
University of Alberta
Department of Sociology
Youth, Crime and Society
Sociology 321-B1
Winter 2017

Monday & Wednesday 8:00 to 9:20 a.m.
ECHA L1 190

Instructor: Dr. Bryan Hogeveen
Phone: (780) 492-2977
Office Hours: Monday 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.
*or by appointment

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TA: None

Calendar Description

Examination and attempted explanation of crime and juvenile delinquency, with an analysis of the social processes leading to criminal behaviour.

Course Description

What comes to mind when you think about youth crime? This course moves beyond popular understandings of youth crime and criminal justice responses. We take a critical approach in our examination of the relationship between youth, crime, and society. We place youth crime in an historical and socio-cultural context. Toward understanding the choices that bring youth into conflict with the Youth Criminal Justice System (YCJS) the course explores various sociological and criminological perspectives. We discuss the following issues:

- Societal perceptions of youth, youth crime, and violence
- The prevalence of youth victimization, youthful offending, and violent behaviour
- How the YCJS responds to youth and youth crime
- Alienation, exclusion, and marginalization of youth
- The conditions of youth crime and the context of youth choices
- Access to social support, services, and institutional assistance
- Questions of social (in)justice as they relate to race, class and gender
- The implications, consequences, and effectiveness of the YCJS
- Ways to respond to youth crime outside the traditional YCJS
- Questions around silence, voice and the role youth play in the youth justice process

Course Prerequisite

Every student enrolled in this course should have completed Sociology 225 or received consent of instructor.

Course Objectives

After taking this course, students should be able to:

- Identify some of the most challenging issues concerning youth crime and justice
- Describe the historical origins of juvenile justice
- Describe and identify the various transformations in ideas and practice related to youth justice in Canada (including the operation of the youth justice system)
- Compare and contrast the JDA, YOA and YCJA.
- Explain the role of law in contemporary society – especially as it relates to the governance of youth
- Articulate an informed and more critical explanation for youth crime
- Identify some implications of (different components of) youth justice legislation
- Discuss how issues of social marginalization contribute to youthful offending
 - Explain the relevance of social class to youth crime and youth justice
 - Explain the relevance of race/ethnicity to youth crime and youth justice
 - Explain the relevance of gender to youth crime and youth justice
- Describe the role of law and legislation in dealing with youthful offending

Throughout the course you will be encouraged to critically explore the relationships between “youth,” “crime,” and “society.” Our task will be to examine various understandings of, and (criminal justice) responses to, youth crime. In so doing, we will demonstrate the complexities involved in youth justice.

Required Texts

The bookstore has been asked to stock sufficient quantities of the following book:

Winterdyk, John and Russell Smandych
Youth at Risk and Youth Justice: A Canadian Overview (2nd ed.).

The sociological literature on youth crime and juvenile delinquency is vast and students are encouraged to read broadly. I will be happy to recommend supplemental reading for any topics that are discussed in the course.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

Grading

Marks for exams are given in percentages, to which letter grades are also assigned, according to the table below. The percentage mark resulting from the entire term work and examination then produces the final letter grade for the course.

<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Point Value</u>
90-100	A+	4.0
86-89	A	4.0
82-85	A-	3.7
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78-81	B+	3.3
74-77	B	3.0
70-73	B-	2.7
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66-69	C+	2.3
62-65	C	2.0
58-61	C-	1.7
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54-57	D+	1.3
50-53	D	1.0
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Note: Grades will be posted on eClass. In accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Privacy Act* grades will not be given out over the phone or via email.

The professor is willing to reconsider grades for all components of the course **if there is a sound basis for why the previous grading was in error**. Individuals who would like to have an assignment re-evaluated must outline in writing the reason(s) why he/she may believe their assignment deserves a better grade. Requests for a re-evaluation of a grade must be submitted to the Teaching Assistant no more than three weeks after the assignment was returned or grades were posted.

Examinations 100%

There are three quizzes (February 1st and March 8th) and a final examination (April 26 at 9:00 a.m.) each worth one third of your grade. Exams will be comprised of multiple-choice questions, short answer and long answer questions. Exams will draw on lecture materials (as well as guest lectures), required readings, and films. The final exam is not cumulative. Example exam questions can be found in your textbook.

Missed Examinations: A student with an unexcused absence for a mid-term exam will receive a mark of 0 on that exam. For an excused **mid-term** exam absence students must email or phone the professor's office within two days of the exam and leave a message on voicemail. Students with approved absences from an examination will have the choice of writing a make-up examination or deferring the weight of the missed examination to their final.

Note: Make-up exams may follow a different format and have different questions from in-class exams.

