

SOC 347-JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

SYLLABUS

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COURSE DELIVERY:

Print-Based Correspondence

CREDIT HOURS:

Three Semester Hours

PREREQUISITES:

SOC 201: The Sociological Imagination.

COURSE MATERIALS:

Required Textbook:

Regoli, Robert M. and Hewitt, John D. (2003). *Delinquency in Society*, (5th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., ISBN: 0-07-248596-5

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

This course considers the nature of delinquency, including an analysis of treatment methods and the juvenile justice system. It provides an analytical study of the statistics, trends, characteristics, and causes of juvenile delinquency. The theories of delinquency, social influences on delinquency, the history of the juvenile justice system, the juvenile justice process, and prevention models currently used in the United States will be examined.

It is important to remember that in this course you will be using the sociological perspective to analyze and synthesize the concepts, theory, research, and issues that constitute the field of juvenile justice. It is central to your sociological understanding of the subject that you recognize that juvenile delinquency and juvenile justice do not exist in a vacuum, rather they form a major industry, organization, and institution in U.S. society. They affect and are affected by the same workings of society, problems, and issues as other major social institutions.

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Thus, juvenile delinquency and juvenile justice will be situated in the frameworks of larger historical, political, economic, and social/cultural forces. You will examine juvenile justice as it exists which includes moving beyond personal values, beliefs, and experiences and seeing the social forces that impact juveniles and the justice system.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Examining the major areas of theory, research, social policy and practice which affect younger populations
- Looking at the myths, stereotypes, and stigmas of juveniles – including how they are created and perpetuated
- Familiarization with the history and emergence of childhood and adolescence as established stages of the life cycle in U.S. culture
- Determining how the youthful population influences, and is influenced by, the social structure; including:
 - the status and roles of younger persons in groups and institutions of American culture and society
 - regularities, variations, and interdependence among the relationships of this younger population
 - values, beliefs, attitudes, norms, and behaviors that legitimize and sanction youth culture
 - how changes in social institutions such as economy, politics, education, religion, and family affect youth culture
- Effects of race/ethnicity, gender, and social class on younger populations
- Examining the rites, rituals, and customs of youth
- Analyzing existing and changing systems of power, privilege, and constraint and how these influence youth
- Learning the types of and extent of delinquency and how delinquency is defined
- Responses to delinquency and youth culture at the community, local, and national levels
- Policies and services directed at delinquency and younger populations
- The role of the justice system in preventing, responding to, and contributing to delinquency

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

There are three proctored exams you are required to take for this course. Each exam is multiple choice and is worth 100 points, for a total of 300 points. Thus the exams are worth 75% of your final grade. The *Guidelines for Proctored Exams* and the *Examination Request* forms are included in this study guide. Please send your exam request form two to three weeks before you plan to take the exam.

In addition, you will be required to write five (5) essays on the information from the chapters in the text. These writing assignments are a way for me to evaluate your progress through the course. They can also be a way of helping you prepare for the exams since they cover material from the text. Each writing assignment is worth 20 points, thus they add up to 100 points, or the equivalent of an exam. They are 25% of your final grade.

Since each writing assignment focuses on specific chapters of the text, you should read the appropriate chapters before attempting the writing assignments. And as noted above, when you prepare the writing assignments, you are taking a step toward preparing for the exams. In the next section of this study guide you will find the **COURSE WORK SCHEDULE**. Note that **you must mail in your writing assignments that cover the chapters of the text before you take the exam for those chapters of the text.**

Contact me at any time if you need clarification or guidance on some aspect of the course requirements, especially the writing assignments. You may want guidance on the first writing assignment in order to get comfortable with writing sociologically.

Points to remember in writing the essays:

1. Be concise, avoid wordiness and too much generalization; stay on topic.
2. Address the issues required of the writing assignment and get to the point in the first sentence or two of the introductory paragraph; flowery or wordy introductions detract from the essay.
3. Use a **formal** writing style (this means no contractions, avoid slang, and use the third person voice – use the pronouns they, their instead of the pronouns I, me, mine, we, our, he, or she), but you do not need to adhere to a particular academic writing style such as APA or AMA.
4. Use only the textbook.
5. Since you are using only the text for the course, a bibliography page is not needed
6. Avoid opinion; the whole point of these writing assignments is to ensure that you are making progress by working toward the exams.
7. It is better to go over the required length of the paper than under the required length

(The following are format requirements to remember.)

