Fall 2020
Graduate Seminar: At-Risk Youth
Course 5340 CRN 18651
T 6:00-8:50 UGLC 106

Instructor: Dr. Caitlyn Muniz
Office Hours: By appointment only via Blackboard Collaborate
Email: cnmuniz@utep.edu

The most efficient means of communication with me is through email. I make every possible effort to respond to emails within 24 hours.

Course Description
This course will introduce students to topics such as violence, bullying, homicide, and victimization regarding varying youth populations. Throughout the course, students will be exposed to how these different populations experience victimization and perpetration and the risk factors leading to such experiences.

Student Learning Outcomes
1. Understand to what the term at-risk youth refers.
2. Be able to describe different at-risk youth populations and how these groups relate to crime.
3. Be able to describe trends in youth violence.
4. Be able to describe the juvenile justice system and how it treats at-risk youth.
5. Be able to find, read, and understand research/academic journal articles.

Required Texts
Academic articles as assigned.


Course Requirements and Grading

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100+%</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>80-89.9%</td>
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<td>70-79.9%</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>60-69.9%</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>Below 59.9%</td>
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This course has the following requirements:

1. Participation - 10% of grade
2. Student Discussant—10% of grade
3. Commentaries—30% of grade
4. Exams – 30% of grade
5. Final Paper—20% of grade
Participation (10%)

This course is a graduate seminar and it relies heavily on student participation. A good seminar requires collective effort and so I expect everyone to contribute constructively to our conversations each week. I will begin each class with some initial remarks and points of discussion, but everyone is expected to participate every week. Attendance is mandatory (see below for COVID considerations) and contributes to your overall participation grade. Students must come to class prepared, which means having read all of the readings and bringing with you notes, comments, and at least two or three questions based on the readings to discuss as a class. I strongly encourage all students to consider each reading through the lens of their own research and professional interests. This, in turn, can lead to some fun and exciting discussions.

If you are ill or otherwise unable to come to class, you can skype in to class for no penalty. If you are unable to video call in, you can submit a short summary with your 2-3 discussion questions. I highly suggest getting in to the practice of writing a summary and your discussion questions for every week. This will allow you to be in a better position to discuss/participate in class, and will allow you to be prepared if you are unable to come.

While grading participation will take COVID-19 in to consideration, it is important to recognize this is a graduate seminar class that requires participation to be a successful and meaningful course.

Student discussants and literature summaries (10%)

Every week, students will take on the role of discussant. Each student will be a discussant twice over the course of the semester. The role involves two responsibilities. First, each discussant must prepare a literature summary of the readings for that week. The summary should cover the key questions, arguments, data, and analyses for each reading and 3 – 5 concrete questions for the class to discuss. Second, the discussants will be tasked with helping to lead and advance a discussion about that week’s readings.

Literature summaries from discussants must be submitted via email 24 hours prior to class. They can be no more than 3 single-spaced pages, 12-point Times New Roman font and clearly organized.

Weekly commentaries—3 submissions (30%)

Students are required to submit three (3) “weekly” commentaries. These are brief reaction essays that focus on a single, coherent argument related to that week’s readings. These are not review essays—I know what the readings were about! Instead, essays should develop a concise argument based on what you read that week. They can focus on theory, policy, or methods or a combination. These essays are meant to, first, help you develop your critical
thinking and, second, help you practice clear, organized writing. Essays must draw on one or more weekly readings and can draw on outside sources (but are not required to do so).

You might, for example, critique a theory, argue for a new application of a theory, highlight an important theory or research gap, or identify a theoretical, research, or policy flaw. Even still, the topics of the essays are left purposefully vague—I encourage you to practice thinking critically and developing a specific argument or recommendation based on what you read.

Commentaries are due before class. They should be no less than 2 single-spaced pages. Students can only hand in one commentary per week and are required to submit a total of three.

**Exams (30%)** The course will include two exams, one at mid-term and one at the end of the semester. For these exams, students will be responsible for answering written essay questions that cover a range of topics from readings and class discussions from the entire semester.

