

Department .: Sociology

Course number : Soci 218W

Title : Juvenile Delinquency

Credits : 3

Contact Person : Brad Wright

Complete Catalog Copy : Soci 218. Juvenile Delinquency. Either Semester. Three credits . *Wright* . An overview of theory and research on juvenile delinquency.

Soci 218W. Juvenile Delinquency. Prerequisite: Engl 110 or 111 or 250.

W Criteria: There are three learning objectives in this course: (1) students should understand and be able to apply theoretical and empirical tools introduced in the course to understand and evaluate sociological explanations of delinquency; (2) students should gain substantive knowledge of the predominant sociological theories of delinquent behavior (control, culture conflict and anomie theories), and specifically should be able to critically analyze each theory's major concepts, assumptions, and claims about the causes of delinquency and how each theory can be applied to explain known facts about delinquency; (3) students should gain a basic understanding of the history of American policies for dealing with juvenile offenders, and specifically should be able to critically analyze strategies to reduce delinquency based on the theoretical and empirical tools provided in the course.

To enable and enhance achievement of these learning objectives, students enrolled in the "W" section of 218 are required to write a paper (minimum 15 pages) analyzing a recent book presenting original research on the causes and/or prevention of juvenile delinquency [book selection varies by semester]. In the paper, students must explain the significance of the research for the field, summarize the author's arguments and research findings, and then critically analyze the content of the book by applying the theoretical perspectives, methodological principles, and empirical "facts" about juvenile delinquency learned in class. The paper counts for 33% of the course grade and must be passed in order to pass the course (as stipulated in the syllabus).

Additional written work is required of students in the course, including approximately 15 short in-class essay quizzes that focus on comprehension of material in the readings (33% of course grade) and essay questions on the final exam (33% of course grade).

There are three modes of writing instruction employed in the course. First, early in the semester, the instructor provides formal instruction to the class regarding the requirements of the paper assignment, desired structure of the paper, and how to avoid common mistakes in academic writing (e.g., the use of passive voice, contractions, sentence structure). Second, students are required to turn in a *complete* , initial draft of their paper between weeks 8 and 10 of the semester. The instructor provides detailed written commentary on each student's initial draft focusing on mechanics (e.g., grammar, clarity, organization) and analytic quality (e.g., accurate comprehension of theory and research, creative

application of theories from class). As well, the instructor provides in-class discussion of common problems evidenced in the students' initial drafts. Finally, the instructor actively encourages students to take advantage of one-on-one writing assistance during office hours, via email, and during appointments scheduled at the student's request.

All students must turn in a revised, final draft of their paper. For the revision, students are required to address all of the instructor's comments made on the initial draft (clearly stipulated in the syllabus as one criterion for grading). To ensure students fully address these comments in their revision, they are required to turn in a copy of the initial draft that includes the instructor's commentary along with their final draft. Students' grade on the final draft reflects the analytic and creative quality of the substance of the paper, writing mechanics (e.g., grammar, clarity, organization), and the extent to which students successfully addressed the instructor's comments on the initial draft.

Role of Grad Students : None