

University of Manitoba, Department of Sociology

Sociology 3830 A01– Youth, Crime and Society – Winter 2008 (T2)
Slot 1 – MWF (8:30-9:20) – Room 235 Isbister (3 credit hours)

Instructor: Dr. R. Smandych
Office: 303 Isbister Building
Office Hours: Monday 10:30–12:00 pm, or by appointment
Phone: 474-6446
Email: rsmandy@cc.umanitoba.ca

Course Description: This course is designed to provide students with a detailed understanding of issues surrounding childhood deviance and the treatment of young offenders in the criminal justice system. The course will cover topics including: historical perspectives on the changing role of children and youth in Canadian society; cross-cultural perspectives on childhood; legislation dealing with young offenders (the JDA, YOA, and YCJA); young offenders and the media; and current research on youth crime, youth crime prevention, and the treatment of young offenders in the Canadian criminal justice system. The course will also introduce students to comparative research on the approaches to dealing with youth crime in other countries. This comparative-historical approach is aimed at generating new policy ideas and recommendations needed to bring about progressive changes in the way youth justice issues are dealt with in Canada.

Course Requirements and Evaluation: The course will consist of lectures and discussions on topics outlined in the course syllabus. Students are expected to do the required readings, and be prepared to engage in discussions of the topics covered in the readings.

The course evaluation will consist of three in-class tests, and four short written essay assignments (of approximately 600-900 words, or 2 to 3 type-written pages each). Provided below is a breakdown of the value of each of the course requirements and related approximate test and assignment due dates:

Test 1	20%	(Monday, February 4)
Assignment 1	10%	(Wednesday, February 6)
Assignment 2	10%	(Monday, February 25)
Test 2	20%	(Friday, March 14)
Assignment 3	10%	(Monday, March 17)
Test 3	20%	(Friday, April 11)
Assignment 4	10%	(Monday, April 14)

The following grade distribution will be used in the evaluation of the students' work:

A+	90 - 100	C+	65 - 69
A	80 - 89	C	60 - 64
B+	75 - 79	D	50 - 59
B	70 - 74	F	0 - 49

Tentative Outline of Topics to be Covered:

1. Children and Youth in Historical and Comparative Perspective
2. Youth Justice Systems: Origins and Development
3. Young Offender Legislation: Current Principles and Practice
4. Youth Crime Trends, Public Discourse and the Media
5. Youth Crime: Theories and Problems
6. Youth Gangs and Violent Crime
7. Youth Crime Prevention: What Doesn't Work?
8. Youth Crime Prevention: What Works?
9. Understanding Youth Justice System Reform

Required Course Readings:

J. Howell, Preventing and Reducing Juvenile Delinquency: A Comprehensive Framework. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2003.

R. Green and K. Healy, Tough on Kids: Rethinking Approaches to Youth Justice. Saskatoon: Purich Publishing, 2003.

B. Schissel, Still Blaming Children: Youth Conduct and the Politics of Child Hating. Halifax: Fernwood Books, 2006.

In addition, a number of additional required readings (in the form of electronic PDF files) will be made available free of charge to students by the instructor at the beginning of the course.

Missed Tests: If a test is missed for a legitimate medical or compassionate reason the student must get in touch with the instructor, provide related documentation if requested, and arrange for a make-up test. Under normal circumstances, the student is required to inform the instructor of their request for a make-up test within one week of the original test date. Failure to request a make-up test within the expected time frame may result in ineligibility for a make-up test and a mark of zero for that test.

Late Assignments: Late assignments will incur a penalty of 2 marks for each day the assignment is late unless the student has contacted the instructor before the assignment due date and requested a time extension. Time extensions will only be given for documented medical and compassionate reasons.

Academic Integrity: Students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on "Examinations: Personations" and "Plagiarism and Cheating" found in the Undergraduate Calendar.

The last date for voluntary withdrawal is March 20, 2008.