COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

There are two key components to this course: (1) substantive material related to juvenile delinquency and the juvenile justice system; and (2) a class research project.

Course Content

Substantively, the course content is organized around 3 core topics:

Definitions: Historical and Conceptual Background

This first section of the course will deal with some basic “facts” about delinquency, and will place “delinquency” in a historical context. We will answer four questions: (1) What is delinquency, and, in particular, how does it differ from adult crime? (2) How much delinquency is there, and, is delinquency increasing? (3) What are cultural, legal, and criminological conceptions of young people, and how have these conceptions changed over time? (4) What were the original intentions of the Juvenile Justice System, and how have these intentions changed, if at all, over time?

Causes of Juvenile Delinquency

After answering these questions, we will focus on what is probably the most frequently asked question about delinquency: “What causes juveniles to engage in delinquent behavior?” This section of the course will focus predominantly on gangs, drugs, and school performance.

The Control and Prevention of Delinquency

This section of the course is where we will spend the majority of our time. In this section, we will ask “How can we control or prevent delinquency?” We will examine what the juvenile justice system (police, juvenile court, juvenile correctional agencies) does to control delinquency. Four major topics will be explored in this section: (1) We will follow individuals through the juvenile justice system, from police contact to adjudication and disposition, elaborating on juvenile rights, injustices, and tribulations through the process. (2) We will examine four general strategies to control delinquency: interventions, institutions, probation, and restorative justice. (3) We will examine current issues surrounding juvenile justice, including juveniles being tried in adult criminal court. (4) Finally, we will hypothesize about the “future” of the juvenile justice system.
Class Research Project

The class project requires students to choose a topic from a list provided by the professor. Approximately 3 students will choose each topic. Students will work both alone and within the group to satisfy several requirements:


Students will individually write a research paper on the chosen topic. This research paper will be submitted in the following sections:

- The introduction will be submitted first – students will receive grades and comments by the professor which focus on the quality of writing and presentation.

- A comprehensive outline of the body of the research paper will be submitted next – these outlines will be exchanged among group members, who will provide written feedback based on their own experiences researching the topic. A rubric guiding students as to how to assess the outlines will be provided. The written feedback must be constructive and will be assessed and graded by the professor. The professor will also provide comments and grade the outlines, which will be assessed primarily on content and coverage of material.

- The final research paper will be submitted by each student. These papers must take into account comments provided by the professor and fellow students on the introduction and outline. Note that proper structure/organization, proofreading, citations/references, and separate sections, as applicable, are required. The length of the paper may vary based upon the topic chosen. Although no strict minimum or maximum page limits will be enforced, an appropriate length of written text is 10–20 pages, and the best grades will be reserved for the most comprehensive papers.

Group Requirements: Current Events Discussion, Class “Teaching,” Exam Questions

Group members will work together to accomplish 3 tasks:

- The first task is to introduce the class to the research topic through current events articles during the first half of the class. Group members will work together to locate and distribute to the class a relevant and recent article (roughly 10–15 minutes reading time) that highlights their research topic. Groups will be responsible for asking questions and leading the discussion related to the article (roughly 15–20 minute discussion). The discussion should introduce the class to the topic and raise juvenile justice-related issues pertaining to the topic.

- The second task is to “teach” the class about the research topic. These teaching presentations will occur during the final third of the semester. The point of this exercise is to have students teach their classmates about a topic that I only cover superficially during the semester. The presentation will require PPT, lecturing, and class interaction to successfully convey what the group has collectively learned about the topic. The presentation should be 45–50 minutes. The grade on the presentation will be based on effectiveness and clarity of teaching, coverage
of the material, the ability to generate class discussion, the group’s control of the classroom, and the group’s ability to properly time (45–50 minutes) the presentation. Presenters will field questions about the topic during the class period, when necessary.

- The third task is to submit a list of 15 questions (7 multiple choice; 5 short answer; 3 short essay) with a separate answer key (by email) about the research topic. Further details about these questions will be discussed in class. These questions must be answerable based on the class presentation and the ensuing discussion. The questions will be graded based on content, format, and overall relevance to the research topic. The professor will use the collective group of questions to construct an in-class exam.

