



**Childhood and Youth Studies 3346G (570)**  
**YOUTH CRIMINAL JUSTICE**  
**Fall/ Winter 2025-2026**

**Instructor:** C. Sigurdson  
**Email:** csigurd@uwo.ca

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**Course Information**

**Calendar Description:**

This course will examine youths in the context of our criminal justice system. The focus of the course will be on the complex interaction between the law and children's rights, mental health law, the role of legal counsel and allied professionals, and the conduct of courts.

**Prerequisite(s):** Childhood and Youth Studies 2212F/G or the former Childhood and Social Institutions 2212F/G.

**Extra Information:** 3 hours.

**Course Weight:** 0.50

**Breadth:** Category A

**Subject Code:** CYS

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

**KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
at Western University**

**CYS 3346G  
YOUTH CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

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**Term:** Winter 2026  
**Mode:** Blended (in-person and online over ZOOM)  
**Instructor:** Professor Craig Sigurdson, M.S.M., C.D.

*Office hours may be found on OWL Brightspace*

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will examine children in the context of our criminal justice system. The focus of the course will be on the complex interaction between the law and children's rights. Some unique topics will be explored, including forensic assessment of young people, mental health law, and the role of counsel in ensuring access to justice and in advancing the child's case in court.

### **COURSE FORMAT**

The course will follow a seminar format with heavy reliance on class participation, discussion and guest speakers.

### **COURSE MATERIALS**

There is no required textbook for this course. The readings are hyperlinked, on this course outline, and are available free-of-charge.

### **COURSE EVALUATION**

The following will apply:

Attendance and Participation: 10%  
Group Presentation: 45%  
Final Paper: 45%

### **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION**

Attendance will be taken at every class. Be sure that you sign the attendance sheet before leaving class to ensure that you get credit for attending – it is your sole responsibility to do so. If you sign the attendance and then leave midway through the teaching session, you will not get full credit for attending the class. This portion also includes actively participating in class.

Please email the instructor, in advance, to notify him of any absences from class.

This is a seminar course. By design, the course does not lend itself to self-study. The only way to meaningfully engage with the course material is to be present for every class. Please be advised that no alternative evaluations will be offered to those who are wilfully absent.

## **CLASS PRESENTATIONS**

The presentations will be based on a topic of students' interest in youth criminal justice. The date of your presentation will be confirmed during the second class (please see the tentative presentation dates in the course outline). Each group of six students will give a 90 minute presentation, over ZOOM, that includes discussion and/or class interaction throughout about the topic selected and readings. It is expected that you will adhere to this time limit, that everyone works cooperatively within the group, and that you practice your presentation with your group in advance. Please see the attached grading rubric.

It is the sole responsibility of each student to join a group, to introduce themselves to their co-presenters within the first three weeks of the term, and to work diligently and cooperatively with that group throughout the entirety of the group's work product. Kindly be advised that it does not fall to the instructor to assign participants to a group, to introduce learners to their groups, or to negotiate learning tasks with the group on behalf of a participant.

Please note that you may not present on the same subject/topic as your final paper.

Please provide the instructor, via e-mail, with the PowerPoint presentation, full names of each speaker, and written confirmation of activities completed by each member of the group before the class commences. When submitting the group's PowerPoint presentation, please provide it, as an attachment, to an e-mail, in either PowerPoint or PDF format. Please do not use a file sharing program such as Google docs, or incorporate file protections such as a password, or author access permissions.

Kindly note that group members will not be individually evaluated; each member will receive the exact same grade for the class presentation as their colleagues within the same group. Students who choose not to work diligently and cooperatively with their colleagues, throughout the entirety of the group's work product, will be awarded a grade of zero.

## **FINAL PAPER**

Students will submit a four page paper (excluding references) [one inch margins; double-spaced; 12 point font please] on a subject relating to youth criminal justice mental health law. You may use the citation style (i.e. MLA, APA, McGill...etc.) of your choice but please ensure that the style you choose is consistent throughout the paper.

Your paper should discuss the implications for children and youth in the justice system, and use a **minimum** of two research articles to support your argument. The final paper is worth a significant proportion of the final grade (45%); thus, it is important that students take this course requirement seriously and start working on their paper early. If there are any questions, please ask. Kindly review the attached grading rubric.

