Syllabus
(Fall 2009)

Soc 332 (Juvenile Delinquency) (3 credits)
Building/room: Fols 303
Class time: Tuesday – MWF 9:00-9:50
Instructor: Richard Ayre
Office: Normal Hall 109
Office hours: MW – 3:00-4:15 and by arrangement
Phone: (home) 760-8189; (office) 768-9487 (no voice mail); (fax) 768-9433; (cell) 768-1175
E-mail – richard.ayre@umpi.edu

Course Prerequisite: Soc 100 (Introduction to Sociology)

Books


Articles


Course Requirements

Attendance is mandatory. There are NO unexcused absences in this course. ANY UNEXCUSED ABSENCES WILL RESULT IN A LOWERING OF YOUR FINAL GRADE FOR THE COURSE. You are to read all of the books assigned for the course. The articles should be read to supplement the lectures and books and help you prepare for the exams. There will be a midterm and a final exam. Students can choose to do a service learning project or write a research paper.

For the service learning project, the student must submit a journal and a five-page report on his/her experience in the service learning project. Though the journal must include a description of the each session’s activities, it must also include a discussion of, among other things, the frustrations, problems, and/or successes associated with each session. The report must include analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the program or activity the student participated in and what (if anything) might be done to improve the program or activity, a discussion of the extent to which the student’s observations confirmed or disconfirmed what had been learned in the course (and other courses) and what might account for whatever discrepancies there might have been, and, finally, the report must include serious reflection on the extent to which the mentoring experience enabled the student to learn something about him/herself.

For students choosing to write a research paper, the paper is to be fifteen pages double-spaced, typewritten on any topic related to juvenile delinquency. The paper will be done in pieces, with students submitting (in the following order) a topic statement and working bibliography, outline, draft, and final draft with accompanying two-page evaluation of the paper. See the course outline below for submission dues dates. The topic statement and working bibliography, outline, and draft will not be graded, but failure to submit any of them will result in a reduction of a full letter grade for the final draft. Failure to submit two or more will result in an “F” for the paper. Further detail on the research paper requirements will be found on the directions distributed to the class.
The course grade will be based on three equally weighted components – midterm exam, final exam, and either service learning project or research paper.

Goals and Objectives of the Course

There are two interrelated goals of the course. The first of these centers on providing students with understandings of the history of the social and legal concept of delinquency, the variety of ways that delinquency can be measured, the various theoretical explanations for the causes of delinquency, demographic issues in relation to delinquency (age, sex, class, and race), drugs, gangs, and delinquency, social institutions and delinquency (especially schools and the family), the juvenile justice system in relation to delinquency (including the police response to delinquency, juvenile courts, detention facilities, community corrections, and prevention programs), and the issues surrounding the growing trend to prosecute and punish juveniles in the (adult) criminal justice system. The focus throughout the course is on the social foundations of delinquency and the juvenile justice system, on the relationship between society and its institutions and the problem of delinquency. The second goal of the course is to enhance the ability of students to think and write critically and reflectively on delinquency and the nature of the policies necessary to reduce delinquency.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

August 31, September 2, 9, 11: Issues: The concept and measurement of delinquency - defining delinquency; societal reaction to delinquency, media and delinquency, myths and reality in the scope of delinquency (trends in delinquency, officially recorded delinquency, self-reported delinquency, victimization surveys), superpredator myth, race and sex and the measurement of delinquency, crimes of violence and delinquency, and delinquency in urban and rural areas. The historical and social foundations of the concepts of childhood, adolescence, delinquency, and juvenile justice - the concept of childhood in medieval Europe, early-modern Europe and changes in the concept of childhood, childhood in colonial America, childhood and houses of refuge during the period of industrialization and immigration, the origins of the juvenile court, the Chicago Area Project, Mobilization for Youth, changes in the juvenile court (the Gault decision), diversion and deinstitutionalization programs, the conservative reaction, and trying and punishing children as adults.

Readings: Krisberg, Chapters 1-3; Krisberg and Austin; Cauffman and Steinberg; Finkelhor and Ormrod; Snyder and Sickmund, chapter 3.

