

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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**YOUTH, DELINQUENCY AND JUVENILE JUSTICE**

**I. Course Description**

This course is cross-listed as an upper-division elective for undergraduate students (SW360K) and as a graduate elective for graduate students (SW395K) in the School of Social Work who wish to explore the characteristics of delinquent youth and juvenile justice policies and practices. The course will profile the chronic and serious youth offender, examine current legal issues driving federal and state policy in the juvenile justice arena, explore accountability models for determining program effectiveness, and consider contemporary rehabilitative, educational, and delinquency prevention practices. Student will gain knowledge about juvenile justice mandates and the social and learning characteristics of the juvenile offender. They will have the opportunity to study and observe educational and rehabilitative practices in one of the nation's largest juvenile justice systems. Desired outcomes for students are the development of a personal theory of delinquency and juvenile justice, and a working knowledge of the promising supports and systems affecting risk and protective characteristics of delinquent youth.

**II. Course Objectives**

Upon completion of this course you will be able to:

- 1) Demonstrate the risk and protective factors associated with juvenile delinquency
- 2) Critically analyze factors associated with disproportionate numbers of ethnic, minority, and disability groups who are adjudicated delinquent.
- 3) Demonstrate an understanding of the social and educational characteristics of chronic and serious youth offenders, including those with disabilities and special education needs.
- 4) Describe and analyze major issues and trends in juvenile justice practice and programming, including the roles of federal and state governments in the juvenile justice arena.
- 5) Analyze important ideologies, values and ethical decision making process in the NASW Code of Ethics that help shape juvenile justice practice for social workers.
- 6) Critically evaluate different juvenile justice programs as to their effectiveness with juvenile delinquents. This includes: (a) the adequacy of the research and knowledge base (b) the range of applicability (c) the value and ethical issues, including the student's own value system and (d) the policy implications involved in delivery of services to juvenile delinquents.

- 7) Demonstrate an understanding of how to adapt juvenile justice program models and strategies to meet the unique needs of persons from diverse backgrounds, including race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, developmental level, age, and national origin.
- 8) Identify career opportunities for social workers in the juvenile justice arena.

### III. Teaching Methods

This course involves a variety of teaching methods including: lectures, power point presentation, in-class experiential learning, group exercises, small group discussions and court room observations.

### IV. Required Reading Material

Butterfield, F. (1995). *All god's children: The boskett family and the American tradition of violence*. New York, Vintage/Random House Publishing.

Martin, G. (2005). *Juvenile justice: process and systems*. Sage Publications

The assigned readings for this course represent the minimum required reading for this course. There is a vast body

### V. Course Requirements

Course requirements consist of small group assignments, policy analysis, practice area paper and group presentation. Course requirements, due dates and their contribution to the final grade are summarized below.

Assignments	% of Course Grade	Due Date
Boskett Family Assessment	20%	Feb 22nd
Practice Paper	25%	May 3rd
Policy Paper	25%	April 5th
Group Presentation	15%	May 3th
Practice Laboratory	15%	

Grades for this course will be assigned using the following +/- scale.

94 and above = A	80.0 to 83.999 = B-
90.0 to 93.999 = A-	77.0 to 79.999 = C+
87.0 to 89.999 = B+	74.0 to 76.999 = C
84.0 to 86.999 = B	70.0 to 73.999 = C-
67.0 to 69.999 = D+	60.0 to 63.999 = D-
64.0 to 66.999 = D	Below 60 = F

Each course requirement is described in detail below. However, you may still have questions about the assignments. If this is the case, please feel free to ask for clarification at any time during the course. You may ask for clarification during my office hours or you can ask questions at the beginning of each class session.

### VI. Course Schedule

Week	Content	Assignment
I January 18	Course Introduction	
II January 25	Definitions and Important Concepts	Read Butterfield Handout

