PS11901: Youth Violence: Assessment and Prevention, 4 Credits Spring, 2013

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Schedule (class times and day(s): Thursdays, 6:30 PM – 9:00 PM
Room: Carney Hall 203

Boston College Mission Statement
Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation's finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual ideal of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry.

Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive intellectual heritage.

Course Description
PS 11901 Youth Violence: Assessment and Prevention
Violence by our young people has become a national public health epidemic. Youthful assailants have moved from misdemeanors to major crimes of homicide, rape, robbery and assault. When violence occurs, the community asks why were there no warning signs of impending trouble and what can be done to prevent such problems in the future? This course examines the warning signs, which are usually many and protracted; it looks at related theories of development, attachment and adjustment and then explores active strategies parents, teachers, counselors, law enforcement and others interested in young people can implement to prevent these violent outbursts.

Course Objectives
Each student will:
1. Learn to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments and points of view.
   * To do this, you will be reading and critiquing the class texts assigned outside readings, and participating in class discussions
2. Learn how to find and use resources.
   *To do this, you will use 5 scholarly books and any articles of your choice for your research proposal.
3. Develop skills in expressing yourself in writing.
   *To do this, you will write a 5 page paper on some specific aspect of youth violence. The sixth page is where you list the references that were used in your paper. The course text may not be used as a reference to this paper.
4. The student will demonstrate knowledge and competency, as appropriate for the course across cultural settings and will learn the impact of culture, gender, and age in youth violence as demonstrated by an awareness of cultural differences in types and causes of violent youth.

5. The student will demonstrate ethical knowledge and competency, as appropriate for the course pertaining to youth violence as demonstrated by an awareness of differing legal and clinical resources for violent youth of different ages and states of mental health.

**Grading**

**Exams**

Exams will cover any assigned materials in the text, the contents of class notes, any extra readings the student may wish to include, and material from the weekly class discussions. Exams will include the definitions of key concepts and the names of scholars who have made significant contributions to the study of youth violence.

**Term Paper**

Each student is responsible for reading at least five books on some specific aspect of youth violence and for submitting a five (5) page paper on that topic. (The sixth page is to list the five references that were used.) The course texts may not be used.

The term paper is to be typed, double-spaced, in 10 or 12 CPI, with 1 inch margins on all 4 sides of each page. Proper spelling, punctuation, and grammar are expected. Pages are to be numbered. Papers that do not follow these requirements or that exceed five pages of text and one page of references will be substantially penalized by lower grades. Papers handed in late will be penalized one full grade for each week past the deadline.

References are to be in American Psychological Association format. Some examples:


The following websites may be of assistance in gathering information and resources for your term paper:

- [http://libguides.bc.edu/psychologyporta](http://libguides.bc.edu/psychologyporta)
- [http://libguides.bc.edu/apa](http://libguides.bc.edu/apa)
- [http://libguides.newtonfreelibrary](http://libguides.newtonfreelibrary)

No student shall pass this course who has not completed all four course assignments. There are no exceptions to the deadlines, and I reserve the right to assign lower grades to assignments and exams which are handed in late. Term papers and out-of-class summary papers that are handed in late lose one full grade for each week that the paper is late.

Students are expected to attend class weekly and to actively participate in class discussion. 25% of the final grade is left to the instructor's discretion, and is based on overall class performance. No student shall receive an "A" grade for this course who has not been an active class participant as judged by the instructor.
As a courtesy to our colleagues, beepers, cell phones, and other electronic devices are to be placed in vibration mode or turned off during class. Laptops are permitted in class for course-related use only. FaceBook, Twitter and other social media sites are not permitted during class time.

**WCAS Grading System**
The undergraduate grading system consists of twelve categories: A (4.00), A- (3.67), excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00), B- (2.67), good; C+ (2.33), C (2.00), C- (1.67), satisfactory; D+ (1.33), D (1.00), D- (.67), passing but unsatisfactory; F (.00), failure; I (.00), incomplete; F (.00), course dropped without notifying office; W (.00), official withdrawal from course. The graduate grading system is A (4.00), A- (3.67), Excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00), good; B- (2.67), C (2.00), passing but not for degree credit; F (.00), failure.

Grade Reports. All students are required to log into the web through Agora to access their semester grades. Students must utilize their BC username and password to log on. If your username or password is not known, the Student Learning and Support Center in the O’Neill Library Computer Center will issue a new one. The SLSC requires a valid picture ID (a BC ID, driver’s license or passport) to obtain your password.

