Boston University’s Wheelock College of Education and Human Development
Youth Justice and Advocacy Program
Faculty: Ann Tobey, Phd.
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Quick history

- Established in 2004 as the first juvenile justice and advocacy major at Wheelock College by Dr. Ann Tobey – Forensic Psychologist.

- Created as a response to the deficit-centered approach to traditional juvenile justice education by integrating a positive youth development approach in its course content.

- Emphasis on advocacy as a competency no matter what the career goal is for the student.

- Helped Wheelock College achieve Presidential recognition for community service with its Ubuntu Works capstone project.

- In 2017 changed the program’s name from Juvenile Justice and Youth Advocacy to Youth Justice and Advocacy.
Goals of the Curriculum

Create not only an educated student but use the curriculum as a career pathway to creating future professional dedicated to advocating on behalf of children and helping in reforming and transforming our child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Specific learning and competency goals of the curriculum:

- A non-deficit approach and a positive youth development (PYD) mindset (5 to 7 C’s)
- Understanding social and ecological child and youth development frameworks (risks and resiliency)
- Identify the assets and strengths that help youth thrive and become productive members of society
- The importance of understanding adolescent development and brain science, in the context of youth work
Goals of Curriculum (Cont’d)

- Professional Competencies: PYD Practices (Strengths and Assets), Youth Work Skills, Facilitation and Social-constructivist leadership, Transformative advocacy and Cultural Competencies

- Apply PYD in their academic and field experiences and provide feedback to the program on the practice can inform the theory – i.e. What does this work look like on the ground?

- Our major goal is not only to educate but to prepare students to become professionals that will enter the field with a positive youth development mindset, become social change agents and help in reforming our juvenile justice system.
Youth Justice and Advocacy Program

• **Undergraduate Professional Youth Justice and Advocacy Major and a Minor in Positive Youth Development**

• **Curriculum Content and Requirements:** 6 core courses (Introduction to Delinquency & Juvenile Justice, Causes and Prevention, Courts and Law, Youth Work and Advocacy, Field Practicum Seminar and Senior Integrative Seminar) – Pre-requisites in Adolescent and Child Development, Courses related to working with multicultural communities, race, ethnicity and gender, critical theory and thinking, quantitative reasoning

• **Field work with youth led-organizations** (Non-profits, courts, probation, D.A’s Office, courts, police department, juvenile corrections, schools (alternatives, transitional schools, after-school programs), research and advocacy organization, public officials and many more)
Cont’d

- **Student-led policy and issues-specific academic, research and professional activities:** Professional forums, briefings, public education, workshops and seminars.

- **Community partnerships:** Mothers for Justice, The Annie E. Casey Foundation – Reimagine (Adult Professional Training), Board Members (FFLIC, JFF, Artistic Noise, Institute for Race and Justice, Justice Strategies)

- **Nationally recognized curriculum:** Informing juvenile justice professional training and education on positive youth development and cross-sector collaborations (Reimagine initiative)

- **In-house Activities:** Justice for Youth Series (Student-led professional panels/YJA 380, Capstone YJA 403 - Ubuntu Works)