

**SOC 3570-90 GANGS AND GANG VIOLENCE IN THE U.S.**  
Spring Semester 2025

**Instructor:** Dr. Katherine Maldonado, Ph.D.

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**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 1-3pm

**Office Location:** BEHS 317

**Zoom/IM/Canvas Conference Office Hours:**

Zoom office hours by appt.

**Required Materials**

All required readings (Articles and book chapters) will be posted on canvas.

**Course Description**

This course will examine the history and development of gang culture in America. From the beginnings of immigrant gangs in the 1800's to present day gang activity, classified as "organized crime" by many in law enforcement, we will examine the development of modern gang activity and violence in contemporary society. We will explore the effects of race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, and family structure on the growth affiliation and activity. Sociological theory will be used to gain an understanding of gangs and gang activity historically and in contemporary society.

**Course Outcomes**

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Understand the development of gangs in the U.S.
- Identify emerging areas within studies of gangs and gang violence.
- Understand theoretical debates of criminalization and gang affiliation.
- Identify roots, causes, and consequences of gangs and its relations to global organized crime.

**Course Assignments**

Reflections: Discussion reflections—26%

Midterm: Research paper —30%

Final: Creative piece —30%

Discussion Boards: 12%

## Course Schedule

<b>Wk</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assign. Due</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Definitions &amp; Theoretical foundations of Gangs</b>	<b>Introductions</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Settler Colonialism &amp; Structural Violence</b>	<b>Reflection 1</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Emergence of Juvenile pathology</b>	<b>Reflection 2</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Carceral State &amp; Racialization of Prison Gangs</b>	<b>Reflection 3</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Stigma, Criminal Labels &amp; Space</b>	<b>Reflection 4</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Criminalization of Gangs</b>	<b>Reflection 5</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Women, Mothers and Familial Health</b>	<b>Reflection 6</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Drugs &amp; Gang Violence</b>	<b>Reflection 7</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Desistance &amp; turning points</b>	<b>Midterm Due Reflection 8</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
<b>11</b>	<b>Transnational Moral Panics</b>	<b>Reflection 9</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Comparative perspectives on Gangs</b>	<b>Reflection 10</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>Collective Consciousness &amp; Criminal Justice Education</b>	<b>Reflection 11</b>

<b>14</b>	<b>Future Directions</b>	<b>Reflection 12</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>Finals Preparation</b>	<b>Reflection 13</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>Finals</b>	<b>Finals Due</b>

### **Grading Policy (Evaluation Methods & Criteria)**

The following scale will determine letter grades: 100%-93%=A; 92%-90%=A-; 89%-88%=B+; 87%-83%=B; 82%-80%=B-; 79%-78%=C+; 77%-73%=C; 72%-70%=C-; 69%-68%=D+; 67%-63%=D; 62%-60%=D; ≤ 59% F.

The instructor allows no makeup work of any kind unless consultation occurs at least one day prior to the scheduled completion of assigned tasks, or upon formal documentation of an authorized absence as set forth by [University Policy 6-100.III.O](#).

### **University Policies**

Updated mandatory syllabus policies regarding the ADA Act, Safety at the U, Addressing Sexual Misconduct, and Academic Misconduct can be viewed at: <https://cte.utah.edu/instructor-education/syllabus/institutional-policies.php>