Please note that you may not write your final paper on the same subject/topic as your class presentation.

**Due by 6 p.m. on the second last day of class, March 26, 2025.**

Please submit your final paper, via e-mail, to the instructor at: csigurd@uwo.ca, as an attachment, in either Word or PDF format. Please do not use a file sharing program such as Google docs, or incorporate file protections such as a password, or author access permissions.

### **LATE POLICY/EXTENSIONS**

If, for some reason, you are unable to hand in an assignment at the scheduled time, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor by e-mail. A late penalty of 5% per day will be in effect for the final papers (including weekends). Extensions are not ordinarily granted.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- 1) Gather, review, evaluate and interpret information relevant to the study of childhood. Gain an understanding of law, policy, history and practice as they relate to children and youth.
- 2) Be able to assess the potential applicability of empirical research to public debate, policy, law and professional practice. Understand the relationships between them.
- 3) Have an ability to communicate accurately orally and in writing.
- 4) Develop transferable skills in personal responsibility and decision making, working effectively with others, identify their own learning needs and maintain behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility.
- 5) Have an ability to communicate information, arguments and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing.
- 6) Develop qualities and transferable skills necessary for further study, employment and community involvement which require the exercise of initiative, personal responsibility and accountability; to manage their own learning in changing circumstances and maintain behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility.

CYS 3346G also contributes to Program Learning Outcomes 3, 4 and 5:

- **LO 3** - CYS students gain a working knowledge of case law, statutory law, public policy, and institutional features of childhood and youth in the past and the present. They critically reflect on the significance of various norms, rules, and practices for young people. They consider these structures in terms of power relationships between children, parents, and professionals, as well as those between racial, ethnic, migrant, gender, class, and national groups.
- **LO 4** - CYS students apply analytic tools within childhood studies, and defend their ideas and arguments in oral and written forms. HSP students conduct research in childhood studies. Apply and defend ideas and arguments in speech and writing and in communication with others.
- **LO 5** - CYS students are able to assess the applicability of research and its social implications for public debate, policy, law, and professional practice. HSP students are able to offer critique and alternative perspectives on how research should be applied and what implications it might have for diverse communities in and beyond Canada.

## **WEEK 1 – JANUARY 8**

### **Introduction to Course/Expectations**

## **WEEK 2 – JANUARY 15**

### **The Canadian Criminal Justice System – Identifying the Players**

Readings:

<http://www.ontariocourts.ca/ocj/self-represented-parties/guide-for-accused-in-criminal-cases/guide/>

[Going to criminal court | ontario.ca](http://www.ontariocourts.ca/ocj/self-represented-parties/guide-for-accused-in-criminal-cases/guide/)

## **WEEK 3 – JANUARY 22**

### **Children and the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms***

Reading:

<https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/rfc-dlc/ccrf-ccd/>

## **WEEK 4 – JANUARY 29**

### **Treatment of Children in Court – Fitness to Stand Trial and NCR**

Readings:

[Introduction - The Review Board Systems in Canada: An Overview of Results from the Mentally Disordered Accused Data Collection Study](#)

[26 \(b\): Mentally Ill Accused - Court Practices and Procedures | Crown Prosecution Manual | ontario.ca](#)

## **WEEK 5 – FEBRUARY 5**

### **Perspectives from a Forensic Assessor (Guest Speaker)**

Reading:

[http://jaapl.org/content/43/2\\_Supplement/S3](http://jaapl.org/content/43/2_Supplement/S3)

[Youth Justice Assessments - London Family Court Clinic](#)

## **WEEK 6 – FEBRUARY 12**

### **Perspectives from the Defence (Guest Speaker)**

Reading:

<https://albertalawreview.com/index.php/ALR/article/download/1355/1344/>

## **WEEK 7 – FEBRUARY 19**

**Reading Week – NO CLASS NOR READINGS**

**WEEK 8 – FEBRUARY 26**

**Perspectives from the Forensic Hospital (Guest Speaker)**

Readings:

Forensic Mental Health in Ontario - Forensic Directors Group of Ontario  
Forensic Mental Health Care Program | St. Joseph's Health Care London

