This course explores perspectives on street gangs and criminal activity; policing and the criminal justice system; and obstacles to securing housing, employment, and services for reentry after incarceration. Students will examine advances in the social science of adolescence and innovations in government policy and community-based programs aimed at encouraging public safety and youth development, improving policing and prisons, and promoting criminal desistance and decarceration. In addition, we will delve into the lived experience of adolescence and beyond in the context of racially-segregated, high-poverty neighborhoods, with a focus on Chicago. Our approaches will include discussion and lecture; ethnography, autobiography, and policy-oriented readings; panels and guest speakers; and documentary films and other media.

**Grading:**
- 25% attendance and participation
- 25% weekly discussion postings (3% x 8 +1% discretionary)
- 25% crime and justice project
- 25% final essay

**Attendance/participation:** Students are expected to attend and participate in all classes, and to arrive on time. Active participation is central to this class; it’s where much of the learning happens. As such, students with five or more absences will receive no course credit (W or F).

**Screen policy:** Screens are banned after class begins. This may inconvenience some of you, and may even be counterproductive in some ways (taking notes, look-ups, etc.), but I’ve found that maintaining a collective focus makes class sessions immeasurably better. There will be some exceptions.

**Weekly Canvas Discussions:** At least two short (about 75-200 words) postings a week, preferably one for both Tuesday’s and Thursday’s readings. Either before or after class, but by Friday at 5 p.m. Canvas will close and open discussion on Saturdays at 5 p.m. This is meant as a way to engage the texts, pose and answer questions, admit confusion, explore ideas, and offer authentic (and civil) responses to readings and other students’ posts. The broader goal is to create a space for reflection, exchange, and community. Revise your comments for clarity and quality, but postings, unlike essays, need not be formal and utterly free of typos. It is important, though, to reference the readings, guests, films directly where possible. Grading is simple: 3 points if you make at least two posts, 1.5 points off for each missed post, and .5 off for each late post. Only one post is required weeks 1 and 10. Two lowest grades dropped. A final discretion point awarded for exceptional contributions over the quarter.
Crime and Justice Project: Choose a topic for independent study. Submit a prospectus with bibliography (200-400 words, excluding bibliography; half a point late penalty per day to project grade) and indicate in which section of the class it fits (Part 1, 2, or 3) and if you’d like to present. Each section has its own due date for the project report (5-10 pages, double-spaced) and time slots for three slide-based voluntary presentations (5-6 min.). Extension requests are granted only if requested at least 24 hours ahead of deadline and if they specify a one- or two-day extension. For credit as a “Windows” class, you must choose one of the first two options.

1. Observational Study: undertake at least three observations at Cook County Bond Court, CAPS (Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy) meetings, a community-based organization, or some other location and write up your observations and findings.

2. Interview Study: conduct at least three interviews exploring a government or community-based organization’s attempt to address some of the social and policy problems we explore. You could focus, for example, on one organization (e.g., iGrow’s Peace House) or a policy area in which three separate organizations operate (e.g., reentry).

3. Policy Analysis: examine a policy problem (e.g., what supports exist for an ex-offender to reenter her/his community in Illinois), a policy proposal (e.g., eliminating cash bond), or a specific policy’s implementation.

4. Crime Data and Mapping: use the City of Chicago’s Data Portal and Social Explorer to examine crime data and patterns. I will provide a step-by-step introduction to this option.

5. Book Review: write an in-depth review of one of the recommended books, linking it in some way to one of the course readings. If possible, aim for publication, whether it’s a local publication, Goodreads, or some other location. You can suggest your own book. You can combine with a documentary film from the syllabus or elsewhere, too.

6. Life History Analysis: read the autobiography of John Walker (about 55,000 words, supplied by me as PDF file) and analyze it in relation to relevant course themes and readings.

Final Paper: requires integration of readings (6-12 pages, double-spaced) and insights from at least one guest speaker or student presentation. There will be prompts, but I also welcome student-generated topics. Extension requests are granted only if requested at least 24 hours ahead of deadline and if they specify a one- or two-day extension.

