Justice Studies 122
Drugs and Society

"Forbede us thyng, and that desiren we." -- Chaucer

"It is dangerous to be right when the government is wrong." -- Voltaire

"If people let government decide what foods they eat and what medicines they take, their bodies will soon be in as sorry a state as are the souls of those who live under tyranny. ... A society that will trade a little liberty for a little order will lose both, and deserve neither." -- Thomas Jefferson

“Exactly in the ratio as {the mill hands} worked long and monotonously, the craving grew within them for some physical relief.” – Charles Dickens, Hard Times

"He had discovered a great law of human action, without knowing it - namely, that in order to make a man or a boy covet a thing, it is only necessary to make the thing difficult to obtain." --Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer

“Most men and women lead lives at the worst so painful, at the best so monotonous, poor and limited that the urge to escape, the longing to transcend themselves if only for a few moments, is and always has been one of the principal appetites of the soul.” -- Aldous Huxley

"As nightfall does not come at once, neither does oppression. In both instances, there is a twilight when everything remains seemingly unchanged. And it is in such twilight that we all must be most aware of the change in the air -- however slight -- lest we become unwitting victims of the darkness." -- Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas

Course Description: 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.

We will examine the physiological effects of psychoactive drugs; the history of legal and illegal drug use; causes and rates of use and addiction; drugs in the media; drug related crime and violence; criminalization and decriminalization, legalization, harm reduction; drug courts; drug treatment.

Prerequisites: You must have upper division standing to be enrolled in this course.
Course Objectives:

- to explore the social, cultural, political and economic processes that shape our understanding of and policies toward drugs.
- to provide an historical and theoretical grasp of the social causes and consequences of the use and abuse of consciousness-altering substances.
- to stimulate critical thinking about policies that can reduce the harms associated with drug use -- and those associated with drug policy.

Required Reading

Required texts, bluebooks and writing materials are available at the Spartan bookstore.


Course Expectations and Requirements

(This outline/schedule is tentative. Please know that if I give you reasonable notice I can alter this schedule in order to better suit our needs.)

Contacting Me: The best way to contact me is in person during office hours or after class. The best way to leave a message or ask me a short question is by email. However, email is not a good way for me to communicate complicated ideas. Try to speak to me in person if you have a question that requires more than a one sentence response.

Readings: It is expected that you will have finished the readings assigned by the date listed in the syllabus. I encourage you to read the text carefully. Make certain that you understand each paragraph before moving onto the next one. Sometimes, writing a short summary of the main ideas in the margin next to each paragraph can help keep you on the right track. I also recommend that you engage the material by underlining ideas you consider important and by writing down your reactions to the readings in the margins next to the text. This can be about ideas you agree or disagree with, or the feelings that the readings evoke in you. Reading in this way will help you engage actively with the texts and will also be useful when it comes time to write up your journal papers, do your presentation and when you discuss the readings in class.

Quizzes/In-class Writing Assignments: To encourage you to keep up with the reading and be engaged with the course material, you will be required to take in-class quizzes and complete in-class writing assignments at various points during the semester. The quizzes will be closed-book, closed-note and the in-class writing assignments will be open-book, open-note. There will be no review for quizzes and in-class writing. The questions asked in quizzes will be straightforward and are designed to help you keep up with the reading material and class discussions. The in-class writing will ask for your opinion about an
issue or topic discussed in class, but will also expect you to link your opinion to the 
course material.  

15%

Class Presentation: 
You will be required to present a selection from the syllabus to the class and provide a set 
of questions for class discussion that addresses an issue from the reading. You will be 
required to submit this presentation and the questions you will ask in to me in written 
format at the conclusion of your presentation. These presentations do not have to be an 
exhaustive summary. Rather, you should cover what you see as the main points of the 
author and what you see as the main contribution(s) the author makes. I encourage you 
critically engage with the reading by addressing what you see as the strengths and 
problems with the author’s argument. End your oral presentation with a question or set 
of questions that you think would be appropriate for discussion. This could be about any 
concept or argument that was unclear, a point you consider interesting or something 
about the reading that you think deserves our attention as a class. I encourage you to 
write your presentation down in outline form to help guide you as you address the class. 
Your presentation will be evaluated based on how well you are able to clearly articulate 
your ideas and engage the attention of the class. Make every effort to speak clearly, 
concisely and to maintain eye contact with your audience. I would recommend practicing 
at home before making your presentation in front of the class. The oral part of your 
presentation should be approximately five to ten minutes and will be followed by a period 
of discussion (see below).  

10%

Discussion Participation: 
Small and large group discussions comprise an essential part of this course. The success 
of these discussions depends on all of us, including you. Your regular attendance and 
engagement with the class materials is essential. I do not expect you to always agree 
with the readings, with me or with each other. However, I do expect you to be courteous 
and respectful of one another. Please respect other people’s opinions and do not yell at, 
personally attack nor insult one another. In addition, try not to take offense if someone 
else disagrees with you. Remember that we are talking about ideas and try not to take 
any disagreements personally. Come to class prepared to listen to each other’s ideas as 
well as comment on them and the ideas in the text and lectures.  

10%

Midterm: There will be one midterm on Week 8 (please see syllabus). This midterm 
will ask you to explain or define key concepts from the readings and the lectures. Please 
note that there will be no make ups for this midterm unless you are experiencing a 
genuine emergency or unless you are too ill to take the midterm. In either case, you will 
need to provide me with documented evidence of your situation to take a make-up 
midterm  

• Midterm  

20%
**In-Class Final Exam:** You will have one in-class cumulative final exam. This exam will be based on the class materials and will ask you to define key concepts we have covered over the course of Fall Semester. In addition, I will ask you to complete some short writing assignments in which you will apply what you have learned in class to a specific case. Please note that there will be no make ups for this final exam unless you are experiencing a genuine emergency, are too ill to take the midterm or have another final exam scheduled within twenty four (24) hours of the final exam schedule for JS 122. In any case, you will need to provide me with documented evidence of your situation to be able a make-up the final exam.