III February 1	Juvenile Justice History	Read Butterfield Martin: Chapter 1 Handout
IV February 8	System's Theory and Ecological Perspective	Read Butterfield Martin: Chapter 2 Handout
V February 15	Intersection Between Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Systems	Read Butterfield Martin: Chapter 5
VI February 22	Discussion: All God's Children	<b>Boskett Family Assessment Paper Due</b>
VII March 1	The History, Role and Function of Juvenile Court	Martin: Chapter 7 <b>Courtroom Observation</b>
VIII March 8	The Evolution of the Juvenile Justice System Guest Speaker	Martin: Chapters 8 & 9
IX March 15	Spring Break	
X March 22	Community Based Juvenile Focused Programs Antisocial Youth Culture and Gangs	Martin: Chapter 10 & 11
XI March 29	Role of the Police Guest Speaker	Martin: Chapter 6
XII April 5	Crossover Youth Practice Model	CYPM Manual: pp. 1-37 <b>Juvenile Justice Policy Research Paper Due</b>
XIII April 12	Practice Model Values and Principles Practice Model Flow Chart Family Engagement Reducing Disproportionality and Disparity	
XIV April 19	Phase I Practice Area I: Arrest, Identification and Detention Practice Area II: Decision Making Regarding Changes Phase II Practice Area III Case Assignment, Joint Assignment and Case Planning	CYPM Manual: pp. 38-68
XV April 26	Phase III Practice Area IV: Coordinated Case Supervision and Ongoing Assessment of Progress Phase III Practice Area V: Planning for Youth Permanency, Transition, and Case Closure	CYPM Manual pp. 69-87
XVI May 3	<b>Group Presentations</b>	<b>Practice Paper Due</b>

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## Course Assignments

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### **A. Boskett Family Assessment (20 points)**

You are to read the book entitled: *All God's Children: The Boskett Family and the American Tradition of Violence* by Fox Butterfield. The assignment requires you to write a 5-7 (undergraduate students) or 7-10 (graduate students) page paper that assesses the intergenerational psychosocial dynamics of the Boskett family and how the family dynamics interfaced with the role the juvenile justice system played in the lives of Willie Boskett, senior and junior. Also discuss what you think could have been done to prevent Willie Boskett jr from being labeled as the most notorious youth in the history of New York state's juvenile justice system.

### **B. Practice Paper (25 points)**

Each group will submit a paper that is between 10-12 pages in length. The paper will focus on an area of juvenile justice practice that is of particular interest to them. The paper must conform to the following outline and is due by noon on May 3rd

1. Description of the population of children of interest
2. Why is this area of practice important?
3. What are the most common techniques used to provide service to the population of interest? (must provide at least two)
4. The history & development of each technique
5. The extent to which the technique has been accepted by the professional community
6. Assessment of the overall effectiveness of techniques used

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### **C. Policy Research Paper (25%)**

This paper requires you to identify a juvenile justice policy that impacts the population of youth that interest you. The paper must be between 5-7 (undergraduate) or 7-10 (graduate) pages. The paper must conform to the following outline.

1. Background of the policy i.e., social conditions and circumstances that led to the formation of the policy.
2. Description of the population of juveniles intended to be helped by the policy
3. Description of the effectiveness of the policy
4. What are the demographic implications of the policy i.e., race, gender, age, socioeconomic status etc.?
5. How has the policy evolved over time?

### **D. Group Presentation (15 points)**

Each group will prepare a 20-minute presentation that reflects the content of the practice paper submitted. Props are encouraged but should serve only as a guide to simplify the presentation for the benefit of the audience. A logical approach to the paper and presentation would be to view them as one assignment with two separate parts that link together.

**Note:** As the instructor, I do reserve the right to award differently weighted grades on the group project. This will normally occur when a member of the group fails to actively participate in the group, consistently misses deadlines for assigned tasks, or produces work that is below the quality standards expected for the project. In other words, if a student's individual performance is consistently below par so that it jeopardizes the grades of the other members of the group, I will down grade that student.

### **E. Practice Laboratory (15)**

The practice laboratory is an educational tool used to give you practice experience. It will also allow you to understand and implement specific concepts and interventions related to working with children in or at-risk of being in the juvenile justice system. Each week you and your group members will engage in exercises related to the topic of discussion for that week. Laboratory exercises may vary between in class and out of class activities

including discussion board. You will earn one point for your participation. In order to earn that point you must be in class.

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## **VII. Class Policies**

**CONDITIONAL ADMISSION.** Students who were admitted into the MSSW program on a conditional basis are not able to take an incomplete for this course if the conditions for admission are still in place.

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HONOR CODE.** The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT IN CLASS.** The professor expects students to act as professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

**POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION.** Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (i.e. blogs, etc.) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image. Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including any information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in any way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

**POLICY ON SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY.** Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>).

**USE OF CLASS MATERIALS.** The materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, exams, quizzes, and homework assignments are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized copying of the class materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary actions being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of class materials without the specific, expressed approval of the instructor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of sharing those materials with other current or future students.

**DOCUMENTED DISABILITY STATEMENT.** Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471- 6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

**RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS.** By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day,

**USE OF E-MAIL FOR OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO STUDENTS.** Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to their e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time- sensitive. Students can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

**SAFETY.** As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

**BEHAVIOR CONCERNS ADVICE LINE (BCAL).** If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual’s behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

**EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY.** Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor’s instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

## Practice References

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