

**San José State University  
Justice Studies Department  
JS 122, Drugs and Society, Summer 2015**

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**Office Hours:** Monday through Thursday 3:00-4:00 (drop-in)  
**Class Days/Time:** Monday and Wednesday 12:30-3:00  
**Classroom:** MH 234

**JS Competency Area:** Area C: Critical Inquiries

### **Course Description**

From Catalog:

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

This is not a course on pharmacology. Though we will discuss the physical properties and physiological/psychological “effects” of various substances throughout the course, this is not of central concern. As noted in the title, we will examine the historical and contemporary relationship between human societies and mind/body altering substances (“drugs”). In modern societies, this relationship is largely shaped through the social construction of deviant and normal “drug use,” including the (il)legality and (il)legitimacy of particular substances and their use. We will *critically* investigate the national (U.S.) and global “War on Drugs,” its effects, and alternative approaches to defining and addressing social problems that arise from the use and/or trade of mind/body altering substances.

Students will be encouraged to grapple with questions such as:

What makes particular drugs (il)legal? Who decides?  
Who are the consistent winners and losers in the “war on drugs”?  
What interests and social forces drive policy concerning legal and illegal mind/body altering substances?

How could we describe our historical connection to various mind/body altering substances (for example: cannabis, the poppy plant, etc.)?

How do large corporations and private interests shape the relationship between “drugs and society”?

How has the criminalization of particular substances in the U.S. been inextricably linked to the construction of race and racism?

What are the connections between the global drug trade and the business of warfare?

## **Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives**

(SLO 1) Students should gain a theoretical understanding of the social construction of deviance, normalcy, and crime. They should be able to define and apply these concepts in the interpretation of current events and social phenomena.

(SLO 2) Students should gain a reasonable (empirical) understanding of the development of the US and global “war on drugs.” Specifically, students should be able to discuss and recognize the key “moral entrepreneurs,” private interests, and public stakeholders involved in the creation and perpetuation of the drug war.

(SLO 3) Students should be able to explain the historical and contemporary connections between the criminalization of illicit substances and the exploitive (by definition) systems of racism and capitalism.

(SLO 4) Students should be able to recognize and discuss various connections between the trade of illicit substances and the business of warfare.

(SLO 5) Students should be able to recognize and discuss the historical and contemporary power of pharmaceutical corporations in constructing the relationship between “drugs and society.”

## **Required Texts/Readings**

### **Textbook**

Gray, Mike. (2000). *Drug Crazy: How We Got into This Mess and How We Can Get Out*. NY, NY: Routledge.

ISBN: 0415926475 [paperback]

Note: Free (legal) online copies are available. This will be discussed in class.

### **Other Readings**

All additional readings will be provided by the instructor via emailed PDF files. All students should make sure that their email address on record (MySJSU) is valid and operating properly to receive classroom announcements and readings.

## Classroom Protocol

- 1) Foster an environment that encourages participation, rather than silencing other students (be respectful, considerate, etc.)
- 2) Complete readings and assignments by dates indicated on syllabus
- 3) Show up for and participate in class
- 4) Students are responsible for any and all notes and materials missed in their absence. You may want to make a friend or two in class.
- 5) Students are expected to make an honest effort to stay informed on current events so that our class discussions can relate to the world beyond SJSU. In the words of C.W. Mills, we will be helping each other to develop a “sociological imagination.”
- 6) Students are expected to contribute to and participate in class discussions and activities to the best of their abilities and comfort levels. For those students with special needs, several other avenues and measures of participation can be pursued to ensure an equitable environment. (For instance, alternative avenues can be used in lieu of verbal participation.)

## Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. [Information on add/drops are available at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-298.html](http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-298.html). [Information about late drop is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/](http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/). Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

## Assignments and Grading Policy

### Review/Discussion Questions

To facilitate class discussion on readings and other materials, students will complete weekly responses to assigned prompts/questions on the readings under examination.

These assignments will be graded based on the depth and accuracy of student responses. They will count for **20%** of the final course grade.

