waivers), mentally-ill offenders, and community corrections (i.e., the use of community service, probation, and electronic monitoring as alternative forms of sentencing). I am currently a member of the Criminal Justice Association of Georgia (CJAG), the Southern Criminal Justice Association (CJAG), and the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS).

When I am not teaching or working with community organizations, I like to use my “free time” to watch sports, play sports (especially basketball), bike, and listen to music or books on CD. I am by birth a Miami fan (GO Canes, Dolphins, Heat, Panthers, and Marlins), which is usually only painful during the playoffs!

I look forward to working with you during this course. Should you have any course related questions and/or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached via email at shani.wilfred@columbiasouthern.edu and/or via phone at 229.269.9213.