**Final Paper (20%)** Discuss how one of the following specifically affects the transition to adulthood and life course of an at-risk youth. In doing so, you should be talking about things like getting a college education, employment, housing, family, and criminal behavior and how these things are affected by the topic you choose. You should explain the incidence and prevalence of the issue by explaining existing research on the topic. You should then focus on the transition to adulthood. In other words, what happens to this at-risk youth when they grow up? How does arrest or running away in adolescence affect an individual later in life? This is a research paper and should be based on academic research. (100 points for the content of the response):

- Child Abuse
- Drug/Substance Abuse
- Teen Pregnancy
- Arrest
- Running Away
- Problems at school (truancy, achievement, suspension and expulsion)
- Homelessness

**Requirements**

15 pages minimum and 20 pages maximum--double-spaced (25 points)

Proper grammar, spelling, and conventional writing (25 points)

- Avoid first-and-second-person (*I, me, my, we, our*).
- Avoid slang and clichés
- Do not use contractions in formal writing (can’t, wouldn’t, don’t)
- Be consistent with verb tense.
- Use correct subject-verb agreement (don’t use plural verbs with singular
nouns or vice versa).
Avoid over-generalizing statements.
Answer the question that you are asked.

APA style in-text citations with properly formatted full references listed at the end (which will not count towards your page minimum) (25 points)

Minimum of 10 outside sources beyond required class readings (25 points). These sources must be academic. This means journal articles.

Course and University Policies

Student Expectations
To ensure learning outcomes are met, students are expected to:

Participate. Students are expected to be prepared for class by completing required readings prior to the start of class. Students are expected to contribute to all class discussions and are responsible for all material presented in each module, including course related announcements.

Check Email & Blackboard Regularly for Course Correspondence. Important information regarding the course schedule, assignments, and grades will be posted to Blackboard.

Be Respectful. This includes directing full attention to discussions. When participating in discussion and in email exchanges with the instructor and other classmates, students are expected to use respectful language. Do not communicate with others via the Internet in a way you would not interact with them in person. Disrespectful language, and/or disrespectful classroom behavior will not be tolerated. Disregard for this expectation will result in students being asked to leave class. In instances of serious or repeated infractions, students will be subject to University disciplinary action.

Complete Exams and Assignments When Scheduled. Students are informed in writing (this syllabus) of the due dates of ALL exams and assignments for the entire semester on the first day of class. For this reason:

LATE WORK IS NOT ACCEPTED & MAKE UP EXAMS ARE NOT AN OPTION*  
* Exception: Emergencies, Religious Observances, & University Excused Absences. Students are expected to notify their instructors at the beginning of each academic term if they intend to be absent for an announced examination. Students absent for religious reasons, as noticed to the instructor at the beginning of each academic term, will be given reasonable opportunities to make up any work missed.
**Make Up Exam / Assignment Policy:**
If a student feels an unforeseen event requires them to request a make-up test/assignment, he or she **must** complete the following:

1. **Determine the event constitutes a University Excused Absence or an emergency.** Emergencies refer to **very serious** physical or mental health issues only. Because students are made aware of class due dates in advance, emergencies do NOT refer to events such as: social obligations (e.g., weddings, birthdays), computer/technology issues, or work requirements.

2. **Communicate (email/office hours) your issue as soon as possible: preferably before class.** Delayed requests may not be considered.

3. **Provide acceptable documentation of the emergency** (documents from a person or organization other than the student [e.g. medical professional]).

   *If the instructor determines all 3 criteria are satisfied, a make-up exam / assignment will be given at a date and time of the instructor’s choosing.*

**Extra Credit**
There may be extra credit opportunities for this course throughout the semester.

**Right to Change Syllabus**
Although I put considerable effort into the syllabus to balance your workload and ensure that the course flows, adjustments to the content, timeline, and due dates for assignments may be required during the semester. If this is necessary, some components of the syllabus may change. However, any such changes will be posted on Blackboard. The students are responsible for any such announced changes.

**Video/Audio Recording and Course Material Reproduction**
Materials for this course are considered property. Notes, tapes, and written materials developed by or provided to the students may not be sold or given to other persons. You may not photograph, screen capture, video, or audio record course lectures, quizzes, or any other course material for any reason.

**Exposure to Sensitive Materials**
Students in this class will be exposed to materials that may be uncomfortable. Students should look over the syllabus to determine whether this class will cause any discomfort that will inhibit the student’s ability to complete readings or assignments. Discomfort due to a sensitive topic will not be an excuse for incomplete work.

