



CJ 597.02W
Juvenile Delinquency
Spring Semester 2013
2/25-3/31
Online

COURSE SYLLABUS

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COURSE INFORMATION

Required Reading:

Agnew, Robert and Brezina, Timothy (2011). *Juvenile delinquency: Causes and control*. 4th ed. Oxford University Press, USA. ISBN:9780199828142 / 0199828148

Supplementary Reading:

Other materials/readings as assigned and posted online

Course Description/Explanation:

The class will consider the subject of juvenile delinquency from various perspectives including psychological, physiological and sociological. Particular attention will be paid to the role of family, the school, and the peer group in promoting delinquency. This course will provide students with the tools to analyze and evaluate juvenile justice policies and programs.

The course will be divided into four sections, with each section being organized around one or more major questions about delinquency:

The Nature and Extent of Delinquency:

The first section will deal with some basic "facts" about delinquency. We will answer four (4) questions: 1) What is delinquency and how does it differ from adult crime? 2) How much

delinquency is there? 3) Is delinquency increasing? 4) What types of youth tend to commit delinquent acts?

Theories of Delinquency:

After answering the above questions, we will focus on what is probably the most frequently asked question about delinquency: "What causes juveniles to break the law?" We will examine several major sociological theories or explanations of delinquency.

Research on the Causes of Delinquency:

We will then examine research inspired by or at least compatible with the above theories. This research examines the extent to which delinquency is caused by individual traits (e.g., low intelligence, negative emotionality), family factors (e.g., "broken homes," poor discipline), school factors, delinquent peer groups, gangs, and other factors.

The Control and Prevention of Delinquency:

In the final section of the course, we will ask "How can we control or prevent delinquency?" We will spend the first part of this section examining what the juvenile justice system (police, juvenile court, juvenile correctional agencies) does to control delinquency. Three questions will guide our analysis: 1) How do these agencies operate -- what do they do to control delinquency? 2) To what extent do these agencies violate the rights of individuals and groups in their efforts to control delinquency? 3) How effective are these agencies and what can they do to be more effective? We will then examine the general strategies to control delinquency: the "get tough" strategies of deterrence and incapacitation and the "liberal" strategies of rehabilitation and prevention. ****Format and course syllabus adapted in part from Dr. Robert Agnew*

Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Define juvenile delinquency from a legal and sociological perspective and create and document a history of delinquency in America
2. Generalize juvenile crime trends and measure rates of delinquency
3. Differentiate between the various theories of delinquency and discuss how culture, diversity, social stratification, families, schools, neighborhoods and peers may play a role in delinquent behavior.
4. Discuss classical and contemporary research on the etiology of juvenile delinquency, with reference to original sources.

5. Assess the extent of juvenile law breaking behavior in contemporary society and trace its development (and the popular perception of its development)

Student Learning Outcomes/Core Competencies:

1. Introduce you to the major research on juvenile delinquency, as outlined above. This goal will be achieved primarily through the readings and discussions.

2. Introduce you to the methods that criminologists use to study delinquency. How do criminologists determine how much delinquency there is, whether some factor like "broken homes" causes delinquency, or whether some policy like imposing a curfew reduces delinquency? We will examine some of the methods that criminologists use to answer questions about delinquency. In particular, we will examine how criminologists estimate the extent of delinquency and trends in delinquency, how they determine whether various factors cause delinquency, and how they determine whether certain policies or programs reduce delinquency. A basic knowledge of these methods will prove invaluable to you, since they will help you evaluate the accuracy of many of the claims you hear about delinquency and other topics (claims from friends and family, politicians, the media, etc.).

3. Get you to apply course materials. It is not enough to simply memorize certain facts and theories about delinquency. Such facts and theories are useless unless you can apply them to your own lives and the larger community. In particular, the materials in this course can help you better understand your own behavior and that of the people around you; better raise your children if you decide to have children; better evaluate the claims you hear about delinquency from others; and better work toward the control of delinquency in your community. We will achieve this goal through a number of class discussions and it will be emphasized on the exams.

4. Increase your commitment to work toward the reduction of delinquency. Almost everyone in the field of juvenile justice feels that we can do much more to control delinquency. This course will help you better formulate your own views on controlling delinquency and will encourage you to act on your views. This goal will be achieved through reading and discussing the literature on delinquency.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional Methods/Activities/Assessments

This course will provide a variety of activities and assessments to assist you in achieving the outcomes/objectives for the course. Each week you will work toward achieving these outcomes through discussions/comments and a final paper. Below is an explanation of each course requirement including due date, assignment instructions, and other requirements.