Required books:

- Peter Moskos, 2009, Cop in the Hood: My Year of Policing Baltimore’s Eastern District.

Recommended books:

- Ta-Nehisi Coates, 2015, Between the World and Me.
- Ralph Sampson, 2011, Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect.
Course Schedule

Introduction: Race, Justice, and Freedom in America
Ta-Nehisi Coates, 2015, Between the World and Me

WEEK 1

1/3 (Tu): Justice and Freedom in America
Canvas: MLK, “Letter from Birmingham Jail”
Watch at home: “13th” (Netflix)

Part 1: Getting In: What causes criminality (and what prevents it)?
Rec’d book: R. Sampson, Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect
Rec’d television series: HBO’s “The Wire”

1/5 (Th): Lens on Criminality: Autobiographical (listening to another’s voice)
James Reed, Escaping Death’s Grip: An Autobiography from the Streets of Chiraq
In-class viewing: “Crips and Bloods: Made in America” (15 min. excerpt)

WEEK 2

1/10 (Tu): Lens on Criminality: Macroanalysis (societal structures and public policies)
Canvas: Michelle Alexander, The New Jim Crow, Introduction, Chp. 2
Read: “1.5 Million Missing Black Men”
Rec’d: Moyers interview of Michelle Alexander and Bryan Stephenson

1/11 (W): Crime and justice project prospectus due by 11:59 p.m. at Canvas

1/12 (Th): Lens on Criminality: Mesoanalysis (neighborhoods and cultures)
Canvas: Wortley and Mazerolle, “Environmental criminology and crime analysis”
Canvas: Morenoff et al., “Neighborhood Inequality, Collective Efficacy, and Spatial Dynamics…”
Rec’d: Canvas: Snodgrass, “Clifford R. Shaw and Henry D. McKay: Chicago Criminologists”
Listen at home: This American Life, “Harper High School, Part 1” (57 min.)
In-class viewing: TED, Christakis, “The Hidden Influence of Social Network” (18 min.)

WEEK 3

1/17 (Tu): Lens on Criminality: Microanalysis (psychology, behaviors, and the individual)
Canvas: T. Moffitt, “Adolescence-Limited & Life-Course-Persistent Antisocial Behavior” (27 pgs)
Canvas: Center for the Developing Child, “Excessive Stress Disrupts the Architecture…”
Rec’d: Canvas: Sharkey et al. “Effect of Local Violence on Children’s Attention, Impulse Control”
Listen at home: This American Life, “Harper High School, Part 2” (62 min.)
Guest: Jadine Chou, Chief Safety and Security Officer, CPS
1/19 (Th): Lens on Criminality: Humanistic *(attempting to see from another’s perspective)*
   Guest: John Walker, former governor, Gangster Disciples (confirmed for 10:30 a.m.)

**WEEK 4**

1/24 (Tu): Lens on Criminality: Developmental *(more on the life course)*
   Chicago Reader, “In Chicago's war zones, the tragedy extends beyond the kids who die”
   Part 1 student presentations

1/25 (W): **Part 1, Crime and Justice Projects due by 11:59 p.m.**

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**Part 2: Inside: How does criminal justice work and can it be reformed?**

   Rec’d documentary: Frontline, “*Prison State*” (1h 23m)

1/26 (Th): A View from the Street: Cops in Baltimore and Milwaukee
   Peter Moskos, *Cop in the Hood*, Chps. 1-4 (Chp. 5 rec’d)
   Listen: This American Life, “*Cops See It Differently, Part 1*”
   Skype guest: Peter Moskos (confirmed for 10:30 a.m.)