**Effective Electronic Communications:**
It is important to share a word of caution, so we can become wiser about interpersonal distance learning communications. When communicating electronically, many of the feelings or impressions that are transmitted via body language in face-to-face communications are lost. Consequently, interpreting emotions and innuendos is much more difficult. Only what is written, or drawn, carries the message. Often, excitement can be misinterpreted as anger or insult. It is important that we all keep this in mind as we
communicate. Words in print may seem harmless, but they could emotionally injure us when working at a distance. Hence, it is vitally important that we are conscious of how we communicate while working at a distance. For example, avoid the use of caps in your electronic messages, as wording in caps comes across as shouting.

The standard practice ("Netiquette") for participation in networked discussion requires that all participation be focused on the topic at hand, not become personalized, and be substantive in nature. (Translation: you may certainly disagree with others, but you must do so respectfully; you may express strong beliefs or emotions, but you may not get so carried away that you lose all perspective on the course itself). More information on Netiquette, the etiquette of Internet communication, can be found at www.albion.com/netiquette.

**Technical Information and Support**

The University of Texas at El Paso offers complete technical information and help desk support at: http://issweb.utep.edu/techsupport/.

**BLACKBOARD COLLABORATE SESSIONS**

This class requires that you participate in scheduled Blackboard Collaborate sessions. The purpose of these sessions are for you to view live demonstrations of the course material and/or to participate in small discussion groups with your classmates. These sessions will be held on Tuesdays from 6:00-8:50pm.

Students are expected to, at least occasionally, participate in these sessions with a webcam and microphone. The sessions will be recorded and provided so that they can be reviewed by classmates at a later time. Students should not record the sessions and post them to any sites outside of Blackboard.

If you are unable to attend a Collaborate session, please let me know as soon as possible so that accommodations can be made when appropriate.

**Technology Requirements**

Course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system. Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser.

You will need to have access to a computer/laptop, scanner, a webcam, and a microphone. You will need to download or update the following software: Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader, Windows Media Player, QuickTime, and Java. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course.
If you do not have a word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs (including Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and more) for free via UTEP's Microsoft Office Portal. Click the following link for more information about Microsoft Office 365 and follow the instructions.

**Scholastic Integrity**
The University of Texas at El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence. In all matters of intellectual pursuit, UTEP faculty and students must strive to achieve excellence based on the quality of work produced by the individual. In the classroom and in all other academic activities, students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any form of scholastic dishonesty is an affront to the pursuit of knowledge and jeopardizes the quality of the degree awarded to all graduates of UTEP. It is imperative, therefore, that the members of this academic community understand the regulations pertaining to academic integrity and that all faculty insist on adherence to these standards.

Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. Proven violations of the detailed regulations, as printed in the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) and available in the Office of the Dean of Students and the homepage of the Dean of Student Affairs may result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary probation, to failing a grade on the work in question, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or dismissal, among others.

**Academic Dishonesty Statement**
Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another person's as ones' own. And, collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions.

Academic dishonesty is an assault upon the basic integrity and meaning of a University. Cheating, plagiarism, and collusion in dishonest activities are serious acts which erode the University's educational and research roles and cheapen the learning experience not only for the perpetrators, but also for the entire community. It is expected that UTEP students will understand and subscribe to the ideal of academic integrity and that they will be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work. Materials (written or otherwise) submitted
to fulfill academic requirements must represent a student’s own efforts. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions.

**Disabled Student Statement**

In Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, if a student needs an accommodation then the Office of Disabled Student Services located at UTEP need to be contacted. If you have a condition, which may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of the Disabled Student Services. You may call 915.747.5148 for general information about the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the rights that you have as a UTEP student with a disability. You also can visit the DSSO website at www.utep.edu/dsso or the DSSO office in Room 108 East Union Building. Individuals with disabilities have the right to equal access and opportunity. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor and The Disabled Student Services Office At The University of Texas at El Paso.