Please note that a core competency of this course is critical thinking. Critical thinking requires students to think through situations, facts, and issues in an open-minded and objective way in an effort to analyze and evaluate information in an informed manner. Qualities of a critical thinker (and of arguments that embody critical thinking) include:

- Certainty is not always necessary for a critical thinker; possibility and probability should always be a consideration**—in other words, just because the book tells you it is true, doesn't mean that there may not be another solution or possibility to consider. The way that facts relate to one another—and not just fact alone—should be used to determine truth.
- Critical thinkers are not only independent thinkers; they are also fair-minded in that they are willing to consider all points of view, and they are careful to take every aspect of an argument into consideration**—your way of thinking may not necessarily be the only way or the right way of thinking. Consider other perspectives
- Consider evidence (facts), source (from what source did your evidence come from), and motivations (what might be the underlying motivation behind these facts)**—in other words, gather information from credible sources and evaluate these sources/factual information in the context of what you have been asked to discuss/evaluate.

As defined by the National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking, critical thinking is: “The intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. In its exemplary form, it is based on universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter divisions: clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness.”

(Scriven, M. & Paul, R. Presented at the 8th Annual International Conference on Critical Thinking and Education Reform, Summer 1987.)

When preparing discussions/comments/assignments/papers/presentations, use the following to help you critically think through task. You will be graded (in part) on how well you are able to perform this skill.

- Determine the problem/issue you are trying to solve. Make sure you remain open-minded and objective and be aware of your own biases on the subject and put them aside

- Develop a hypothesis and/or possible solution to the problem/issue. Brainstorm other possible solutions. Think about the pros and cons of the problem/issue
- Gather information on the problem/issue that may support or contradict your position
- Analyze your facts. Don't assume anything. Evaluate the facts objectively
- Determine a reasonable conclusion based on all of the facts
- Make sure your facts (and the reporting of the facts) are accurate. You may assume a causal relationship but there might be other possible conclusions to be drawn based on other factors. Be sure to evaluate what those might be.

Introduction/Discussion Posts: (1 Introduction @ 50 points; 4 discussion posts @ 50 points each = 250 course points)

Student Learning Outcomes #1-#3: Think critically about important issues in criminal justice planning and evaluation; Problem-solve solutions to issues related to criminal justice planning and evaluation; Enhance communication skills and reading/research acumen

The **Introduction** is a chance for you to 'meet' your colleagues in the class and an opportunity to introduce yourself to your professor. You will also be required to answer a course-related question. Specific instructions on what to post are available when you click on Introduction/Discussion in Week #1. The Introductory post is due on Tuesday of Week #1 of the course.

The **Discussions** are directly related to the assigned readings/your program evaluation paper. Upon completion of the assigned readings, you are expected to engage in an **ongoing** discussion/debate with your classmates. Your contributions to the discussion forums will be graded for **quality** and a **detailed analysis** linking the material to a critical appraisal of theory, policy, and practice. In all cases, students must cite in-text and provide a full bibliography/works cited at the end of their post for all citations mentioned in the post (See information later in the syllabus for more information on citing utilizing APA citation format. Also see the 'How to Cite' FactSheet available in CJ 500, the program orientation course to which you have ongoing access).

These discussion posts should be **the equivalent of 1 page in length**. The specific discussion assignment is located in each unit Week and may be accessed by clicking on the Discussion link. Discussion Posts are due by 11:00PM CST on **Thursdays**.

Assessment Method: Discussion posts will be graded using the Discussion Post Grading Rubric.

Comment Posts: (10 comments @ 10 points each = 100 course points; or minimum 2 substantive peer responses per week for 20 points per discussion)

Student Learning Outcomes #1-#3: **Think critically about important issues in criminal justice planning and evaluation; Problem-solve solutions to issues related to criminal justice planning and evaluation; Enhance communication skills and reading/research acumen**

Comment posts are responses you make to the original discussion posts that you and your classmates post each week. You are **required** to make a minimum of **two** comments each week.

Comment posts should be meaningful. Merely agreeing or disagreeing with a classmate will not be looked upon favorably and will result in a loss of points. A meaningful post is one that moves the discussion forward in some substantive way through providing one's perspective, additional information through research, or reframing the discussion in some new way. You are expected to engage in an **ongoing** discussion/debate with your classmates. Your comments will be graded for **quality**, and **relevance**. Your comments will also be graded based on your ability to engage in critical thinking.

