

Rutgers University, Summer 2012
Criminal Justice Seminar - Street Gangs: 202-389

Professor: Dr. Michele Muni

Course Location: Brookdale Community College, Freehold, NJ

Course Period: 5/29/2012-6/21/2012

Hours: 4:00 pm - 9:15 pm

Email: mlmuni@andromeda.rutgers.edu

Room: 209

Overview:

This course is designed to provide students with introductory knowledge on street gangs. Street gangs have transitioned throughout time, progressively becoming more problematic. Since the 1970s gangs have posed a major problem in many cities throughout the United States. The gang problem is not limited to the United States, the problem is interational. In fact, at one point in time, South Africa, Britain, and the United States have all declared a war against gangs.

Students will become familiar with responses to street gangs and criminological explanations for street gang membership.

Required Text

Gangs an Individual and Group Perspective

Author: Kimberly Tobin

Publisher: Pearson, Prentice Hall

Copyright: 2008

ISBN:0-13-172404-5

Optional Text

The American Street Gang

Author: Malcolm Klein

Publisher: Oxford University Press

Copyright: 1997

ISBN: 0-19-511573-2

Course Objectives

Grading: Your grade in the class will be determined by three movie reviews, one essay, one research paper, class participation; and a final exam.

Grades will be determined accordingly:

1. **2 short papers:** 40%
 - June 7, 2012 and June 19, 2012

PAPERS ARE DUE ON THEIR DUE DATE, NO EXCEPTIONS. THEY WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED BY EMAIL OR IN MY MAILBOX.

2. **Quiz One** 20%
3. **Final Quiz (cumulative)** 30%
4. **Class Participation** 10%

Short Papers: Short essays are usually short in length (2-3 pages). For your reviews, you will be graded according to whether you followed paper guidelines and whether you provided detailed facts, supporting your point of view, briefly and clearly.

GUIDELINES:

Paper One (Due June 7): Imagine that you are a recent immigrant to the United States and are faced with whether to join a criminal street gang. In a letter to your relatives in your home country describe your perception of street gangs in the United States.

Objectives:

1. How does society depict gangs (media, legislators, political figures, neighborhoods, relatives, etc.)
2. Your own perception of street gangs
 - a. does your perception of gangs fit society's perception or
 - b. how does your view differ from society's perception;
 - c. explain how gangs are similar to or different from adolescent peer groups; and finally
 - d. why do you think this country has a gang problem
3. Conclusion: Succinctly summarize your ideas

Paper Two (June 19): According to a recent article by CNBC, gangs are becoming more involved in white collar crime. Based on what you learned in this class answer the following questions:

Objectives:

1. What is a gang?
2. Why do you think gangs are moving towards white collar crime?
3. Can current gang criminological theories explain the recent trend towards white collar crime?
 - a. if yes: explain a theory that relates and how;
 - b. if no: explain why they do not apply.
4. Conclusion: Succinctly summarize your ideas

When using references, BE SURE TO PROPERLY REFERENCE WITHIN THE PAPER – APA STYLE

i.e.

- Muni (2012) suggests that..... (p.2).
- 23% of the population..... (Muni, 2012).
- Muni (2006) is quoted “ “ (Muni, 2012, p.2)

Whenever you directly quote, a page number is necessary.

Attendance is required in order to maintain a passing grade in the class. Information discussed in class is not necessarily covered in the text; you are responsible for understanding all material.

- **DUE TO PROBLEMS IN THE PAST, THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS FOR LATE PAPERS OR QUIZZES.**

➤ **DUE TO PROBLEMS IN THE PAST, THE INSTRUCTOR WILL NOT GIVE INCOMPLETES --NO EXCEPTIONS!!!!**

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in any shape or form. Each student is responsible for understanding the concept of academic dishonesty and will face harsh consequences if he or she takes part in ANY FORM of academic dishonesty in this class.

Preliminary Syllabus

The following is a weekly list of reading assignments and discussion topics for the course. You are responsible for completing each reading assignment before coming to class.

WEEK ONE

May 29: Class Requirements and "What is a gang?"

Reading: Chapters 2 and 12

IN CLASS: Street gangs introductory documentary.

June 1: Classical Studies on Gangs – a historical review of gangs in American society and criminological theory

Reading: Text: Chapters 1

IN CLASS: Interactive Discussion: 5 Points Gang Documentary (30 minutes)

IN CLASS: Chapter 3 (do not read before class)

WEEK TWO

June 5: Quiz One & Pushes and Pulls and Gang Involvement/Popular Culture and Street Gangs

Reading: Text: Chapter 4

Optional: Klein: pp 57-64 and Chapter 4: 86-110

Optional: James C. Howell, *Youth Gangs: An Overview*

(on-line at <http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/167249.pdf>)

In class project - Chapter 6 (do not read before class)

In class - *The Wild One*

June 7: Gang Delinquency

Reading: Text chapters 5

Optional: Klein: Chapter 4 – 112-135

In class project - Chapter 7 (do not read before class)

- **Paper One Due**

WEEK THREE

June 12: Race & Ethnicity/Female Gangs

Reading: Text chapter 8

In class project - Chapter 9 (do not read before class)

June 14 : Prison Gangs

Reading: Text Chapter 10

WEEK FOUR

June 19: What Do We Do From Here?

Reading: Text Chapters 11

Optional: Klein - Chapter 6

- **Paper Two Due**

June 21: Wrap-up - **FINAL QUIZ** (covers quizzes one and two)

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER AND GOOD LUCK IN THE FALL IN ALL OF YOUR ENDEAVORS!