Note: Deferred final examinations are approved by students' home Faculty. Students granted a deferred final exam will write the exam on Saturday, May 6, 2017 at 9:00am in BUS 1-10. "A deferred final examination will not be approved if a student (a) has not been in regular attendance where attendance and/or participation are required, and/or, (b) excluding the final exam, has completed less than half of the assigned work."

Important Dates

Classes Begin:	Monday, January 9, 2017
Course Drop and Add:	Friday, January 20, 2017
Course Withdrawal: <i>(with 50% fee refund)</i>	Wednesday, February 8, 2017
Family Day Holiday:	February 20, 2017 (no classes)

Winter term Reading Week: February 21 - 24, 2017 (no classes)

Final Course Withdrawal: Friday, April 5, 2017
Classes End: Friday, April 12, 2017

Required Notes:

Policy about course outlines can be found in **Course Requirements, Evaluation Procedures and Grading** of the University Calendar.

Academic Integrity

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.governance.ualberta.ca) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University."

Learning and working environment

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring that all students, faculty and staff are able to work and study in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the student ombudservice: (<http://www.ombudservice.ualberta.ca/>).

Recording of Lectures:

"Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s)."

Student Accessibility Services (SAS):

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with SAS, contact their office immediately (2-800 SUB; Email ssdsrec@ualberta.ca; Email; phone 780-492-3381; WEB www.ssds.ualberta.ca).

Topics

The course format will consist of weekly lectures, films and (possibly) guest speakers. It is the responsibility of the student to attend lectures, keep pace with assigned readings and submit assignments on time. Students are expected to read the required material in advance of the lecture. At times there will be overlap between the lectures and assigned readings, however lectures are intended to supplement rather than reproduce information contained in the textbook. You are responsible for all of the assigned readings, regardless of what topics are discussed in lectures.

Students are advised to consult the instructor immediately if they experience difficulty meeting course expectations.

Week One ***Introduction: Toward Understanding Youth Crime***

Reading: Chapter 4

Film: Who is Watching the Children

Week Two ***Responding to Youth Crime: Historical Origins***

Lecture Topic: When was childhood and juvenile delinquency invented? How were youthful deviants governed/treated before the development of the Juvenile Court? Why do we have a separate system of justice for juvenile offenders?

Reading: Chapter 1

Week Three ***The Nature, Extent, and Public Perceptions of Youth Crime***

Lecture Topic: How does the public perceive youth crime and how do these perceptions relate to media representations of young offenders? Given public concern over crimes by youth under 12 (i.e. the Bulger case), should the lower age jurisdiction of the YOA be reduced to 10 (or lower)?

Reading: Chapters 2 & 6

Week Four ***Canadian Youth Justice: Philosophy and Principles of the YOA and YCJA***

Lecture Topic: What are the goals of the Canadian Youth Justice system? Are they being achieved? Why should the youth justice system have a statement of principles?

Reading: Chapters 3 & 4

Week Five ***Practices of Governance and Control: Theoretical Underpinnings***

Lecture Topic: Why do youth commit crimes? Are the rationales behind youth crime all that different from the reasons adults are deviant? Does young offenders' "knowledge" of the YOA and rights encourage deviance?

Reading: Chapters 8 & 9

Week Six ***Violence and Youth***

Lecture Topic: What is the nature and extent of youth violence in Canada? Are youth becoming increasingly violent? Why does it seem so?

Reading: Chapter 9

Week Seven ***Street Involved Youth: Conditions, Consequences, Interventions***

Lecture Topic: Does a disruptive family environment lead youth to find reprieve on the streets? What are the factors leading street youth to commit violent criminal acts? What effect does involvement in street prostitution have on the lives of youth?

Reading: Chapters 12 & 13

Week Eight ***Criminalized Girls and Boys: Gender and Delinquency***

Lecture Topic: What do we know about female young offenders? How well/poorly does the Canadian youth justice system respond to the needs of female juvenile delinquents? Why young girls join gangs?

Reading: Chapter 7

Week Nine ***Marginalized Youth***

Lecture Topic: Do theories of delinquency apply equally across all offenders? Does the Canadian youth justice system respond to the needs of all young offenders equally?

Reading: Chapter 11

Week Ten ***What to do about Youth Crime?***

Lecture Topic: Do harsh penalties for young offenders reduce youth crime? Why does Canada have a higher rate of incarceration for young offenders than the United States and (most of) Europe? Does transferring youth to adult court undermine the legitimacy of a separate youth justice system? What are the implications of transfer to adult court?

Reading: Chapters 15 & 16

Week Eleven ***Youth Voices and Youth Centred Interventions***

Lecture Topic: What is the best way to manage youth crime? Can we learn from other countries' experiences? What are some of the pros and cons of some of the latest programmes (Mentoring; Sentencing Circles; Restorative Approaches)? Should the youth justice system be abolished?

Reading: Chapter 5

Week Twelve ***Conclusion***