NO LATE COMMENTS ARE ACCEPTED. All comment posts are due by 11:00PM CST on **Saturdays**. Discussions require active participation therefore it is expected that are online a minimum of two times per week; more is encouraged.

Assessment Method: Comments will be graded using the Discussion Grading Rubric.

Please note that each discussion and its accompanying comments will be graded together. You will note that each grade book entry for each discussion is worth 70 points (50 points for the discussion and 20 points for comments).

Exams: (2 exams @ 50 points each = 100 course points)

Student Learning Outcomes #1 - #4: The student will obtain a basic understanding of important issues in juvenile delinquency and juvenile justice. The student will learn to utilize critical thinking skills.

There will be **2** exams in this course. Exams will be 1-2 hours in length (depending on test composition) and will be accessible for a 17-hour period beginning at 6:00AM on until 11:00PM CST Wednesday of week 1 and Wednesday of week 5. Students will be notified of the precise format of the test prior to exam day. **YOU WILL ONLY BE ALLOWED TO ACCESS THE EXAM ONCE.** See under Course and University Policies/Procedures for more information regarding taking tests on eCollege. Your exams will take place on the following Wednesdays:

Exam #1 covering Chapters 1-12 of the text and any other assigned materials will be **taken on Wednesday of week 3.**

Exam #2 covering Chapters 13-25 of the text and any other assigned materials will be **taken on Wednesday of week 5.**

Assessment Method: Multiple choice and/or short answer questions.

Final Paper (1 paper @ 100 course points)

Student Learning Outcomes #1-#4: Think critically about important issues in the juvenile justice system; Problem-solve solutions to issues related to juvenile justice; Enhance communication skills and reading/research acumen

Assignment Instructions: Write a paper analyzing a **major** problem facing today's juvenile justice system. Some examples might be disproportionate minority confinement, recidivism, gang issues and in particular the growing influence of female gangs, drug use, juvenile curfews, zero tolerance policy for /with school searches, socio economic factors affecting delinquency and parental liability for juvenile offenses, life without parole for juvenile offenders. A central purpose of the project is to have you to analyze, evaluate, and simulate the way the juvenile justice system has or has not addressed a problem and to propose a solution.

An introduction must be provided to summarize and define your topic, including a clear statement of the problem or issue of concern. In addition, you need to select a theoretical framework for your issue and describe its relevance to the issue that you write about.

The body of the paper must include summaries of current relevant research from a minimum of ten (10) credible sources, a discussion of the implications of proposed solutions for the juvenile justice system, and your evaluation and conclusions regarding possible methods of managing or addressing the problem your opinion on the issues raised—supported by research.

The paper is expected to have content and thoughtful analysis on the topic on a graduate level. Sources should be a combination of scholarly works, textbook and primary sources. You are encouraged to add your own opinions; however, those opinions should be carefully considered, logical, and supported by evidence or outside rationale.

Relate your subject to larger (broader) juvenile justice issues as found in the course readings.

Your paper should be a minimum of 15 pages in length (not including title page or reference page), double spaced, 12 font, well written, and formatted in conformity with APA rules.

Note: Topic selections: Please note that once you have selected your topic. **(IT CANNOT CHANGE)**. Choose wisely and submit the topic to me for approval not later than Saturday at 11:00PM CST of week 2 via e-mail.

Your **FINAL** paper should be a **MINIMUM** of 15 pages -if your paper reaches 30 pages, stop and regroup.), **MAXIMUM** 12-point font, using full APA paper format (an example of APA paper format may be found on the TAMU-C library website and in Doc Sharing for this class). Make sure all citations follow APA citation format, as well. All formal rules of grammar and word usage apply.

Assessment Method: Students will be assessed using the Final Paper Grading Rubric located in Doc Sharing. Be sure to review this rubric carefully to ensure that your paper includes all

components of the paper upon which you will be graded. The final paper will be due Friday of week 5 via drop box not later than 11:00PM CST.

Course Pre/Pos-test (not graded)

Pre and post-tests allow the professor to assess your baseline (foundation) knowledge of a particular subject at the time that you enter a course and the degree of increase in knowledge at the end of the course. This pre/post-test is comprised of no more than 10 questions that will assess your knowledge. You will be asked to complete the pre-test by **Friday** of Week #1 and your post-test by **Friday** of Week #5. These tests will not be graded (they are used for assessment purposes only).

