

Drugs in U.S. Society
Spring 2008
SOCY 2034
Class Syllabus

Instructor: Patrick O'Brien
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Office: Ketchum 8
Class Hours: MWF 1:00-1:50pm
Office Hours: MW 2-3:30pm
Course Website: Available through CULearn.

Feel free to contact me at any point during the semester. Please note that I rarely check email over the weekend. **Also, please do not email me with questions regarding your grades.** University policy prohibits talking about grades over email. If you would like to discuss your grades, please make an appointment or visit me during office hours.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

James A. Inciardi and Karen McElrath. 2008. The American Drug Scene 5th Ed.: Roxbury.
Jacob Sullum. 2003. Saying Yes: In Defense of Drug Use: Tarcher Penguin.

I-CLICKER

Additional readings will be available on CULearn or handed out in class. You are responsible for obtaining these readings.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is an introduction to the sociology of drugs in our society. Specifically, we will be discussing the social constructionist perspective as it pertains to legal and illegal drugs in the United States. Through the use of the constructionist perspective, we will explore how believed truths and realities about drugs are often socially created, how the social order and the control of drugs has been constructed and maintained, how culture and history influence perceptions of drugs, and how societal norms, values, and ideas concerning drugs are created and perpetuated.

The world of drugs is complicated and complex. The ingestion of chemicals for purposes of altering consciousness has been practiced in virtually all human cultures and in all epochs of history. Sometimes this has resulted in problems, sometimes not, depending on

how a society defines and deals with drug use and on how well it takes care of its citizens.

This course is not a “just say no” course, but neither is it a “how to” course. The first objective is to explore the social, cultural, political and economic processes that shape our understanding of and policies toward drugs. A second objective is to provide an historical and theoretical grasp of the social causes and consequences of the use and abuse of consciousness-altering substances. Third, the course attempts to stimulate critical thinking about policies that can reduce the harms associated with drug use and those associated with drug policy.

COURSE POLICIES/REQUIREMENTS

Course Meetings: Please arrive to class on time, and remain for the entire class, do not begin packing up until after I have dismissed the class. If you have a conflict that requires you to arrive late or leave early, please inform me beforehand. Please turn off all cell phones. Please refrain from any disruptive behavior such as reading newspapers, doing other homework, engaging in side conversations, or sleeping. **Computer use is for note taking only.**

Readings: You are required to complete all assigned readings *before* class meets. The schedule of readings is in this syllabus and available on CULearn. Additional readings not found in the text can be found on CULearn or will be handed out in class.

Exams: There will be three exams in this course: two midterms and a final. Dates for exams can be found on the course schedule and syllabus. In-class exams will be multiple-choice. There is also a second part of every exam consisting of two take-home essay questions. These questions will be given to you once you hand in the in-class portion of your exam. This portion of the exam should be typed and handed to me in hard copy form at the beginning of the next scheduled class. The specifics of the exams will be discussed in detail as the course progresses. **ABSOLUTELY NO MAKE UP EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN.** If you must miss an exam, please drop the class. The exams will cover each section of the course; **the final will not be cumulative.**

Attendance and Participation: You are required to attend and participate in all classes. I caution you that success in this class largely depends on your consistent effort and presence. It is my goal to create an environment where all members of the class feel comfortable sharing their ideas and thoughts. In order for this to be achieved it is crucial that all students behave in a respectful manner towards one another. Insensitive comments based on race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, religion, ideas or beliefs will absolutely not be tolerated.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Graduate Instructors have the professional responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and set reasonable limits on the manner in which students express opinions.

Academic Misconduct:

Cheating of any kind will not be tolerated and is an academic offense. Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion).

