

**Sociology 423: The Sociology of Youth Crime**  
The University of Calgary, Faculty of Arts, Department of Sociology  
Course Syllabus, Winter 2016

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<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:chris.esselmont@ucalgary.ca">chris.esselmont@ucalgary.ca</a> <i>Please note that e-mail is the only way to reach me.</i>	<b>Office Hours:</b> MWF 10:00am-11:00am or by appointment.
<b>Classroom:</b> SS 012	<b>Class Hours:</b> MWF 9:00am-9:50am

### **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, deviance, and criminal behavior, bullying, at risk youth, 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.

### **Staying in Contact**

Course-related announcements will be sent out over email. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the university has the correct email address on file and that the student's email account is in working order.

Outside of scheduled office hours/pre-scheduled appointments, the best means of contacting the instructor is through email. When sending an email, please put SOCI 423 at the beginning of the subject line. Please include a proper salutation, your full name, UCID number, and a proper closing in the body of your email. All emails violating customary email conventions will be ignored. I will make every effort to respond to emails conforming to the above conventions within 24 hours.

If you have a course-related question, please check the syllabus first. Questions that can be answered by consulting the syllabus will be ignored. Please do not use email as a replacement for an office visit. Given the nature of the material covered in the course, please use email only for administrative purposes (e.g., booking an appointment outside of office hours). Attempts to answer questions related to course material over email are error-prone, and so I will usually suggest that students come see me in person.

## **Required Readings**

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

Winterdyk, John and Russel Smandych, eds. 2012. *Youth at Risk and Youth Justice: A Canadian Overview*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

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

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))

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))

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

## **Lecture Notes and Readings**

I will make the PowerPoint slides available on D2L. Students should print these slides and bring them to the lectures or have them available on an electronic device. These PowerPoint slides cover the basics, but students will still need to take notes during class. If a class is missed, it is the student's responsibility to get any additional notes from another student.

Details about the required readings (including specific page numbers) will be provided in class. Please note, the lecture and reading schedule presented in the syllabus is tentative, and will be slowed down or sped up as necessary.

## **Student Responsibilities**

1. A careful and punctual reading of the required material prior to class.
2. Regular attendance at lectures and labs.
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. Cell phones must be muted and students should refrain from using them during class.
6. Refrain from inappropriate or disruptive behavior, comments, or language. This will enable us to create a classroom environment in which all students feel. 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. Paper Proposal 15%

A proposal (1½ - 2 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 12th, 2014 in class. The term paper proposal identifies the research topic and main argument of the student's final paper. Proposals submitted after February 12th, 2014 will be subject to a late penalty of 10% each day, including weekends. More information will be provided in class.

2. Mid-Term Exam 35%

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 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2014 during class time, and students will have the full 50 minutes to write the exam. More information will be provided in class.

3. Final Paper 40%

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 11<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 11<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/documents/teaching/pdfs/Quick\\_Tips\\_for\\_ASA\\_Style.pdf](http://www.asanet.org/documents/teaching/pdfs/Quick_Tips_for_ASA_Style.pdf)

4. 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.

## **Writing**

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.

## **Passing Grades**

A passing grade on each component is not necessary to pass the course on the whole. Passing the course requires the student’s overall grade to be C- or higher.

## **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 the student’s grade. The instructor will reconsider the grade assigned and will then book a time with the student to discuss his or decision and rationale. It should be noted that a re-assessed grade may be raised, lowered, or remain the same.

## **Course-Related Matters**

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

## **Tentative Lecture and Reading Schedule**

<b><u>Dates</u></b>	<b><u>Topics</u></b>	<b><u>Readings</u></b>
Jan 11 - Jan 15	Introduction, Defining, and Measuring Youth Crime	Textbook Chapters 1 & 2
Jan 18 - Jan 22	The Youth Justice System	Textbook Chapters 3 & 4
Jan 25 - Jan 29	Theories of Youth Crime and Deviance	Textbook Chapters 5 & 6 Moffitt (1993)
Feb 01 - Feb 05	Theories of Youth Crime and Deviance	Textbook Chapters 7 & 8 Brezina et al. (2004)
Feb 08 - Feb 12	Theories of Youth Crime and Deviance	
<b><i><u>Paper Proposal – Due Friday February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016</u></i></b>		
Feb 15 - Feb 19	<b><i>Reading Week</i></b>	
<b><i><u>Midterm Exam – Monday February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2014</u></i></b>		
Feb 22 - Feb 26	At-Risk Youth	Textbook Chapters 9
Feb 29 - Mar 24	At-Risk Youth	Textbook Chapters 10 & 11
Mar 07 - Mar 11	At-Risk Youth	Textbook Chapters 12 & 13
Mar 14 - Mar 18	Correlates of Youth Crime and Deviance	
Mar 21 - Mar 25	Bullying	Olweus (1995)
Mar 28 - Apr 01	Alternative Approaches to Youth Justice	Textbook Chapters 14 - 16
Apr 04 - Apr 08	Conclusion	
Apr 11	Conclusion	
<b><i><u>Final Paper – Due Monday April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016</u></i></b>		

## **Course Policies**

### ***Handing in Assignments Outside of Class, Return of Student Work, and Release of Final Grades***

1. When students are unable to submit assignments in class, they should make arrangements to hand in their assignments directly to the instructor or teaching assistant. Assignments will not be accepted in the main Sociology Department office.
2. Student work 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 work returned by mail provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise, term work 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.

### ***Emergency Evacuations***

In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom/lab, please proceed to the assembly point by the Professional Faculties - Food Court. Please check these assembly point locations for all of your classes at:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

### ***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/deferred\\_termwork15.pdf](http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/deferred_termwork15.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 (FOIP)*

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) 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.**

Additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities can be found at:

[www.ucalgary.ca/access/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/)

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>

### *Student Representation*

The 2015-16 Students' Union VP Academic's email is: [suvpaca@ucalgary.ca](mailto:suvpaca@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>