In many criminal cases in every jurisdiction, defendants are simultaneously convicted of two or more offences. When sentencing such defendants, courts frequently apply a reductive approach, known in England as ‘the totality principle’. Thus, if D is convicted of five offences each of which, considered separately, would merit imprisonment for one year, D will in total receive much less than a five year sentence. This has been described pejoratively as ‘a discount for bulk offending’, but it is a principle that appears to be universal, in both common law and civil law jurisdictions. Sentencing theorists have struggled to provide a coherent justification for this practice. In this seminar, the limited quantity of empirical research on multiple offence sentencing is examined, and it is argued that these studies of judicial practice can help us to move towards a better normative understanding of the totality principle.