**Text(s)/Readings (Required)**

**Required Readings:**


Flannery, R. B., Jr.  *Violence in America: Coping with Drugs, Distressed Families, Inadequate Schooling, and Acts of Hate*  

Flannery, R. B., Jr.  PowerPoint Course Outline (Distributed by email)

**Suggested Reading:**


**Text(s)/Readings (Recommended)**

**Suggested Readings:**

Youth violence and its prevention is a fascinating area of inquiry. The following books and articles are recommended for students who wish to examine more thoroughly the issues raised in each weekly lecture. While not required reading, the material in these books and articles would be helpful in answering class and exam questions in greater depth.

**Lecture I - The Nature of Youth Violence**


**Lecture II - The National Context for Violence.**


III. Theories of Youth Violence


**IV. Normal Development**


V. **The Psychology of Poverty.**


VI. **Special Risk Factors for Violence.**


Jurton, S. (Ed.) Cliques. Farmington, MI: Gale Cengage Learning, 2010


VII. Mid-Term Exam

VIII. Prevention: The Early Warning Signs


**IX. Prevention: The Serious and the Urgent Warning Signs**


**X. Prevention: Fostering Safety and Caring Attachments**


**XI. Prevention: Fostering Mastery and Meaning**


**XII. Prevention: Crisis Intervention Procedures for Victims**


XIII. **Prevention: Restoring Community**


XIV. **Final Exam**

**Important Policies**

http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/schools/advstudies/guide/academicinteg.html
Written Work
Graduate and undergraduate students are expected to prepare professional, polished written work. Written materials must be typed in the format required by your instructor. Strive for a thorough, yet concise style. Cite literature appropriately, using APA, MLA, CLA format per instructors decision. Develop your thoughts fully, clearly, logically and specifically. Proofread all materials to ensure the use of proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling. You are encouraged to make use of campus resources for refining writing skills as needed [http://www.bc.edu/libraries/help/tutoring.html].

Scholarship and Academic Integrity
It is expected that students will produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to reference properly is plagiarism. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on examinations or assignments, and submitting the same paper or substantially similar papers to meet the requirements of more than one course without seeking permission of all instructors concerned. Scholastic misconduct may also involve, but is not necessarily limited to, acts that violate the rights of other students, such as depriving another student of course materials or interfering with another student’s work.

Request for Accommodations
If you have a disability and will be requesting accommodations for this course, please register with either Dr. Kathy Duggan (dugganka@bc.edu), Associate Director, Connors Family Learning Center (learning disabilities or AHD) or Dean Paulette Durrett, (paulette.durrett@bc.edu), Assistant Dean for students with disabilities, (all other disabilities). Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations. For further information, you can locate the disability resources on the web at http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/libraries/help/tutoring/specialservices.html.

Attendance
Class attendance is an important component of learning. Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive by the beginning of and remain for the entire class period. When an occasion occurs that prevents a student from attending class, it is the student’s obligation to inform the instructor of the conflict before the class meets. The student is still expected to meet all assignment deadlines. If a student knows that he or she will be absent on a particular day, the student is responsible for seeing the instructor beforehand to obtain the assignments for that day. If a student misses a class, he or she is responsible for making up the work by obtaining a classmate’s notes and handouts and turning in any assignments due. Furthermore, many instructors give points for participation in class. If you miss class, you cannot make up participation points associated with that class. Types of absences that are not typically excused include weddings, showers, vacations, birthday parties, graduations, etc. Additional assignments, penalties and correctives are at the discretion of the instructor. If circumstances necessitate excessive absence from class, the student should consider withdrawing from the class. In all cases, students are expected to accept the decision of the instructor regarding attendance policies specific to the class.

Consistent with our commitment of creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing the fulfillment of their academic obligations. It is the responsibility of students to review course syllabi as soon as they are distributed and to consult the faculty member promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed
religious holidays. If asked, the student should provide accurate information about the obligations entailed in the observance of that particular holiday. However, it is the responsibility of the student to complete any and all class requirements for days that are missed due to conflicts due to religious holidays.

There may be circumstances that necessitate a departure from this policy. Feel free to contact the WCAS at 617-552-3900 for consultation.

**Deadlines**
Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the specified dates. Late assignments will be graded accordingly. Term papers and out-of-class summary papers that are handed in late will be penalized one full grade for each week past the deadlines.

