

**University of Guelph  
Sociology & Anthropology**

**SOC 4470 – Youth in Conflict with the Law**

**Winter 2025**

**Wednesdays, 7:00 pm – 9:50 pm**

**GRHM 2302**

**Instructor**

Instructor: Dr. Chris Tatham

Email: [ctatham@uoguelph.ca](mailto:ctatham@uoguelph.ca)

Office Location: MCKN 609

Office Hours: Office hours will be held over Zoom. See CourseLink for schedule and links.

**Course Topic**

This course examines the sociology of youth crime and delinquency. This course is intended to provide a comprehensive understanding of issues facing at-risk youth in Canada. Emphasis will be given to contemporary issues in Canadian youth justice. Topics include the social construction of youth deviance, theoretical understandings of juvenile delinquency, as well as the changing philosophies that shape our official and legislative responses to youth crime. We will study important correlates of youth crime, such as the peer group, social disadvantage, and mental health. We will also examine special populations of at-risk youth, such as girls, racialized youth, Indigenous youth, 2SLGBTQIA+ youth, and youth experiencing homelessness. Throughout the course, students are encouraged to critically assess the official and legal responses to youth crime as well as to consider implications for social policy, and the potential impacts upon youth who may come into conflict with the law.

**Course Structure**

This course has been scheduled to have in-person delivery. Blended options may be available.

This is a reading-intensive, discussion-based course. This is not a lecture-based class. Class time will employ a seminar-style approach and will be centered around peer-led in-depth discussion of the readings. Students are responsible for reading the assigned works before class. Students are expected and encouraged to participate in class discussion. Regardless of our new online context, engaged, thoughtful discussion is an integral part of the seminar experience.

Students may require a laptop or computer and internet access in order to participate in class. Students are advised to print off their readings and have them easily accessible for use during class time. During the course of the semester, we will use Zoom, PowerPoint as well as other programs.

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of the class, students will be able to:

- Identify and critically evaluate a variety of theories of juvenile delinquency and youth crime.
- Develop awareness and appreciation for a breadth of issues surrounding youth, crime, and youth justice.
- Make connections between sociological theory, empirical research, social issues, and real-world events.
- Critically evaluate scholarly and non-scholarly sources.
- Formulate research questions, collect, evaluate, and utilize academic and non-academic sources to support written arguments.
- Write critically and creatively.
- Develop public speaking and knowledge translation skills.
- Engage in thoughtful and respectful discussion.

## Course Materials

All assigned readings are available on CourseLink.

## Evaluation

COMPONENT	WEIGHT
Outline	20%
Presentation	30%
Research Paper	25%
Peer Evaluations	5%
Discussion Questions	10%
Participation	10%

*Please note that this web outline is for informational purposes only and is subject to change. A complete course syllabus will be available on CourseLink on the first day of classes.*