September 2: Hand out guidelines for research paper.

September 4: Guest speaker: Julie Leavitt, Juvenile Community Corrections Officer

September 7: Labor Day
September 14, 16, 18: Issues: Theory and theories of delinquency causation and their relevance to the prevention and control of delinquency; classical criminology (and its contemporary descendants) and delinquency; biological explanations of delinquency (historical and contemporary); intelligence and delinquency; psychoanalytic explanations; moral development and delinquency, personality and delinquency; mental illness and delinquency; moral, legal, and social policy implications of classical, biological, and psychological theories.

Readings: Shoemaker, Chapters 1-4.

September 14: Topic statement and working bibliography for research paper due.

September 21, 23, 25: Issues: Social explanations of delinquency - ecological explanations (urbanization and delinquency); rural delinquency and social disorganization; cultural explanations; differential association and other learning theories; anomie theories and delinquency; social psychological theories (interactionist and control theories); social psychology and the impact of the media on violent delinquency; conflict theory and delinquency; gender and theories of delinquency; delinquency and the sociology of the life course; moral, legal, social policy implications of the respective social theories of delinquency; targeted social interventions in the prevention and control of delinquency; is there support for a progressive policy agenda?


September 28, 30, October 5, 7, 9: Issues: Families and delinquency - history and controversies surrounding the relationship of families to delinquency; the changing American family; family structure and delinquency; parent-child relationships and delinquency; parental responsibility and delinquency; discipline and delinquency; the nature and extent of child abuse; symptoms and signs of abuse; the relationship of child abuse to delinquency; causes of child abuse; policy implications of family-centered explanations of delinquency; holding parents accountable for the delinquency of their children; preventing and controlling child abuse; family-centered interventions in delinquency prevention; mentoring and the prevention of delinquency.

Readings: Geis and Binder; Merideth; Straus; Widom; Kaufman and Widom; Kumpfer and Alvarado; Grossman and Garry.

October 10-18: Fall Break.

October 19, 21, 23, : Issues: The school and delinquency - the school as a delinquency producing institution (juvenile alienation from school, school dropout and
delinquency, school vandalism, schools and drugs and alcohol, violence in 
schools; schools and delinquency prevention, conflict resolution curricula); 
drugs, alcohol, delinquency - causes of youth involvement with alcohol, tobacco, and 
other drugs; the relationship of drugs and delinquency; school/delinquency policy 
(reducing alienation from school and curricular and pedagogical changes); 
policies to prevent and control juvenile drug abuse (social policy, education 
[DARE], the criminal justice response, and the debate over decriminalization).

Readings: Kupchik and Bracy; American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task 
Force; Fallis and Opotow; Carey; Casella; Stearns, et al; Lindle; Brooks, et al.; 
Johnson; Aber, Brown, and Jones; Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency 
Prevention; Catalano, et al; Howell and Decker; National Institute of Justice; 
Thomas; Hutchinson and Pullman; Smyth and McInerney.

October 19: Outline of research paper due.

October 19: Hand out midterm paper due.

October 26, 28, 30: Issues: Status offending and the concept of delinquency - the 
movement toward the diversion, deinstitutionalization, and `decriminalization' of 
status offenses; child delinquency – significance, prevalence, and development; 
the nature, extent, demographics, and causes of sporadic delinquency; the nature, 
extent, demographics, causes, and transition to adult criminality of chronic 
delinquency; defining juvenile gangs; the nature and extent of the gang problem; 
theories of gang formation; causes of the gang problem; gender and ethnic issues 
and gangs; gang structure; gang behavior in the U.S.; gangs and violence; gangs 
and drugs; risk and protective factors in serious and violent juvenile offending; 
policies to prevent, control, and reduce (respectively) status offending, sporadic 
delinquency, chronic delinquency, and gangs.

Readings: Snyder, et al.; Joe and Chesney-Lind; Esbensen.

November 2: MIDTERM EXAMINATION.