**WEEK 5**

1/31 (Tu): A View from the Street: Cops in Baltimore, Miami Gardens, and Las Vegas
   Peter Moskos, *Cop in the Hood*, Chps. 6-7, Epilogue, Afterword
   Listen: This American Life, “*Cops See It Differently, Part 2*”
   Canvas: Las Vegas Police Dept. and DOJ, “Collaborative Reform Process” (skim)

2/2 (Th): A View from the Street: Young Men and Women in Philly
   Canvas: Kelling and Wilson, “Broken Windows”
   Rec’d: Canvas: Craig Futterman et al., “‘They Have All the Power’”
   In-class guest: Craig Futterman, UChicago Law School, *Invisible Institute*

**WEEK 6**

2/7 (Tu): A View from the Street: Young Men and Women in Philly
   Alice Goffman, *On the Run*, Chps. 4, 5, Conclusion (Epilogue and Appendix recommended)
   Rec’d: Friedersdorf, “*The Corrupt System That Killed Laquan McDonald*,” *The Atlantic*
   Watch at home: “*Hip Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes*” (first 20 min. required, rest is optional)
2/9 (Th): Models for Change: Trusting, Interrupting and Deescalating

**Canvas**: Kennedy, *Don’t Shoot*, “Cease Fire” (pp. 44-75)
**Rec’d**: Canvas: Cook et al., “Sources of Guns to Dangerous People: What We Learn by Asking”

**Watch at home**: Frontline, “The Interrupters” and “Youth Guidance and Becoming a Man”

**Rec’d**: Canvas: Police Accountability Task Force report report (skim)

**In-class guest**: Jennifer Maddox, CPD officer and community activist

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**WEEK 7**

2/14 (Tu): Cook County Court

**Canvas**: Nicole Gonzalez Van Cleve, *Crook County*, Preface, Chps. 1, 3
**Rec’d**: Bond court observation

**Guest**: Cara Smith, Chief Strategist, Cook County Sheriff’s Office (confirmed for 10:30 a.m.)

2/16 (Th): Cook County Jail

**Canvas**: Walsh, *The Urban Culture of Control*, Chp. 3, 4

**Read**: Vera, “Inside the Massive Jail that Doubles as Chicago’s Largest Mental Health Facility”

**Watch**: Cook County Jail: America's Largest Mental Health Facility, Nneka Jones Tapia

**Browse**: Cook County Sheriff, “Unjust Incarceration: A Look Inside a Broken System”

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**WEEK 8**

2/21 (Tu): Mass Incarceration and Mass Decarceration?

Ta-Nehisi Coates, “The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration,” *The Atlantic*

**Canvas**: Angela Davis, “Intro.: Prison Reform or Prison Abolition?” *Are Prisons Obsolete?*

**Canvas**: Brennan Center, “How Many Americans are Unnecessarily Incarcerated?” (skim)

**Rec’d**: Read: Matt Ford, “A Blueprint to End Mass Incarceration,” *The Atlantic*

**Part 2 student presentations**

2/22 (W): Part 2, Crime and Justice Projects due by 11:59 p.m.

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**Part 3: Getting Out: What Promotes Desistance?**

**Rec’d book**: Jennifer Gonnerman, *Life on the Outside*

**Rec’d documentary**: “The Road from Crime” (2012)

2/23 (Th): On the Way Home

**Canvas**: Joan Petersilia, *When Prisoners Come Home*, Chps. 1, 5

**Rec’d**: Canvas: Sampson and Laub, “Understanding Desistance”

**Browse**: “Reentry Illinois” (explore existing policy supports and what remains unaddressed)

**In-class**: Guests: Sheldon Smith and Todd Brown, *Dovetail Project*
WEEK 9

2/28 (Tu): Women, Reentry, and Desistance
    Canvas: Andrea Leverentz, *The Ex-Prisoner’s Dilemma: How Women Negotiate...*, Chp. 1, 3
    Skype guest: Andrea Leverentz (confirmed, 10:30 a.m.)

3/2 (Th): Desisting from Crime, Rebuilding a Life
    Maruna, *Making Good: How Ex-Convicts Reform, Rebuild Their Lives*, Intr, Chp. 1 (Chp. 2 rec’d)
    Part 3 student presentations

3/3 (F): Part 3, Crime and Justice Projects due by 11:59 p.m.

WEEK 10

3/7 (Tu): Narratives of Redemption

EXAM WEEK

3/14 (Tu): Final papers due @ Canvas by 11:59 p.m.