**URP 534: Crime and Community Development**

Mondays, 1:00-4:00, room 2213 A&AB

Instructor: Professor David Thacher (dthacher@umich.edu)

American criminal justice is in crisis, and city leaders and activists across the country have tried to establish new ways of keeping communities safe without relying so heavily on policing and punishment. This course examines the ideals and assumptions that have guided this movement, the interventions it has inspired, and the institutional arrangements that have both sustained and frustrated it. We will explore a wide range of topics including abolitionist theory, violence interrupters, crime prevention through environmental design, mobile crisis teams, private security, place management, and the reintegration of formerly incarcerated people into their communities. We will consider the scope and limits of community-based public safety strategies as alternatives to criminal justice, and we will examine the obstacles that have limited their use and the unintended consequences they have had.

**Learning Goals**:

By the end of the term, students will be able to:

* Understand and evaluate the main ideas introduced by criminal justice abolitionists in recent debates about policing and mass incarceration.
* Describe a range of non-criminal justice strategies that communities can use to prevent crime and alleviate its harms.
* Critically analyze the strengths and weaknesses of particular strategies for tackling particular crime problems.
* Identify key challenges that community-based crime prevention strategies face and articulate ways of managing and overcoming those challenges.
* Identify the criminal justice practices that are most destructive to marginalized communities and articulate alternatives.

**Course Requirements**:

Course assignments will include:

* Discussions of course readings, both during live class discussions and in weekly online written discussion posts
* Short presentations describing and evaluating local community-based crime prevention projects
* A term paper or project allowing students to explore a topic of their choice related to the course theme.