COURSE READINGS
There is no required text for the course. All course readings will be available on Blackboard.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
A number of different graded assignments will be utilized to fulfill the course goals. Graded assignments include (1) 4 in-class quizzes, (2) 2 group projects, (3) a class research project, including (3a) an introduction, (3b) an outline, (3c) a final paper, (3d) a peer review of a classmate’s literature review outline; (3e) a current events discussion, (3f) a class presentation, and (3g) a list of possible exam questions; (4) an in-class exam, and (5) class participation. See the “Course Grading” section below for allocation of points. These requirements will be discussed in depth throughout the semester.

BLACKBOARD
Blackboard technology will be integrated into this class. You can access main blackboard site at http://blackboard.neu.edu. You are responsible for checking this site regularly as course information will be added to the site. Blackboard training courses are offered for free through the University. See a representation from the “Help Desk” at the Info Commons in Snell Library.

COMMUNICATION
Students are expected to check Blackboard as well as their email on a regular basis. Important information such as assignments, class cancellations, and changes in course material may be relayed via Blackboard and email.

CLASS POLICIES

Extended Absences
In the rare instance where a student expects to miss class for an extended period of time (i.e., serious illness) or multiple classes regarding the same issue, he or she must contact me as soon as possible. Students must provide a documented reason for an extended
absence in order to make any arrangements regarding missed work. All circumstances will be evaluated on an individual basis.

_Laptops, Cell Phones, and Pagers_

You are not permitted to use the internet in the classroom; laptops should only be used for taking notes. Please turn off your cell phones and pagers before coming to class. This includes text messaging! If I suspect you of using technology for purposes unrelated to the course, I reserve the right to disallow the use of technology in the classroom.

_Personal Responsibility and Extra Credit_

I do not “give out” grades – you earn them. When a grade is earned by you, I will not change it. If you need help, ask for it; do not wait until it is too late to seek help. _Absolutely no extra credit will be given or accepted_. Arrive to class on time, come prepared, respect others’ views, and turn in assignments on time.

_Missing Assignments_

I must be notified in advance if you will be missing a class session when an assignment is due. Acceptable “excuses” relate to serious emergencies such as a death in the family and serious illness. Documentation may be requested and I reserve the right to approve or deny any such requests. In addition, if you miss class on a day when an assignment is due, I must receive the assignment by email or hard-copy before the ending time of the class. Unexcused late assignments will be penalized 25% each day (including Saturday and Sunday), beginning immediately after the class ends (note that an assignment submitted 5 minutes after class ends will be considered late and penalized 25%). After four days, a grade of zero will be given for any assignment not handed in.

_CONTACTING ME_

If you need to contact me, use the email provided above. Please put “JUVENILE JUSTICE” in the subject line of the email.

_ACADEMIC INTEGRITY_

All students enrolled in this course must adhere to Northeastern University’s policy on “Academic Honesty and Integrity.” Those of you who are unfamiliar with this policy are expected to read it online at: [http://www.neu.edu/osccr/academichonesty.html](http://www.neu.edu/osccr/academichonesty.html). Violations of the academic honesty and integrity policy will not be tolerated, and will be reported to university officials. I take this policy very seriously and will make every effort to ensure it is strictly followed. If you are caught cheating, you will receive a failing grade for the course – no exceptions. If you are in any way unclear about this policy, please come speak to me.

_STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES_

Any student who may require special accommodations for this course should notify me as soon as possible. You may need to register with the university’s Disability Resource
Center (DRC). The DRC can provide students with services such as note-takers and extended time for taking exams. The DRC is located in 20 Dodge Hall and can be reached at 617-373-2675.

COURSE GRADING

4 Quizzes – Weeks 2, 3, and 6 (two) 10%
Quizzes will be based on assigned readings. Quiz format and guidelines will be discussed during the class preceding each quiz.

2 Group Exercises – Weeks 5 and 14: 10%
Group projects will be assigned in class and require PPT presentations on various topics. I will provide clear guidelines for working on and presenting these projects in class.

