

# **Sociology 423: The Sociology of Youth Crime**

The University of Calgary, Faculty of Arts, Department of Sociology  
Course Syllabus, Winter 2014

<b>Instructor:</b>	Chris Esselmont	<b>Office:</b>	SS 936
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:chris.esselmont@ucalgary.ca">chris.esselmont@ucalgary.ca</a> <i>Please note that e-mail is the best way to reach me. I cannot guarantee that phone calls will be answered/returned.</i>	<b>Office Hours:</b>	MWF 2:00pm-3:00pm or by appointment.
<b>Classroom:</b>	SH 280	<b>Class Hours:</b>	MWF 1:00pm-1:50pm

## **Course Description**

This course is designed to foster an understanding of youth crime from a sociological perspective. We will examine theoretical and empirical perspectives on juvenile delinquency and youth crime, and explore the social context of youth crime and delinquency. Selected topics will include youth violence, gender and criminal behavior, bullying, gang-related activity, and the youth justice system. This course places a heavy emphasis on theories of crime and how they relate to youth crime and deviance.

## **Course Objectives**

This course will provide students with the tools to think critically and sharpen the student's understanding of the correlates and consequences of youth involvement in crime and deviance. By the end of this course, students will be able to identify and explain the "facts" and implications of youth crime and systems of youth criminal justice. Further, students will be able to apply, analyze, and evaluate leading theoretical perspectives to a variety of issues.

## **Required Readings**

The required text is available at the U of C Bookstore:

Bell, Sandra J. 2012. *Young Offenders and Youth Justice: A Century after the Fact*. 4th ed. Toronto, ON: Nelson Education.

The required articles are available to download for free from any computer on campus:

Brannigan, Augustine. 1997. "Self-Control, Social Control and Evolutionary Psychology: Towards an Integrated Perspective on Crime." *Canadian Journal of Criminology* 39:403-431.

<http://library1.ucalgary.ca/u.php?id=3459&other=Brannigan> (1997)

Brezina, Timothy, Robert Agnew, Francis T. Cullen, and John Paul Wright. 2004. "The Code of the Street: A Quantitative Assessment of Elijah Anderson's Subculture of Violence Thesis and Its Contribution to Youth Violence Research." *Youth Violence & Juvenile Justice* 2:303-328.

[http://library1.ucalgary.ca/u.php?id=3461&other=Brezina et al. \(2004\)](http://library1.ucalgary.ca/u.php?id=3461&other=Brezina_et_al._(2004))

Espelage, Dorothy L. and Susan M. Swearer. 2003. "Research on School Bullying and Victimization: What Have We Learned and Where Do We Go from Here?" *School Psychology Review* 32:365-383.

[http://library1.ucalgary.ca/u.php?id=3469&other=Espelage and Swearer \(2003\)](http://library1.ucalgary.ca/u.php?id=3469&other=Espelage_and_Swearer_(2003))

Esselmont, Chris. 2014. "Carrying a Weapon to School: The Roles of Bullying Victimization and Perceived Safety." *Deviant Behavior* 35:215-232.

[http://library1.ucalgary.ca/u.php?id=3462&other=Esselmont \(2014\)](http://library1.ucalgary.ca/u.php?id=3462&other=Esselmont_(2014))

Kanazawa, Satoshi and Mary C. Still. 2000. "Why Men Commit Crimes (and Why They Desist)." *Sociological Theory* 18:434-447.

[http://library1.ucalgary.ca/u.php?id=3463&other=Kanazawa and Still \(2000\)](http://library1.ucalgary.ca/u.php?id=3463&other=Kanazawa_and_Still_(2000))

Moffitt, Terrie E. 1993. "Adolescence-Limited and Life-Course-Persistent Antisocial Behavior: A Developmental Taxonomy." *Psychological Review* 100:674-701.

[http://library1.ucalgary.ca/u.php?id=3464&other=Moffitt \(1993\)](http://library1.ucalgary.ca/u.php?id=3464&other=Moffitt_(1993))

Olweus, Dan. 1995. "Bullying or Peer Abuse at School: Facts and Intervention." *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 4:196-200.

[http://library1.ucalgary.ca/u.php?id=3466&other=Olweus \(1995\)](http://library1.ucalgary.ca/u.php?id=3466&other=Olweus_(1995))

Pellegrini, Anthony D. and Maria Bartini. 2001. "Dominance in Early Adolescent Boys: Affiliative and Aggressive Dimensions and Possible Functions." *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly* 47:142-163.

[http://library1.ucalgary.ca/u.php?id=3467&other=Pellegrini and Bartini \(2001\)](http://library1.ucalgary.ca/u.php?id=3467&other=Pellegrini_and_Bartini_(2001))

Wilson, Margo and Martin Daly. 1985. "Competitiveness, Risk Taking, and Violence: The Young Male Syndrome." *Ethology & Sociobiology* 6:59-73.

[http://library1.ucalgary.ca/u.php?id=3468&other=Wilson and Daly \(1985\)](http://library1.ucalgary.ca/u.php?id=3468&other=Wilson_and_Daly_(1985))

**NOTE:** Although these are our primary readings, there may be a number of additional readings which will be announced at a later date.