Religious Observances:

All students who foresee the possibility that the academic requirements of this course may coincide with the practice of their religious observances are encouraged to notify me of any anticipated conflicts as soon as possible. For more information please go to http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

Disability Statement:

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me documentation from Disability Services by the end of the third week of classes so that your needs are addressed. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, and <http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices>

Sexual Harassment

The University of Colorado Policy on Sexual Harassment applies to all students, staff and faculty. Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual attention. It can involve intimidation, threats, coercion, or promises that create an environment that is hostile or offensive. Harassment may occur between members of the same or opposite gender and between any combination of members in the campus community: students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Harassment can occur anywhere on campus, including the classroom, the workplace, or a residence hall. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been sexually harassed should contact the Office of Sexual Harassment (OSH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550.

GRADING:

Your final course grade will be determined by the following course requirements:

- 1ST Midterm Exam: 30% of your final grade. (**Part I: 2/11 Part II: 2/13**)
- 2ND Midterm Exam: 30% of your final grade. (**Part I: 3/18 Part II: 3/20**)
- Final Exam: 30% of your final grade. (**Part I: 4/29 Part II: 5/2 1:30-4pm**)
- Participation: 10% of your final grade.

Exams will consist of two separate parts and will not be cumulative. On each exam you have the potential to earn 100 total points.

PART I: Part one of each exam will consist of 30 short answer questions. Each question will be worth 2 points. The entire portion will be worth 60 points.

PART II: Part two of each exam will consist of a TWO take-home essay questions given to you in class once you have completed part I of the exam. Your answers should be typed in 12 point font, Times New Roman style, double-spaced, with standard margins. I expect you to use at least three citations from class material (lectures, texts, hand-outs, etc). The maximum page number will be four pages. You should cite your sources in the document, but I do not expect a works cited page as you are using sources from class of which I am familiar. The essay portion will be handed to me in **HARD COPY ONLY** at the beginning of the next scheduled class. I will not accept emailed copies. Each essay question will be worth 20 points, totaling 40 possible points for the essay section of the exam.

FINAL GRADE SCALE:

A=100-90 B=89-80 C=79-70 D=69-60 F=59-0

“Plus” or “minus” to be assigned at the instructors discretion and will largely depend upon your presence and participation in the class.

By attending this class you are agreeing to the “terms” outlined in the syllabus. I hold the right to change the syllabus throughout the semester to respond to class concerns or situations. If you find any of this disagreeable, drop this class.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE:

This course schedule (the first of three sections) provides a tentative framework for the course throughout the spring 2008 semester. It simply provides a general idea of the required readings and the dates of the three required exams. This schedule is **subject to change** as the course progresses to adapt to the needs and direction of the course.

1/12—Introduction to the Course & Syllabus

1/14—Sociological Perspectives on Drugs & Drug Basics
Goode CH 1 (CUlearn)

1/16—Sociological Perspectives on Drugs & Drug Basics cont'd
Sullum Introduction

1/19—NO CLASS

1/21—More on Drugs & Society
Goode CH 2 (CUlearn)

1/23—Legal Drugs: Alcohol, Tobacco, and Psychotherapeutic Drugs
Inciardi Part II: Alcohol and Tobacco

1/26—Alcohol etc. cont'd
Goode CH 8 (CUlearn)

1/28—Marijuana
Inciardi Part III: 12 & 14

1/30—Hallucinogens and Club Drugs
Inciardi Part VII: 28 & 31

2/2—Stimulants: Amphetamines, Methamphetamine, Cocaine, & Crack
Goode CH 10 (CUlearn)

2/4—Heroin & Narcotics
Inciardi Part IV: 15 & 18

2/6—Drugs & Media Introduction
Goode CH 5 (CUlearn)

2/9—Catch-up & Review

2/11—EXAM I PART I IN-CLASS

2/13—EXAM I PART II Due at the start of class in hard-copy form

3/18—EXAM II PART I IN-CLASS

3/20—EXAM II PART II Due in hard copy form at the beginning of class

4/29—FINAL EXAM PART I IN-CLASS

5/2—FINAL EXAM PART II Due in hard copy form Saturday between 1:30-4pm in my office Ketchum 8.