**Course Assignments** (readings, exercises and/or experiences)

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**Course Outline: Spring, 2013**
**Youth Violence: Assessment and Prevention**

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**Assessment**

I. The Nature of Youth Violence
   A. National Public Health Issue
   B. National Statistics
   C. Underreporting of Violent Acts

II. The National Context for Violence in the Early Twenty-First Century
   A. The Market Culture and the Postindustrial State
   B. The Impact on Community Cohesion

III. Theories of Youth Violence
   A. Cultural
   B. Biological
   C. Sociological
   D. Psychological

IV. Normal Development
   A. Basic Issues of Normal Growth in Childhood and Adolescence
   B. The Roots of Violence: Disruptions in mastery, Attachment, and Meaning

V. The Psychology of Poverty
   A. Poor Children
   B. Affluent Children

VI. Special Risk Factors for Violence
   A. Gender Differences in Assailants
   B. Gangs
   C. Weapons

VII. Mid-term Examination
Prevention

VIII. Prevention: The Early Warning Signs
   A. Case Study

IX. Prevention: The Serious and the Urgent Warning Signs
   A. Case Study

X. Prevention: Fostering Safety and Caring Attachments
   A. Case Study

XI. Prevention: Fostering Mastery and Meaning
   A. Medical Issues
   B. Special Programs for At-Risk Youth
   C. Case Study

XII. Prevention: Crisis Intervention Procedures for Victims of Violence

XIII. Prevention: Restoring Community

XIV. Final Examination

Key Concepts:

Key Concepts in Youth Violence

Part I
Depraved Indifference The Anomic Cycle of Violence
Andrew Dobrin Early Warning Signs
UCR Bowlby
Wolfgang Masten and Coatsworth
Intergenerational Transfer of Violence Sense of Coherence
Widom Antonovsky
Anomie NCVS
Durkheim NIOSH
Cortex Compte
Limbic System Nature/Nurture
Neurotransmitters Gesell
Epinephrine Reciprocal Interweaving
Norepinephrine Piaget
Reactive Detachment Disorder Erikson
Oppositional Defiant Disorder Spitz
Conduct Disorder Avoidant Attachment
Territorial Gang     Ambivalent Attachment
Corporate Gang     Disorganized Attachment
Buddy-Buddy System

**Part II**

Dysthymic Disorder
Major Depressive Episode
Serotonin
Khantzian
Self-Medication Hypothesis
Physical Symptoms
Intrusive Symptoms
Avoidant Symptoms
PTSD
Kindling
Endorphins
Antisocial Personality Disorder
ADHD
Case Manager
The Harried Child
The Just War
Repetition Compulsion
Profiling
Stress- Resistant Persons
ASAP

**Specific Course Assignments:**

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<tr>
<th>Course Requirements</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>March 14, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Feb. 28, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>May 9, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation/ Out-of-Course Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Weekly/Entire Semester/ April 25, 2013</td>
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Out-of-Course Assignment:
This is a four credit course that meets for 2 hours and 30 minutes of formal class time. In addition, the course will include the out-of-class assignment noted below.

Substance abuse is involved in 80% of all violent acts, including those of violent youths. Each student will attend 1 Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, 1 Narcotics Anonymous meetings, 1 Al-Anon meetings, and 1 Adult Children of Alcoholics meetings to learn about the impact of substance abuse on human functioning and its many relationships to violence. Students are to attend ONLY OPEN meetings. These are meetings open to the general public. Closed meetings are not open to the general public. Students may contact each of the four agencies above in the White Pages for a list of OPEN meetings near where they live. Meetings typically run 1 ½ hours and coffee is usually served. The format includes 2-3 speakers who recount what substances have done to their lives. This is then followed by an informal discussion with questions and answers. There is no charge to attend these open meetings.

Written Assignment: Each student will submit a four-page, double-spaced summary of what has been learned. Each paper will have the following four sections with the length of Sections II, III, and IV determined by the student.

Section I: List the four meetings that were attended, include the type of meeting, place of meeting, day and time of meeting. An example: AA Meeting, St. Joseph’s Church, Wakefield, Tues, Nov. 3, 2013, 7 PM

Section II: Discuss the impact of substance abuse on the substance abuser.

Section III: Discuss the impact of substance abuse by the substance abuser on the lives of other (e.g., family, work, community).

Section IV: Discuss how substance abuse may be related to youth violence (e.g., murder in drug deals, domestic violence, date-rape).

This assignment is due Thursday, April 28, 2013. This assignment and the term paper assignment will be discussed in class toward the end of the semester.

It is expected that 8 hours of your study time will be spent on class and out-of-class assignments and exercises. Please note that some weeks will require more time and some weeks less time but the average is approximately 8 hours per week over the semester.