### **Student Responsibilities**

1. A careful and punctual reading of the required material prior to class.
2. Regular attendance at lectures and participation in class discussions and questions.
3. Advanced notice to the instructor if unable to comply with the schedule of assignments due to illness.
4. Students who are having difficulty with the course are advised to contact the instructor immediately to discuss the situation.

5. Refrain from inappropriate or disruptive behavior, comments or language. This will enable us to create a classroom environment in which all students feel comfortable sharing ideas and participating in discussions. If there are any concerns about the classroom environment, students are encouraged to see me in person.

## **Assessment**

The final grade for this course will be based on five components:

1. Quizzes 15%

There will be five unscheduled quizzes during the term (each worth 3% of the final grade). The purpose of these quizzes is to encourage timely reading of course material and identify any areas the instructor needs to clarify or emphasize. Each quiz will be a small number of multiple-choice questions (requiring no more than 15-20 minutes of class time). These quizzes should not be difficult; students who have been keeping up with reading and attending class and find the quizzes difficult are encouraged to meet with the instructor.

2. Paper Proposal 10%

A proposal (1 - 1½ double-spaced pages, not including the title page or bibliography; 12-point Times New Roman font, 1" margins on all sides) is due on February 14th, 2014 in class. The term paper proposal identifies the research topic and main argument of the student's final paper. Proposals submitted after February 14th, 2014 will be subject to a late penalty of 10% each day, including weekends. More information will be provided in class.

3. Mid-Term Exam 30%

The mid-term exam will be open book, and students will be expected to provide a thoughtful response to an essay question. Open book exams encourage a close and careful reading of the assigned materials, a prerequisite to critiquing and comprehending each individual contribution. Open book exams alleviate the pressure to mindlessly memorize information. However, students are advised that relying on the open sources with only a passing knowledge of the material is inadvisable. The mid-term will be held on February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014 during class time, and students will have the full 50 minutes to write the exam. More information will be provided in class.

4. Final Paper 35%

A final paper (10 - 12 double-spaced pages, not including the title page or bibliography; 12-point Times New Roman font, 1" margins on all sides) on an issue relating to youth crime is due April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014 in class. The paper should review how relevant theories would account for this issue, and the empirical findings on this topic. A grading rubric will be posted on Blackboard in advance, and students are encouraged to consult this rubric when planning and writing the paper. Papers submitted after April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014 will be subject to a

late penalty of 10% each day, including weekends. More information will be provided in class.

All sources (both in the text and the bibliography) should be cited using ASA format. If students are unfamiliar with ASA guidelines, more information may be found at:

[http://www.asanet.org/students/Quick\\_Style\\_guide.pdf](http://www.asanet.org/students/Quick_Style_guide.pdf)

5. Class Participation 10%

Public speaking is often intimidating; not all people enjoy it, and this is acknowledged and built in to the allocation of the grade. However in this course, we want to create an atmosphere that encourages and respects open class participation. Students are expected to participate in general class discussion and in-class group work. Contributions are expected to be thoughtful, and informed by assigned reading material.

The exams and assignments in this course involve writing, which is assessed on both content and writing style. Students who need help with writing may make an appointment to see the instructor, or schedule an appointment with a tutor at the Student Success Centre:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

## **Grading**

Letter grades will be assigned and submitted to the registrar based on the following scale:

A+ = 95-100	B = 75-79	C- = 55-59
A = 90-94	B- = 70-74	D+ = 50-54
A- = 85-89	C+ = 65-69	D = 45-49
B+ = 80-84	C = 60-64	F = 44-0

Please note that a letter grade of “A” indicates superior performance, and excellent mastery of the material. A grade of “B” indicates above average performance, and good mastery of the material. A grade of “C” indicates satisfactory performance, and a basic understanding of the material. A grade of “D” indicates marginal performance, and minimal understanding of the material. Finally, a grade of “F” indicates unsatisfactory performance. I reserve the right to use the full scale of grades available. The grades for a course component may be scaled to maintain equity among sections and to conform to departmental norms.

## **Lecture and Reading Schedule**

<u>Week</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Topics</u>	<u>Readings</u>
Week 1	Jan 08 - Jan 10	Introduction	Bell (2012): Chapter 1
Week 2	Jan 13 - Jan 17	Defining and Measuring Youth Crime	Bell (2012): Chapter 3
Week 3	Jan 20 - Jan 24	Correlates of Youth Crime	Bell (2012): Chapter 4

Week 4	Jan 27 - Jan 31	Theories of Youth Crime	Bell (2012): Chapter 5 Wilson & Daly (1985) Kanazawa & Still (2000)
Week 5	Feb 03 - Feb 07	Theories of Youth Crime (Continued)	Brannigan (1997) Brezina et al. (2004)
Week 6	Feb 10 - Feb 14	Theories of Youth Crime (Continued)	Bell (2012): Chapter 6 Moffitt (1993)

