

**Victimless Crime**  
**Course Syllabus**

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**Office Hours:** Monday, Wednesday 9:15-10:30 am  
Monday 3:00-5:30 pm

**Class Meeting Time & Location:** Monday, 5:30-8:15 PM, DMH 234

**JS Department Website:** [www.sjsu.edu/justicestudies](http://www.sjsu.edu/justicestudies) (this syllabus will be posted there)

This course examines the concept of “victimless crimes,” commonly also called “vice crimes.” We will examine three such crimes/behaviors in depth: drug use and abuse, prostitution, and gambling. This category of crimes is particularly useful for a consideration of the role of law in society, because controversy over their continued status as crimes suggests there might be useful non-criminal or non-legal approaches to the same behaviors. The course asks you to consider the following questions throughout the semester: are there any crimes that are truly victimless? If so, why are these behaviors criminalized? If not, who are the victims: the individual who commits the crime, his/her family, loved ones and neighbors, or society at large? What other approaches might we take to social problems like drug abuse, prostitution and gambling? Can the government legislate morality in the absence of popular consensus? What are the unintended consequences and costs of criminalizing these behaviors, and do they outweigh the benefits? What approaches do other societies take to handle these problems, and how successful are they?

**Required Texts:**

1. James A. Inciardi & Karen McElrath, eds., *The American Drug Scene: An Anthology*, Fourth Edition (Los Angeles: Roxbury, 2004) - abbreviated “ADS” below. Be sure you get the most recent (fourth) edition.
2. Ronald Weitzer, ed., *Sex for Sale: Prostitution, Pornography, and the Sex Industry* (New York: Routledge 2000) - abbreviated “SFS” below.
3. Course reader - available at Maple Press, 481 E. San Carlos near 10<sup>th</sup> (by the Subway sandwich shop at the edge of campus).

**Note:** you will also need 3 scantron sheets during the semester, available at any textbook store.

## Class Participation, Requirements, and Grading:

You are responsible for keeping up with the assigned reading and being prepared to discuss it in class. (Class participation helps your learning and your grade.)

**During class, please make sure your cell phones and pagers are silent.**

Exams will cover both lectures and reading assignments, and may include questions relating to videos shown in class. Some material discussed in class will not be in the readings; similarly, not everything discussed in the readings will be covered in class. Thus it is very important that you both keep up with the reading and attend class regularly. Students will be excused from class for legitimate medical reasons and for university-related engagements (e.g., athletics). Whenever possible, if you must miss class please inform the instructor ahead of time.

Your grade will be based on 3 exams (2 midterms and a final), 3 quizzes or in-class writing assignments, and class participation. Your grade will be calculated as follows:

Exams: 100 points each, total of	300 points
Quizzes/in-class writing: 30 points each, total of	90 points
Class Participation:	<u>25 points</u>
	415 points possible

Your scores for each item will be added together, and your total points at the end of the semester will determine your grade. Final grades will be curved (you are measured against the performance of the rest of the class).

Note on class participation: Points for class participation are given for your contribution to class discussions (questions, comments, criticisms, etc.), and *not* simply for attendance.

Exams: Exams are closed-book, closed-note. Midterm exams include short-answer and multiple choice questions. Review sheets will be given before each exam. The final exam *may* include a cumulative essay question. Exams will be handed out only for the first 10 minutes of the class period in which the exam is being given. Students who arrive more than 10 minutes late will not be allowed to take the exam. This policy also applies to the final.

You must take the final exam to pass the course. Students who do not take the final will receive an "F" or an "I" for the course, at the instructor's discretion, regardless of their class average prior to the final.

Extra credit: several extra credit assignments, worth 5 points each, will be distributed in class during the semester. They will not be announced ahead of time and cannot be made up.

Makeup policy: **only one** exam, quiz, or writing exercise can be made up, and only if you have a good reason for missing it (e.g., serious illness with physician's note). If you miss more than one of these, you will be advised to make up the one worth the most points. Make-up exams and quizzes are *longer and involve more writing* than the regular exams. The make-up exam/quiz day is the *last day of class*, and it is your responsibility to notify the professor that you intend to take a make-up. If you have completed all of the exams, quizzes and writing exercises, you will be allowed (if you choose) to retake **one** of these on the makeup day if you are dissatisfied with your original score. You may not retake an exam, quiz, or writing exercise if you missed any of these during the semester. There will be **no exceptions** to the makeup policy.

