

Training

skills training during the summer at other campuses, like Alexandria Technical College.

"I didn't want to get into a position where we were teaching skills ... but not having the social awareness as to what it took to be an effective human being and effective criminal justice employee," Prout said.

"Campus is not the place to be teaching firearms. This is the place to be teaching ethics, literature and communication so you've got a well-rounded person who goes into police work," he said.

Or, as McDonald put it: "They facilitate the learning process for you. It's not just always them providing the lecture. They instruct you how to learn, develop. How to conduct research, how to critique research, so as you progress through your career, you don't accept things at face value."

In 1972, federal money was made available to start criminal justice programs, Prout said. But the former state trooper and police trainer chose not to build the department on a temporary funding source.

"I wanted to develop a program all the way on hard money, not soft money," he said. The stability has been key to the program's success.

Twenty-eight years ago, Prout came to St. Cloud State fresh from earning his law degree and a doctorate. Fourteen students enrolled the first year.

Is the department still moving in the direction he intended?

"Yes, definitely. Now, though, it's getting there faster because we're hiring some high-powered people. (Our) three most recent hires really have been some powerful people," Prout said.

Department faculty have served in the military, CIA and FBI.

Meanwhile, the program's influence has spread throughout the state, Schreiber said. It also was the first St. Cloud State undergraduate program — in any discipline — to require a senior thesis.

At the graduate level, practicums are common. Many students build a connection to Central Minnesota public safety departments while still in school through internships, community service work or asking research questions.

Some eventually will join the St. Cloud Police Department.

"(Police Chief Dennis O'Keefe) hired some of our best," Prout said.

Other students will enter law school, pursue doctorate degrees or continue their primary careers. One student serves as an assistant principal in St. Cloud.

"They're taking what they've learned in an academic setting and sharing that with the community," said associate professor John Campbell, who spent 28 years with the FBI and served as the bureau's academic dean.