**A note about sexual misconduct**

What you should know about sexual misconduct: UTEP does not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment and all forms of sexual violence. If you have experienced sexual misconduct, or know someone who has, the University can help. It is important to know that federal regulations and University policy require faculty to promptly report complaints of potential sexual misconduct known to them to their campus Title IX Coordinator(s) to ensure that appropriate measures are taken and resources are made available. The University will work with you to protect your privacy by sharing information with only those that need to know to ensure the University can respond and assist. Any student who believes that he or she may be experiencing sexual harassment or misconduct is encouraged to consult with or report such conduct immediately to the Title IX Coordinators. Contact information for UTEP’s Title IX Coordinators can be found here: http://utep.edu/titleix/Title%20IX%20Coordinators%20.html

**UTEP Drop Policy**

If circumstances arise to where a student must drop this course, it is the student’s responsibility to initiate the course drop. It is also the student’s responsibility to determine how dropping courses may affect his or her financial aid. Students are limited to dropping no more than 6 courses over their entire academic career of all courses taken at any public college or University in Texas.

a) If a course is dropped within the first 2 weeks before the “official census date”:
   1. the course will not appear on the transcript and
   2. the course will not count toward the 6-course drop limit.

b) If a course is dropped after the official census data but before the “course drop date”:
   3. the student will receive a “W” in the course
4. the drop will show on transcripts but will not lower GPA
5. the drop will count toward the 6 class drop limit
c) If the course is dropped after the “course drop date” or if the student just stops coming/taking tests, etc.:
6. UTEP requires the instructor to issue an “F” in the course that permanently remains on the transcript.
7. the drop will count against the 6 class drop limit.
d) UTEP also allows instructors to administratively drop any student because of excessive absences, lack of effort, or disciplinary reasons. In this case, the student will be notified of the course drop through their UTEP email account. A “W” will be issued if the drop occurs before the course drop date, and an “F” will be issued if a student is administratively dropped for disciplinary reasons or after the course drop date. This type of drop counts against the 6 drop limit.
e) If circumstances occur where a student must miss an excessive number of classes and/or is unable to submit multiple assignments (e.g., student medical reasons, medical conditions of a family member, death of a family member, active military service), they should first discuss the possibility of withdrawal from all classes with their academic advisor. If a student withdraws completely from all classes, kindly notify me at: cnmuniz@utep.edu. Complete withdrawals from all classes in the same semester do not count against the 6 drop limit.

**Student Resources**

- UTEP Library: Access a wide range of resources including online, full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian assistance for enrolled students.
- University Writing Center (UWC): Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help and explore other writing resources.

**COVID-19 Considerations, Accommodations, and Precautions**

Students are not permitted on campus when they have a positive COVID-19 test, exposure, or symptoms. If you are not permitted on campus, you should contact me as soon as possible so we can arrange necessary and appropriate accommodations.

Students who are considered high risk according to CDC guidelines and/or those who live with individuals who are considered high risk may contact Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) to discuss temporary accommodations for on-campus courses and activities.

This course will be taught as a hybrid class this semester. "Hybrid" courses are a blend of traditional face-to-face and online learning activities and/or lecture attendance via distance learning in a rotating format. The format that we will use in this class is low residency hybrid which is described as: “In this model, students would come to campus one to three times over the semester for intensive face-to-face experiences. The rest of the coursework would
be completed online. This could be done in iterative waves to allow for greater density control. **10-15% on campus.** The purpose of doing the hybrid course for the Fall 2020 is to reduce the number of students on campus so that the campus can remain open in a safe way. It is required/recommended that students KEEP THEIR ORIGINAL COMMITMENT TO CLASS TIME OPEN (do NOT assume that you can schedule yourself at a job) just in case the hybrid method must change or the faculty member must alter the day of the week that individuals come to campus vs. attend off-campus. This teaching methodology may be subject to change by the faculty member based on fluctuations in class enrollment, class participation, and/or compliance with UTEP’s policies as the administration continuously monitors COVID-19 cases in El Paso and on campus. Notification of changes in hybrid teaching methodologies will be made in writing on Blackboard Announcements. In person meetings will require students to abide by university procedures (face masks, social distancing, etc.).

You must STAY AT HOME and REPORT if you (1) have been diagnosed with COVID-19, (2) are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or (3) have had recent contact with a person who has received a positive coronavirus test. Reports should be made at screening.utep.edu. If you know of anyone who should report any of these three criteria, you should encourage them to report. If the individual cannot report, you can report on their behalf by sending an email to COVIDaction@utep.edu.