Students with disabilities: Students who need accommodation due to a disability must register with SJSU's Disability Resource Center (DRC). The Center will work with the student to determine the disability, document it, and determine the services and accommodations necessary for student success. The DRC will contact the instructor to determine the types of consideration necessary. Students must register with the Center during the first three weeks of the semester. The DRC Web site: <http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/>

Cheating and plagiarism: In accordance with University policy, students caught cheating or plagiarizing will both *fail the entire course and be reported to the University Judicial Affairs Officer*. If you are considering a career in the criminal justice field, be aware that reports of cheating will go on your academic record and thus will be discovered by employers' background investigations of job candidates.

For more information on what constitutes cheating and plagiarism, take the SJSU Library tutorial at <http://tutorials.sjlibrary.org/plagiarism/index.htm>

See the university's policy on academic dishonesty at <http://www.sjsu.edu/leap/plagiar.htm>

## Course Outline, Reading Assignments, and Exams

### I. The Use and Abuse of Licit and Illicit Drugs

- Week 1. Monday January 31: Introduction to course; Partial history of drug use & drug policies  
*Read for class:* ADS readings 7, 20; Course reader - Historical information
- Week 2. Monday February 7: Drug use and addiction  
*Read for class:* ADS readings 1-4, 6, 8, 15, 17
- Week 3. Monday February 14: Users and categories of illegal drugs  
*Read for class:* ADS readings 10, 14, 16, 18, 24, 25, 27, 28  
Quiz 1
- Week 4. Monday February 21: Drugs and crime  
*Read for class:* ADS readings 21, 22, 26, 30-32
- Week 5. Monday February 28: Reconsidering the war on drugs  
*Read for class:* ADS readings 12, 19, 29, 36  
Video: War on Marijuana
- Week 6. Monday March 7: Reconsidering the war on drugs, continued; **Review** for Exam 1  
*Read for class:* ADS readings 38-41; Course reader - harm reduction  
Video: Harm Reduction
- Week 7. **Monday March 14: EXAM 1.** Closed book. Covers readings and discussions for weeks 1-6. Bring a scantron, #2 pencil, and pen.

### II. Prostitution

- Week 8. Monday March 21: Prostitution – introduction; Prostitutes and their clients;  
Prostitutes' views of their work  
Video: Two Views of Prostitution  
*Read for class:* SFS readings 1, 5, 6, 11
- March 28 - April 1, 2004: Spring Break. No classes, no reading assignment.**
- Week 9. Monday April 4: Street prostitution, drugs, violence & HIV/AIDS  
*Read for class:* SFS readings 7-9  
In-class writing exercise
- Week 10. Monday April 11: Policy responses to prostitution; **Review** for Exam 2  
*Read for class:* SFS readings 10, 13, 14  
Video: Forced Prostitution & Trafficking

Week 11. **Monday April 18: EXAM 2.** Closed Book. Covers readings and discussions for weeks 7-10. Bring a scantron, #2 pencil and pen.

### **III. Gambling**

*Read for class:* Course reader - history of American gambling

Week 12. Monday April 25: Gambling – introduction, history; Gambling demographics & motivations: who gambles & why

*Read for class:* Course reader - gambling demographics

Week 13. Monday May 2: Social problems relating to gambling

*Read for class:* Course reader - gambling-related social problems

Quiz/writing exercise

Week 14. Monday May 9: Managerial & policy responses to gambling problems; **Review** for final exam

*Read for class:* Course reader - gambling policy

Week 15. Monday May 16: **Make-up exam/quiz day**

Make-ups given; no lecture. Bring scantron and #2 pencil (if taking an exam), pen.

**FINAL EXAMINATION: Monday, May 23rd, 5:15 – 7:30 PM**

Bring scantron, #2 pencil, pen.

**Note:** If you want to know your final grade before grades are sent out, please bring a self-addressed, stamped postcard or envelope to the final and I will mail your course grade when I finish grading the finals. To protect student privacy, grades cannot be given out by telephone or email.