8. Writing assignments should be typed.
9. Papers should be double-spaced.
10. 1 inch margins...

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11. Use 12 point font...
12. And use Times New Roman font...
13. Black ink only.

The following are the specific writing assignments:

Writing Assignment #1: From Chapter 3, discuss the contemporary causes of juvenile violence in the United States. Include in this essay the types of violent crimes committed by youth. **Do not** discuss prevention, responses to youth violence and the like. Stay focused on the specific types of violence committed by youth and the societal, familial, and other environmental factors that influence these types of violence. You may choose a few points and elaborate on them or you may cover a variety of points and discuss them briefly. Do not forget to look over the information on “Youth Violence in European Countries” if you need more substantive material to bolster your essay. As you write, be certain to ask yourself if you are staying focused on the topic of the essay. **(3 pages in length)**

Writing Assignment #2: Similar to the first writing assignment, discuss the contemporary causes of drug use among juveniles (Chapter 4). Include in this essay the types of drugs used by youth. **Do not** discuss prevention, consequences of drug use and the like. Stay focused on the theories and explanations of drug use offered in the text. For this essay, you should specifically focus on: a) weakening of social controls, b) socialization into drug use by the subculture, and c) family conflict and poor parenting. In your concluding paragraph or two, give your opinion of the factors that influence drug use among juveniles. Again, be aware of staying on the topic of the essay. **(3 pages in length)**

NOTE: You must turn in writing assignments #1 and #2 before you take exam #1!!!

Writing Assignment #3: From Chapters 6 and 7, compare and contrast the two types of social science theories in the text, the psychological and the sociological. Since your text provides notably more information for sociological theories, pick and choose the ones you want to address. The point of the essay is for you to explain the similarities and differences between the two types of explanations of delinquency, so choose theories that will best illustrate these similarities and differences. Be certain to clearly state in your introductory paragraph which theories you will be examining and follow them through in subsequent paragraphs. In other words, as usual, stay focused on the topics of the essay. **(4 pages in length)**

Writing Assignment #4: From Chapter 10, what are the effects single-parenting , divorce, and working mothers on delinquency? Be certain that you include the variables/factors that have been found to have little influence on delinquency (e.g., mother’s employment status) as well as the specific variables/factors that actually influence delinquency (lack of financial stability). What I want you to watch for here is how some of the previous assumptions concerning what causes delinquency have been

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found to be incorrect and recent research has done a better job of pinpointing factors that directly influence delinquent behavior. **(3 pages in length)**

NOTE: You must turn in writing assignments #3 and #4 before you take exam #2!!!

Writing Assignment #5: From Chapter 12, what are the reasons identified as contributions to the “dramatic spread of gangs over the past three decades?” After discussing the growth of gangs, read the information under the heading “Gang Suppression, Intervention, and Prevention Strategies,” and describe the strategies for responding to the problem of youth gangs. In effect, your focus is twofold, first you should describe the causes of the increase in gangs, and second you should explain how to address the growth and development of gangs. **(3 pages in length)**

NOTE: You must turn in writing assignment #5 before you take exam #3!!!

Remember, it is vital that you turn in these writing assignments before taking the exams since they serve as a method for me to evaluate your progress going into the exam.

Writing assignments received after the scheduled exam will not be accepted.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION AND SCALE:

In alignment with ASC academic policies, no D may apply to a major or minor field.

Grade Distribution:

Exam #1 over Chapters 1-5 of the text:	100 points
Exam #2 over Chapters 6-10 of the text:	100 points
Exam #3 over Chapters 11-15 of the text:	100 points
Writing Assignments 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5	<u>100 points</u>
TOTAL:	400 points

Scale:

360 – 400 = A
320 – 359 = B
280 – 319 = C
240 – 279 = D
0 – 239 = F

ADA STATEMENT:

Students who need special accommodation to complete this class should contact the instructor and the Office of Student Affairs, 719.587.7221 as soon as possible.