GRADING

Assignments for this course will be scored using a points system. Below is an explanation of how each assignment type will be scored.

Assignment Type	# of Assignments	Point Value	Total Points
Introduction	1	50	50
Discussions	4	50	200
Comments	10	10	100
Paper	1	100	100
Exam 1	1	50	50
Exam 2	1	50	50
Pre/Post-test	1	0	0
		TOTAL	550

Grades earned on each assignment will be added together and will be divided by the total number of points possible in the course. Below is the overall point scale/grading schema for the course.

Total points possible for the term = 550.

550-495 = A
494-440 = B
439-385 = C

384-330 = D
329 and below = F

Grades will be available in the grade book so that students can track their progress in the course on an ongoing basis.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

The following hardware and software are necessary in order to use eCollege:

Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).

Your courses will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari 2.0 or better. Along with Internet Explorer and Safari, eCollege also supports the Firefox browser (3.0) on both Windows and Mac operating systems.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a “Browser Test” prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login to eCollege, click on the ‘myCourses’ tab, and then select the “Browser Test” link under Support Services.

For those of you who are not familiar with eCollege, I suggest you take the tutorial offered online. Should you have any questions, feel free to contact the folks in Technology Services.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To log in to the course, go to: <https://leo.tamuc.edu/login.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Students should familiarize themselves with ECollege **PRIOR** to beginning their first course in the program. This will reduce the number of headaches and concerns that you will have throughout the course. Access to the ECollege tutorial is available through MyLeo.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:

My primary form of communication with the class will be through Email. Any changes to the syllabus or other important information critical to the class will be disseminated to students in this way via your official University Email address available to me through MyLeo and in Announcements. It will be your responsibility to check your University Email regularly.

Students who Email me outside of regular office hours can expect a reply within 24 hours M-F. Students who Email me during holidays or over the weekend should expect a reply by the end of the next regularly scheduled business day.

ECollege Student Technical Support:

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of eCollege. The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Chat Support: Click on '*Live Support*' on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.

Phone: 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

Email: helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

Help: Click on the '*Help*' button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e. How to submit to dropbox, How to post to discussions etc...)

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures:

Academic Honesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including (but not limited to) receiving a failing grade on the assignment, the possibility of failure in the course and dismissal from the University. Since dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. In **ALL** instances, incidents of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Department Head. Please be aware that academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) cheating, plagiarism, and collusion.

Cheating is defined as:

- Copying another's test or assignment

- Communication with another during an exam or assignment (i.e. written, oral or otherwise)
- Giving or seeking aid from another when not permitted by the instructor
- Possessing or using unauthorized materials during the test
- Buying, using, stealing, transporting, or soliciting a test, draft of a test, or answer key

Plagiarism is defined as:

- Using someone else's work in your assignment without appropriate acknowledgement
- Making slight variations in the language and then failing to give credit to the source

Collusion is defined as:

- Collaborating with another, without authorization, when preparing an assignment

If you have any questions regarding academic dishonesty, ask. Otherwise, I will assume that you have full knowledge of the academic dishonesty policy and agree to the conditions as set forth in this syllabus.

Students should also reference the following link for more detailed information.

<http://web.tamuc.edu/academics/colleges/artsSciences/departments/sociologyCriminalJustice/frequentlyAskedQuestions/academicHonesty/default.aspx>

Policy for Reporting Problems with eCollege

Should students encounter ecollege-based problems, the following procedure **MUST** be followed.

- Students must report the problem to the help desk. You may reach the helpdesk at helpdesk@online.tamuc.org or 1-866-656-5511
- Students **MUST** file their problem with the helpdesk and obtain a helpdesk ticket number
- Once a helpdesk ticket number is in your possession, students should Email me to advise me of the problem and to provide me with the helpdesk ticket number
- At that time, I will call the helpdesk to confirm your problem and follow up with you

PLEASE NOTE: Personal computer/access problems are not a legitimate excuse for filing a ticket with the helpdesk. I strongly encourage you to check for compatibility of your browser BEFORE the course begins and to take the ECollege tutorial offered for students who may require some extra assistance in navigating the ECollege platform. ONLY ECollege-based problems are legitimate.

