

SOC 4540: Juvenile Delinquency

Instructor: Dr. Crawford

This course will offer an overview of the history, theories, treatment and punishment of juvenile offenders in America. We will attempt to gather insights into the behavior of today's youth. This is essential as many view child delinquency is a major social problem in the United States.

Juvenile crime has been a topic of serious debate and scholarly inquiry for decades. Many citizens and politicians as well as practitioners express frustration and have serious disagreements on the causes of juvenile crime and the solutions to reduce the problem.

This independent study is comprehensive in its scope. It begins with a look at the meaning of juvenile delinquency, its nature and magnitude. It continues with an analysis of the causative factors and conditions that contribute either directly or indirectly to delinquent behavior, and moves from there into an overview of the present juvenile justice system. Ultimately you will be asked to read the autobiography of a serious delinquent and gang member to try and apply what you have learned through the course to a real individual to try and understand/explain his behavior.

Requirements and Course Structure

There are 17 lessons and a final project for this course. Each lesson is 20 questions.

If you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact me.

Required Texts

1. Textbook:

Larry Siegel, and Brandon Welsh

2009 Juvenile Delinquency Theory Practice and Law, 10th edition. Wadsworth.
ISBN 0495503649

2. Novel:

Geoffrey Canada

1996 *Fist Stick Knife Gun*
ISBN: 0807004235

Final Project

The Final project for this course consists of a two-part book report on the autobiography *Fist Stick Knife Gun* by Geoffrey Canada. The first part of your report is a standard book report and should be 4-5 pages in length. *Please see the guidelines for writing a critical book report*

The second part of the report is a challenge. In chapter 23, Canada offers several suggestions for dealing with youth violence and the trouble in many of our nation's cities. Although we may not agree with all of them, he does take the extraordinary step of offering positive solutions (unlike many who simply point out what's wrong). Select three of his suggestions and based on what you have learned in your textbook and from Canada's book - are they feasible? Are they worth pursuing as government policy? State why or why not. This section should be 2-3 pages.

Lessons = 20 points each for a total of 340 points

Final Project = 100 points. Giving a total of 440 possible points for the course.

Grade Scale

A: 396-440

BA: 374-395

B: 352-373

CB: 330-351

C: 308-329

DC: 286-307

D: 264-285

E: Below 264