**WEEK 9 – MARCH 5**

**Group Presentation**

**WEEK 10 – MARCH 12**

**Group Presentation**

**WEEK 11 – MARCH 19**

**Group Presentation**

**WEEK 12 – MARCH 26**

**Group Presentation – FINAL PAPERS DUE BY 6 P.M.**

**WEEK 13 – APRIL 2**

**Class Wrap-Up**

## ESSAY GRADING RUBRIC

Area		Mark
<b>Mastery of Subject Material</b>	Identify issue, applying theories/compare/contrast and providing literature to support theories in a coherent and logical flow. Solid argument, recognizes and understands complexities of the issue jurisprudentially.	<b>30</b>
<b>Quality and Accuracy of Writing</b>	Clear and coherent writing style, easy to follow, references are accurate (APA style) and scholarly tone throughout.	<b>10</b>
	No typographical, grammatical, or spelling errors; coherent flow; linking sections and paragraphs; use of subheadings (where appropriate).	<b>5</b>

## PRESENTATION RUBRIC

Area	Criteria	Mark
Objectives	Are the objectives of the presentation clearly outlined?	5
Presentation of Material & Background information	Clarity, flow amongst presenters, and accuracy. Do the presenters actively engage the class and effectively moderate the discussion?	20
Critical Analysis	Ability to critically analyze the topic and integrate readings and theory into the presentation in an accessible form to the audience	20

### COURSE POLICIES:

#### ***CYS AI Prohibition Statement:***

Intentional usage of artificial intelligence or language generation or translation applications by students to summarize readings or complete assigned work for this course must be approved by the instructor and noted by the student in the submitted work itself. This mandate does not refer to aspects of AI programming embedded into applications such as Word, Chrome, etc. It applies to all intentional usage of AI as a 'co-reader' or 'co-writer.' Students must do their own reading and writing to construct their own voices as democratic citizens. They are not allowed to write text and feed it into a computer application to improve it or translate it. Asking an application to compose text and then changing words before submitting it as your own, constitutes plagiarism.

The use of Grammarly or similar applications is prohibited. Using plagiarism checkers to see if plagiarized text has been altered enough to avoid detection is itself a form of academic dishonesty. Students must compose text, choose words, construct logic flow, structure sentences and paragraphs using their own minds and in response to what they read, hear, and experience. When you borrow words or ideas from another person or from a machine this must be placed in quotation marks and properly cited.

***CYS Late Penalty Statement:***

Penalties for late papers or projects may be avoided if extensions are requested in advance. Otherwise, a two-mark deduction will be taken for each of the first five days it is late (including weekends). After 5-days without communication, a zero will be assigned.

Students are expected to schedule appointments and other responsibilities around class time. To be excused from participatory requirements (attendance or homework, etc.) due to temporary illness or an unavoidable scheduling conflict, contact the instructor directly via email as soon as you are aware of the problem. *Ordinary problems of this nature do not require documentation or communication with the Dean's Office; they will be dealt with by the course instructor.*

If a student experiences a disruption in their ability to study or participate in the course for more than one week, or if there is a personal loss or trauma of a serious nature, they may request more extensive accommodations, counselling, and other forms of help. The best way to do this is to contact the instructor and/or the Academic Dean's Office.

**KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE**  
**GENERAL COURSE POLICIES**  
**2025-2026**

**1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences**

**Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)**

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

**Academic Consideration for Student Absence**

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

Friday Make-Up Exams may only be written with the instructor's consent.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at [https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses\\_enrollment/exams\\_and\\_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf](https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses_enrollment/exams_and_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf).

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course.

Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course.

For further information, please see:

[https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/academic\\_consideration\\_Sep24.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf)

**Absences from Final Examinations**

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under Special Examinations).

### **Religious Accommodation**

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

## **2. Support Services**

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King's University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University

College: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-supportservices/personal-counselling/>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help:

[https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/](https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/)

Academic Support Services at King's University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/>

### **GBSV Support:**

King's is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing [Care@kings.uwo.ca](mailto:Care@kings.uwo.ca) or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email or by calling 519-661-3568.

Further supports can be found on this website: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safecampus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

See also [https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html)

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

### **3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices**

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-affairs/code-of-student-conduct1/>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

### **4. Statement on Academic Offences**

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with you instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammarchecking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

### **5. Copyright of Course Material**

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

### **6. Use of Recordings**

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

### **7. Policy on Attendance**

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.