**Paper Proposal – Due Friday February 14th, 2014**

Week 7 Feb 17 - Feb 21 ***Reading Week***

**Midterm Exam – Monday February 24th, 2014**

Week 8	Feb 24 - Feb 28	Family, School, and Peers	Bell (2012): Chapter 7
Week 9	Mar 03 - Mar 07	Bullying	Olweus (1995) Espelage & Swearer (2003) Pellegrini & Bartini (2001) Esselmont (2014)
Week 10	Mar 10 - Mar 14	The Juvenile Justice System and Policing	Bell (2012): Chapters 2 & 8
Week 11	Mar 17 - Mar 21	The Courts	Bell (2012): Chapter 9
Week 12	Mar 24 - Mar 28	Corrections	Bell (2012): Chapter 10
Week 13	Mar 31 - Apr 04	Failings of the Juvenile Justice System: Aboriginals and Girls	Bell (2012): Chapter 11
Week 14	Apr 07 - Apr 11	Conclusion	Bell (2012): Chapter 12
Week 15	Apr 14	Conclusion (Continued)	

**Final Paper – Due Monday April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

## **Course Policies**

### ***Emergency Evacuations***

In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom/lab, please proceed to the assembly point by the Education Block Food Court.

### ***Safewalk***

The University of Calgary provides a “safe walk” service to any location on Campus, including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones, and campus housing. For Campus Security/Safewalk call 220-5333. Campus Security can also be contacted from any “Help” phone located around Campus.

### ***Deferrals***

If at all possible, you must provide advance notice to the instructor if you are unable to take a test or pass in an assignment or essay on time. All requests for deferral of a course component due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while the student has the physical or emotional problem rather than after recovery. Deferrals will be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction, or religious conviction. Travel arrangements and misreading of the syllabus are not valid reasons for requesting a deferral. Deferrals will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student.

If you have missed a test for a legitimate reason, the instructor can require you to write a “make up” test as close in time to the original test as possible or can choose to transfer the percentage weight to another course component. If the instructor schedules a “make up” test for you, its date and location will be at the convenience of the Department of Sociology.

### ***Deferred Final Exam Form***

Please note that requests to defer a Registrar-scheduled final exam are dealt with through the Registrar’s Office. Further information about deadlines, and where paperwork should be taken, is available on the form, which can be found at:

[http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/Sp\\_Su\\_DFE\\_App.pdf](http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/Sp_Su_DFE_App.pdf)

### ***Deferred Term Work Form***

Deferral of term work past the end of a term also requires a form, available at:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/defTW.pdf>

Once an extension date has been agreed between instructor and student, the form should be taken to the Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (SS 110) for approval by an Associate Dean (Students).

### ***Ethics Research***

Students are advised that any research with human subjects--including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation--must have the approval of the Departmental Ethics Committee. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.

### ***Academic Misconduct***

Plagiarism, cheating, and other academic misconduct are regarded as serious academic offences. Students are advised to consult the University Calendar which presents a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct. Please refer to the website listed below for information on University of Calgary policies on Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

### ***Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPP)***

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, e.g., outside an instructor's office or the Department main office. Written assignments must be returned to students individually, during class, or during the instructor's office hours; if a student is unable to pick up her/his assignment s/he may provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

### ***Academic Accommodation***

Students who require academic accommodation, must register with Student Accessibility Services (formerly the Disability Resource Centre) at MC 452 (or phone 403-220-8237). Please provide academic accommodation letters to the instructor as early in the semester as possible and no later than two weeks after the course begins. ***It is a student's responsibility to register with the Student Accessibility Services and to request academic accommodation, if required.***

### ***Student Representation***

The 2013-14 Students' Union VP Academic's email is: [suypaca@ucalgary.ca](mailto:suypaca@ucalgary.ca). The Faculty of Arts has four SU representatives who may be contacted at any of the following email addresses: [arts1@ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@ucalgary.ca), [arts2@ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@ucalgary.ca), [arts3@ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@ucalgary.ca), and [arts4@ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@ucalgary.ca). You may also contact the Student Ombudsperson for help with a variety of University-related matters:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds/role>

### ***Course-Related Matters***

The main Sociology Department office does not deal with any course-related matters. Please speak directly to your instructor.

### ***Failing an Assignment and Failing the Course***

In order to pass the course a student does not have to record a passing grade on all of the assignments.

### ***Grade Reappraisal***

Within two weeks of the date the exam/assignment is returned, students seeking reappraisal of examinations or assignments must submit a written response to the instructor explaining the basis for reconsideration of one's mark. The instructor will reconsider the grade assigned and will then book a time with the student to discuss his or her work and rationale. It should be noted that a reconsidered mark may be raised, lowered, or remain the same.

***Handing in Papers Outside of Class, Return of Final Papers, and Release of Final Grades***

1. When students are unable to submit papers in class, they should make arrangements to hand in their papers directly to the instructor or teaching assistant. Papers will not be accepted in the main Sociology Department office.
2. Final papers will not be returned through the main Sociology Department office. The Freedom of Information and Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place (i.e. outside an instructor's office, the department office, etc.). Students who want their final papers returned by mail must attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with the paper. Otherwise, final papers will be available for pick-up only during the instructor's office hours at the end of this term or at the beginning of the next term.
3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are available only online.