For each day that you attend campus—for any reason—you must complete the questions on the UTEP screening website (screening.utep.edu) prior to arriving on campus. The website will verify if you are permitted to come to campus. Under no circumstances should anyone come to class when feeling ill or exhibiting any of the known COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, and alternative instruction will be provided. Students are advised to minimize the number of encounters with others to avoid infection.

Wear face coverings when in common areas of campus or when others are present. You must wear a face covering over your nose and mouth at all times in this class. If you choose not to wear a face covering, you may not enter the classroom. If you remove your face covering, you will be asked to put it on or leave the classroom. Students who refuse to wear a face covering and follow preventive COVID-19 guidelines will be dismissed from the class and will be subject to disciplinary action according to Section 1.2.3 Health and Safety and Section 1.2.2.5 Disruptions in the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures.

Please note that if COVID-19 conditions deteriorate in the City of El Paso, all course and lab activities may be transitioned to remote delivery.
COURSE SCHEDULE

**August 25**—Introduction, syllabus, discussant sign up

*September 1*— Adverse Childhood Experiences

**September 8**— Race and At-Risk Youth

*September 15*— Gender and At-Risk Youth

**September 22**— Homeless & Runaway Youth

**September 29**—Missing and Exploited Youth

**October 6**— Foster Care

**October 13**—Midterm

*October 20*— At-Risk Youth in School

**October 27**— Youth and Substance Abuse

*November 3*— Legal Issues

**November 10**—Youth in the CJ System

*November 17*— Homicide & Parricide

**November 26**— Thanksgiving

**December 1**— Paper Due

**December 8**—FINAL EXAM

*Indicates face-to-face meeting
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>August 25</td>
<td>Welcome/Syllabus/Pretest</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>September 1</td>
<td><strong>Adverse Childhood Experiences</strong></td>
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<td>Felitti, et al. (2019). Relationship of childhood abuse and household dysfunction to many of the leading causes of death in adults: The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study</td>
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<td>Fox et al. (2015). Trauma changes everything: Examining the relationship between adverse childhood experiences and serious, violent and chronic juvenile offenders.</td>
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<td>Muniz et al. (2019). The Effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences on Internalizing Versus Externalizing Outcomes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>September 8</td>
<td><strong>Race &amp; At-Risk Youth</strong></td>
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| Week 4  | Gender & At-Risk Youth | Wong et al (2013) Sex and Age Differences in the Risk Threshold for Delinquency  
Lopez book |
|---|---|---|
| Week 5  | Homeless & Runaway Youth | Snyder et al. (2016) Homeless Youth, Strain, and Justice Involvement: An Application of General Strain Theory  
Jeanis et al., (2018). Revitalizing profiles of runaways: A latent class analysis of delinquent runaway youth  
Landers et al (2017) Baseline Characteristics of Dependent Youth Who Have Been Commercially Sexually Exploited: Findings From a Specialized Treatment Program  
| Week 7  | Foster Care | Riebschleger et al., (2015). Foster care youth share stories of trauma before, during, and after placement: Youth voices for building trauma-informed systems of care.  
| Week 8  | Mid Term | Submitted to Blackboard by 11:59pm |
## Week 9
- **October 20**
  - **At-Risk Youth in School**
  - Haynie et al. (2001) Bullies, Victims, & Bully/Victims: Distinct Groups of At-Risk Youth
  - Rocque et al., (2017). The importance of school attendance: Findings from the Cambridge study in delinquent development on the life-course effects of truancy

## Week 10
- **October 27**
  - **Youth & Substance Abuse**

## Week 11
- **November 3**
  - **Legal Issues**
  - *Roper v. Simmons*
  - *Graham v. Florida*
  - *Miller v. Alabama*
  - *Montgomery v. Louisiana*

## Week 12
- **November 10**
  - **Youth & the CJ System**

## Week 13
- **November 17**
  - **Homicide & Parricide**
<table>
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<th>Week 14</th>
<th>Thanksgiving</th>
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<th>Week 15</th>
<th>Paper Due</th>
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<tr>
<td>December 1</td>
<td>Turn in on Blackboard by 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 16</th>
<th>Final Exam</th>
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<tr>
<td>December 8</td>
<td>Submitted to Blackboard by 11:59pm</td>
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Juvenile homicide in the pathways to desistance study. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice, 14*(1), 26-42.