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# Breaking the Cycle of Violence - Engaged Scholarship, Juvenile Delinquency Course: Sociology 362 – Spring 2014

Civic Engagement Scholars Initiative, University of Massachusetts Boston

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# Breaking the Cycle of Violence - Engaged Scholarship

## Juvenile Delinquency Course: Sociology 362 – Spring 2014

### Exploring Juvenile Delinquency

This course, retooled through the CESI program, underscores the programmatic and policy responses to the issues presented. Students explore the actionable options through partnering with a community partner, allowing a reciprocal process of community work contextualizing the classroom and the classroom informing the community partner. The course examines juvenile delinquency through four stages:

**The first stage** to understand how the notion of juvenile delinquency is socially constructed, and learn how to research the concept called juvenile delinquency.

**The second stage** explores the various theories that facilitate understanding juvenile delinquency, from three perspectives micro, macro, and critical theories, looking at system response and the influence in power and politics.

**The third stage** of explores the reality of youth in their institutional social context of family, school, peers and gangs, and youth in the social context of drugs and drug use.

**The fourth stage** explores how our societal systems respond to youth that violate social norms and laws.

### Goals and Objectives

- Provide more in-depth community engaged learning experience for students of the Juvenile Delinquency course.
- Students completing the course will understand how the concepts presented in the classroom apply to work in the community, by learning how to translate the abstracts concepts to concrete application.
- And, to learn how to take concrete application to inform ongoing development of the abstract concepts.
- Build ongoing community and student involvement with BCVI on campus and in the community

### Partnership Information

**Peace Circles Boston**



**Changing Lives Through Literature Chelsea and Dorchester**



**Do The Write Thing Peace Ambassadors**



**UMass Boston Sociology Department**  
Dr. Russell Schutt, Chair

**The Peace Circles Boston**  
Valleria Miranda, Director

**Do The Write Thing Essay Challenge [DTWT]**  
Chancellor Motley and Steven Neville, Co-Chairs of the Boston Chapter

**Breaking the Cycle of Violence Initiative [BCVI] at UMass Boston**

Steven Neville and Jackie Lageson, Co-Chairs

**Changing Lives Through Literature [CLTL]**  
Juvenile Probation Department, Dorchester and Chelsea Massachusetts

### Building Civic Responsibility in the Classroom

#### Course catalog description of the course:

*“The nature and extent of delinquency. Consideration of theories, delinquent subculture, and programs for control and prevention.”*

#### Course description from my last syllabus:

*“The Juvenile Delinquency course will investigate the nature and extent of delinquency. We will consider theories, how the category of delinquency is constructed, what are considered delinquent subculture, and the formal and informal social organizations and how they are used for control and prevention. We will also investigate juvenile delinquency from a cross-cultural perspective.”*

### Approaches and Methods

- Gain insight on current research in DTWT’s focus area of middle school student’s experienced and observed violence in their community.
- Co-creation of an essay to practice design for DTWT essays
- Mentor UMass Students as Peace Circle facilitators and data collectors
- Mentor UMass Boston students as CLTL facilitators
- Weekly journals focused on that week’s academic concepts, community experience, and how the two intersect.
- Research paper that includes a literature review of the community partners area of focus and deliverables and recommendations for community partner.