Attendance Policy

While this is an online course, students are expected to ‘attend class’ and actively participate. Student participation/activity will be monitored by the professor. Students should plan to dedicate approximately 15-20 hours/week of time to this course, of which approximately 1 hour/week should be spent in the discussion board (reading posts and comments and conversing with others). You are expected to “attend class” more than once per week to actively participate in discussions.

APA Citation Format Policy

It is very important that you learn how to cite properly. In some ways, citations are more important than the actual text of your paper/assignment. Therefore, you should take this task seriously and devote some time to understanding how to cite properly. If you take the time to understand this process up front, it will save you a significant amount of time in the long run (not to mention significant deductions in points).

In the social and behavioral sciences (including Criminal Justice), we use APA (American Psychological Association) format. As a rule of thumb, one cites whenever they are paraphrasing other people’s words or when they quote other’s words directly. You may learn to cite from a variety of different sources including the APA Tutorial and the sources listed below. A copy of an APA paper is located in Doc Sharing for your review.

www.apastyle.org

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/02/>

www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/apa

It is the student’s responsibility to understand how to cite properly. If you have questions, feel free to ask.

Late Work

In principle, I do not accept late work and do not believe in allowing students to turn in work after the due date. My position is that everyone knows the rules of engagement at the beginning of the term and that it is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they plan accordingly to submit their assignments in a timely manner. However, I also do understand that sometimes there are circumstances outside one’s control that may impact timely submission of assignments. To that end, I have developed a policy on late work. Please note that this policy applies ONLY to your reflection paper assignment and not to discussion or comment submissions or exams.

Late assignments will be accepted after the due date and time up to 1 day (24 hours) late. Twenty (20) points will be deducted from all late assignments. Assignments submitted more than one day late **will not** be accepted/graded. **E-mail assignments are never accepted.**

Drop Course Policy

Students should take responsibility for dropping themselves from the course according to University policy should this become necessary.

University Specific Procedures:

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library

Room 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*). Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Every effort will be made to adhere to the course schedule as noted below. However, unforeseen circumstances may require changes to the schedule. In that case, changes will be announced via University Email and in Announcements. The professor reserves the right to change the schedule if necessary and depending on the progress of the class. I highly recommend that you follow the schedule outlined below **VERY CAREFULLY** so that you are sure to complete readings as assigned and turn your assignments in on time.

Please note that all assignments are due by 11:00PM CST in ECollege on the day they are due as outlined in the syllabus. Please note that this course runs on a Monday-Sunday schedule.

WEEK #1—The Nature and Extent of Delinquency

Monday	<p>Read the syllabus carefully. Post a Week #1 Introduction where you introduce yourself, accept the conditions of the syllabus, agree to the Rules of Netiquette, and answer the course-related question I pose. Please note that this post is required for ALL students and will be graded. The link to the Rules of Netiquette may be found under Course and University Procedures/Policies under Student Conduct or here: http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html</p> <p>Readings from the Text</p> <p>Agnew & Brezina: Chapters 1-4</p>
Tuesday	Complete first-week Introduction/Question
Thursday	Discussion #1 due
Friday	Complete course pre-test
Saturday	Comments for Discussion #1 due

WEEK #2—Theories of Delinquency part 1

Monday	<p>This week’s readings cover information related to theories of delinquency.</p> <p>Readings from the Text</p> <p>Agnew & Brezina: Chapters: Chapters 5-10</p>
Thursday	Discussion #2 due
Saturday	Comments for Discussion #2 due

WEEK #3—Theories of Delinquency part 2

Monday	This week’s readings will cover additional theories of delinquency.
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	Readings from the Text: Agnew & Brezina: Chapters: Chapters 11-12
Wednesday	Exam 1 covering chapters 1-12
Thursday	Discussion #3 due
Saturday	Comments for Discussion #3 due

WEEK #4— Research on Causes of Delinquency

Monday	This week’s readings will cover topics surrounding major research on the causes of delinquency. Readings from the Text Agnew & Brezina: Chapters: Chapters 13-18
Thursday	Discussion #4 due
Saturday	Comments for Discussion #4 due

WEEK #5—The Control and Prevention of Delinquency

Monday	This week’s readings will cover topics including policies and programs in delinquency. Readings from the Text Agnew & Brezina: Chapters: Chapters 19-25
Wednesday	Exam 2 covers chapters 13- 25
Friday	Final Paper due by 11:00PM CST Complete course post-test
Saturday	Last Day of Class

Note: *Instructor intends to follow syllabus but reserves the right to make revisions as deemed necessary and appropriate and will notify students in writing.*