SLOs 1-5 will be assessed through these assignments.

### Exams

There will be two exams in this course (midterm and final). Both exams will be a mixture of multiple-choice, true false, and short answer questions covering all course materials. Both the mid-term and final exams will count for 40% of the final course grade (**exams = 80% of total grade**). There will be a review session and review guide for each exam, and we will be sure to discuss exams more throughout the semester at appropriate times. DRC students, and others with special needs should contact the instructor in the first two weeks of class to make any necessary arrangements for exams or note-takers.

SLO's 1-5 will be assessed at length through the midterm and final exams.

Please note: Mid-Term and Final Exams will not be rescheduled for anything short of an absolute emergency (documentation needed). An unannounced and/or unexcused absence (even if ill, one should email the instructor *before* exam time) will result in a zero on that particular exam.

## **University Policies**

### **Academic integrity**

Students should know that the University's [Academic Integrity Policy is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial\\_affairs/Academic\\_Integrity\\_Policy\\_S07-2.pdf](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf).

Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University's integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for [Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial\\_affairs/index.html](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html).

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

### **Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make 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 that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

## **Student Technology Resources**

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Clark Hall and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

## **Learning Assistance Resource Center**

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support

services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. [The LARC website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/](http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/).

### **SJSU Writing Center**

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. [The Writing Center website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/).

### **Peer Mentor Center**

The Peer Mentor Center is located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Clark Hall in the Academic Success Center. The Peer Mentor Center is staffed with Peer Mentors who excel in helping students manage university life, tackling problems that range from academic challenges to interpersonal struggles. On the road to graduation, Peer Mentors are navigators, offering “roadside assistance” to peers who feel a bit lost or simply need help mapping out the locations of campus resources. Peer Mentor services are free and available on a drop –in basis, no reservation required. [Website of Peer Mentor Center is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/](http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/) .

## JS 122, Drugs and Society, Summer 2015, Course Schedule

Class	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadline
1	6/1	<p>(1) Review Syllabus; Email Goode chapters 1 &amp; 2 (on basic concepts), and Howard Becker excerpt from <i>Outsiders</i> (to begin on the concept of deviance, as it has to do with drug use and our understanding of it)</p> <p>(2) Drugs from a sociological vs. pharmacological perspective; The social construction of crime and deviance; moral entrepreneurs and public policy [email Goode chapters 1 and 2; review questions for Gray text; race and racism readings]</p>
2	6/3	<p>(1) Considering prohibition and the modern illicit drug market(s); <i>Read Chapters 1-3 in Gray</i></p> <p>(2) A theoretical primer on race and racism; <i>Readings TBA (emailed PDF)</i></p>
3	6/8	<p>(1) Power, bureaucracy, and the state</p> <p>(2) Discussion of Gray text; <i>read Gray chaps 4-7; Discussion Questions DUE (email to instructor)</i></p> <p>[Email film link, Iran Contra guide, and discussion questions: <i>American Drug War: The Last White Hope</i>; email midterm exam review guide]</p>
4	6/10	Iran-Contra, Racism and the drug war, and general discussion of <i>American Drug War</i>
5	6/15	<b>Mid-Term Exam (SLOs 1-5)</b> [Email Film link and review questions: <i>Big Bucks, Big Pharma</i> ; Email Taibbi on Banks]
6	6/17	Student self-directed work (no class meeting): <i>Watch Big Bucks, Big Pharma, read Taibbi</i> Watch (emailed) and read assigned materials on Narco states and Mexico's "missing 43."
7	6/22	<p>(1) Discussion of <i>Taibbi</i> and <i>Big Bucks Big Pharma</i></p> <p>(2) War, peace, and "narco-states": Mexico (missing 43, cartels, self defense squads, etc.)</p> <p>[Email links on narco-states]</p>

8	6/24	(1) War, peace, and “narco-states”: Afghanistan (connection to wars, opium production on the rise, etc.)
9	6/29	(1) Film TBA  (2) Discussion of film and final exam review
10	7/1	<b>Final Exam (SLOs 1-5)</b>