November 4, 6, 9, 13: Issues: The nature and extent of female delinquency; differences 
from male delinquency; causes of female delinquency; sexuality and delinquency 
(and the double standard); differential treatment of female delinquents in the 
juvenile justice system; race and delinquency; self-report research and racial 
differences in offending; drugs and the hidden reality of middle class 
delinquency; the causes of middle class delinquency; accounting for racial 
differences in offending; drugs, minority youth, and the juvenile justice system; 
juvenile justice system and racial discrimination.

Readings: Shoemaker, Chapter 11; Krisberg, Chapters 5, 6; Feld; Bell; Tracy, et al.; 
Johansson and Kempf-Leonard; Chesney-Lind; Horowitz and Pottieger; Shelden
November 11: Veterans Day.

November 13, 16, 18, 20, 23: Issues: The historical development of juvenile justice and the emergence of the juvenile court; policing juveniles; class, race, and gender in the policing of juveniles; policing gangs; status offenders (and the history of their treatment by the juvenile court); runaways and other status offenders and their treatment by the juvenile court; proposed changes in the handling of status offenses; the handling of serious delinquent offenders; the cycle of juvenile justice (the movement between punitive and rehabilitative orientations); juvenile and criminal justice response to gangs and gang violence; court action against habitual and violent offenders; treating juveniles as adults - theoretical and political issues; the process of binding juveniles over for trial as adults; does harsher punishment and treating juveniles as adults result in reduced juvenile crime? juveniles in confinement (secure juvenile detention, jails, and prisons); the efficacy of boot camps in the prevention and control of juvenile delinquency.

Readings: Krisberg, Chapters 5, 9; Scott and Steinberg. *Rethinking Juvenile Justice*, Chapters 2-9; Redding; Equal Justice Initiative; Podkopacz and Feld, “End of the Line…”; Podkopacz and Feld. “Judicial Waiver Policy and Practice…”; Zaehringer; De Li; Krisberg and Schwartz; Krisberg, Schwartz, Litsky, and Austin; Hirschi and Gottfredson; Schiraldi and Ziedenberg; Bishop, Frazier, Lanza-Kaduce, and Winner; Cauffman and Steinberg; Scott and Steinberg, “Blaming Youth”.

November 23: Draft of research paper due

November 25-29: Thanksgiving vacation.

November 23: Hand out study questions for final exam.

November 30, December 2, 4, 7: Issues: Preventing and controlling juvenile delinquency what works and what does not; ineffective programs – DARE, “Scared Straight,” boot camps, transfer to adult criminal courts; programs with disputed effectiveness (e.g., wilderness challenge programs); effective interventions – early childhood prevention programs, interventions for serious and violent offenders, graduated sanctions; the development and implementation of effective collaborative programs to prevent and control juvenile delinquency, is America ready for reform?

Readings: Krisberg, Chapters 7,8,10; Scott and Steinberg, *Rethinking Juvenile Justice*, Chapter 9; Burns, et al.

December 9, 11, 14: Film: *Scared Straight: Twenty Years Later*
December 14: Research paper and accompanying evaluation essay due.

December 14: SERVICE LEARNING JOURNALS AND REPORTS DUE.

December 18: FINAL EXAMINATION (8:00-10:00am)

YOUR INSTRUCTOR MUST ABIDE BY THE FOLLOWING ATTENDANCE AND GRADING POLICY:

Reporting of Student Attendance

1. At the end of add/drop period

2. At fourth week (includes all students, all classes)

3. Midterm

4. Final grade reporting time

At each point the instructor is provided with class lists showing all students currently registered. For the first three dates, the instructor need only report on students who have ceased to attend class. At all for dates the instructor assigns either a “W” or an “L” to non-attending students. The “W” is to be used after midterm only in cases of serious illness or extenuating circumstances as determined by the instructor and coordinator of the department responsible for the course. An “L”, when submitted as the grade for the course, is computed as an “F” by the registrar.

*******************

As a member of the university community, I pledge to

Pursue academic excellence

Support open inquiry and civil expression

Listen respectfully to the viewpoints of others

Participate responsibly in the life of the community

Conserve and enhance the beauty of the campus

Help all members of the university community to realize their potentials

*******************