Research Project: 55%

Individual Components
- 5% Introduction
- 5% Outline
- 5% Student Outline Comments
- 20% Final Paper

Group Components
- 5% Current Events Discussion
- 10% Presentation
- 5% Questions

The research project consists of individual and group components, as discussed in the “Course Objectives and Description” section above. The introduction is due on 9/29; the outline is due on 10/16; the current events discussions take place on 10/16 and 10/20; students’ comments on classmates’ literature review outlines are due on 10/20; the group presentations take place on 11/3, 11/6, and 11/10; the questions pertaining to the group presentation are due on 11/13; and the final paper is due on 12/1.

In Class Open Notes Exam (Week 13): 15%
The class exam will take place on 11/24. It will consist of instructor-selected questions from those submitted by groups on their research projects. Students will be allowed to bring to the exam 1 double-sided page of written or typed notes.

Class Participation: 10%
The class participation grade is based on each student’s willingness to answer questions, ability to raise thoughtful questions related to course material, and capacity to respond thoughtfully to course topics and class readings. Although attendance is not a direct part of the final grade, missing class limits your ability to participate in class discussions. Therefore, repeated absences will indirectly influence your final course grade through the class participation grade.
Note that there will be no extra credit in this course. Grades will be based strictly on the assignments above.

**GRADING SCALE**

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100%-93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92%-90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>62%-60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>62%-60%</td>
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**CLASS SCHEDULE**

*Weeks 1–2: Definitions; Historical and Conceptual Background*

**R**  9/4  Introduction  
Readings:  
Frontline: Four Kids, Four Crimes  

**M**  9/8  Defining Delinquency; Extent of Delinquency; Social Context and the Juvenile Justice System  
*Quiz I*  
*Research Topic Selection*  
Readings:  
Juvenile Arrests, 2011  
Juvenile Justice: A Century of Change

**R**  9/11  Social Context and the Juvenile Justice System (continued)

*Weeks 3–4: Causes of Delinquency*

**M**  9/15  Gangs  
*Quiz II*  
Readings:  
Youth Gangs: An Overview  
Thornberry et al. (1993)

**R**  9/18  Drugs  
Readings:  
Monitoring the Future (2013)

**M**  9/22  Poor School Performance; Dropping Out  
Readings:  
Anderson (2014)

**R**  9/25  No Class – Rosh Hashanah
### Weeks 5–7: Policing and Juveniles

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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</table>
| M 9/29 | Policing and Juveniles: Introduction  
*Group Exercise I Assigned*  
*Individual Research Paper Introduction Due* |
| R 10/2 | Policing and Juveniles: Problem Oriented Policing  
*Group Exercise I Presented* |
| M 10/6 | Policing and Juveniles: Broken Windows Policing, Race and Juvenile Justice  
*Quiz III*  
*Readings: Sampson and Raudenbush (1999)  
Secret and Johnson (1997)* |
| R 10/9 | Policing and Juveniles: Race and Juvenile Justice (continued)  
*Quiz IV*  
*Readings: Pope and Snyder (2003)* |
| M 10/13 | No Class – Columbus Day |
| R 10/16 |  
*Group Current Events Discussion I*  
*Individual Research Paper Outline Due* |

### Weeks 8–9: The Juvenile Court Process

<table>
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<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M 10/20</td>
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</table>
*Group Current Events Discussion II*  
*Individual Research Paper Outline Comments Due* |
| R 10/23 | Arrest through Adjudication  
*Readings: Redding (2008)  
State Transfer Provisions* |
| M 10/27 | Arrest through Adjudication (continued) |
| R 10/30 | Due Process |

### Weeks 10–14: The Punishment of Delinquency: What Works, What Doesn’t; The Future of the Juvenile Court

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<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M 11/3</td>
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*Group Research Project Presentations I* |
| R 11/6 |  
*Group Research Project Presentations II* |
M 11/10  Group Research Project Presentations III
R 11/13  Disposition
      Group Research Project Questions Due
M 11/17  Nothing Works
      Group Exercise II Assigned
R 11/20  No Class – ASC
M 11/24  In-Class Exam
R 11/27  No Class – Thanksgiving
M 12/1   Future Directions of the Juvenile Court
      Individual Research Papers Due
      Group Exercise II Presented