- **Final Exam held on Wednesday, December 13th 7:15-9:30am**  
  **30%**

**Please Note that it is your responsibility to be aware of the following policies of San Jose State University:**

**Course Add/Drop**
Instructors are permitted to drop students who fail to attend the first scheduled class meeting and who fail to inform the instructor prior to the second class meeting of the reason for any absence and their intention to continue in the class. Some instructors will drop students who do not meet the stated course prerequisites. However, instructors are **not required** to drop a student from their course. **It is the student’s responsibility to make sure classes are dropped. You, the student,** are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, withdrawal, etc. found at: [http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct](http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct)

**Academic Integrity Statement**
Academic integrity is essential to the mission of San José State University. As such, students are expected to perform their own work (except when collaboration is expressly permitted by the course instructor) without the use of any outside resources. Students are not permitted to use old tests, quizzes when preparing for exams, nor may they consult with students who have already taken the exam. When practiced, academic integrity ensures that all students are fairly graded. Violations to the Academic Integrity Policy undermine the educational process and will not be tolerated. It also demonstrates a lack of respect for oneself, fellow students and the course instructor and can ruin the university’s reputation and the value of the degrees it offers. We all share the obligation to maintain an environment which practices academic integrity. Violators of the Academic Integrity Policy will be subject to failing this course and being reported to the Office of Student Conduct & Ethical Development for disciplinary action which could result in suspension or expulsion from San José State University. The policy on academic integrity can be found at: [http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct](http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct)

To better understand plagiarism and to aid you in making sure that you are not plagiarizing, please see me and/or visit: [http://tutorials.sjlibrary.org/plagiarism/index.htm](http://tutorials.sjlibrary.org/plagiarism/index.htm)
American with Disabilities Act
If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need
special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment
with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03
requires students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with DRC to
establish a record of their disability.

Course Outline, Reading Assignments, and Exams

Week 1  Course Introduction
  • August 24th  Readings: None

Week 2  Perspectives and Social Theories about Drugs
  • Aug 29th  - Erich Goode – Chapter 1, Drugs: A Sociological Perspective – pp 3-23
  • Aug 31st  - Erich Goode – Chapter 3, Theories of Drug Use – pp 55-78

Week 3  Perspectives and Theories (Continued)
  • Sept 5th  - Erich Goode – Chapter 2, Drugs: A Pharmacological Perspective – pp. 28-45
  • Sept 7th  - Erich Goode – Chapter 6, Methods of Research – pp 143-160

Week 4  Perspectives (Continued) and Histories of Drugs
  • Sept 12th  - Peadar King - Chapter 1: A Drug Saturated World – pp 1-12
  • Sept 14th  - Peadar King – Chapter 2: The War on Drugs – pp 13-47

Week 5  Histories of Drugs (Continued)
  • Sept 19th  Erich Goode – Chapter 4: The Historical Context – pp. 85-112
  • Sept 21st  Erich Goode – Chapter 7: Historical Trends pp. 164 – 196

Week 6  Drug Myths
  • Sept 26th  Erich Goode – Chapter 5: Drugs in the News – pp.116-138
  • Sept 28th  Peadar King – Chapter 3: Drug Users: Perceptions and Reality – pp. 79-100

Week 7  Drug Myths (continued)
  • Oct. 3rd  Peadar King – Chapter 3: Drug Users: Perceptions and Reality – pp. 101-121
  • Oct. 5th  Peadar King – Chapter 5: The Politics of Drugs - pp. 163-174
Week 8  Midterm Review and Exam
- Oct. 10th  Activity: Review for midterm – please bring questions
- Oct. 12th  Please bring two bluebooks a pen

Week 10  Drugs and Crime

Week 11  Illicit Drugs I
- Nov. 2nd  Erich Goode - *Chapter 9: Marijuana, LSD and Club Drugs* – pp. 247- 269

Week 12  Illicit Drugs II
- Nov. 7th  Erich Goode – *Chapter 10: Stimulants* pp. 273-296
- Nov. 9th  Erich Goode – *Chapter 11: Heroin and the Narcotics* pp.301-321

Week 13  Legal Drugs
- Nov. 14th  Erich Goode – *Chapter 8: Legal Drugs*– pp 201 – 212
- Nov. 16th  Erich Goode - *Chapter 8: Legal Drugs* – pp 213- 229

Week 14  United States Policies
- Nov. 21st  Erich Goode – *Chapter 14: Law Enforcement* - pp. 383-408
- Nov. 23rd  –Thanksgiving Holiday

Week 15  Policies and Alternatives I
- Nov. 28th  Peadar King – *Chapter 2: The War on Drugs* – pp 47-58, 72-78
- Nov. 30th  Erich Goode Chapter 15: *Legalization, Decriminalization and Harm Reduction* – pp. 415-442

Week 16  Alternatives II
- Dec. 5th  Peadar King *Chapter 4: Strategies and Interventions* – pp. 123-162
- Dec. 7th  Peadar King *Chapter 5: The Politics of Drugs* pp 175 – 183

The Final Exam
Will be held on **Wednesday, December 13th** from **7:15-9:30**. Please bring 2 blue books and pens.