INSTRUCTOR: Professor Nicholas Athey
OFFICE: Hoover 114
OFFICE HOURS: M & W, 3:00-4:00 pm (or by appointment)
OFFICE PHONE: (909) 448-4636
EMAIL: nathey@laverne.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course approaches the study of drugs from a sociological-criminology perspective. Students are introduced to several dimensions of drugs in society, including historical and contemporary social controls, theoretical explanations for use, the drug-crime nexus, addiction and dependency, and cultural socialization processes.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The course takes an in-depth look at drugs and the role they play in society. It introduces students to important terminology and perspectives that inform how we think, study, and talk about drugs from a sociological perspective. Upon completing the course, students will be able to:

- Critically exam and apply social theories to the study of drugs and drug policy;
- Describe historical and contemporary perspectives of drugs and drug policy;
- Describe the ways in which drug production, distribution, trafficking, and use affect society from a sociological perspective;
- Understand the difference between “profiles” of (il)licit drugs, including their origin, trafficking routes, cultural contours, addiction/dependence potential, and use;
- Define important sociological, criminological, and policy terminology needed to study and talk about drugs in society;
- Learn how to locate and interpret drug policies and statistics from a variety of sources; and
- Critically analyze and critique criminological and sociological research.

REQUIRED TEXTS:


Note: Supplementary academic journal articles will be assigned as part of the weekly reading list and for the term paper. All articles will be accessible through La Verne’s electronic journals.
PREREQUISITE:
Completion of SOC 250: Introduction to Sociology

COURSE EVALUATION:
Students will be evaluated on the basis of ten weekly quizzes, a final examination, construction of a concept map and course journal, participation in weekly online discussions, moderation of one class discussion and a written assignment based on the textbook and at least three additional peer-reviewed sources. The University of La Verne operates on a letter-grade system, with the following range of possible outcomes: A+ (98-100%), A (94-97%), A- (90-93%), B+ (87-89), B (83-86%), B- (80-82%), C+ (77-79%), C (73-76%), C- (70-72%), D+ (67-69%), D (63-66%), D- (60-62%), and F (0-59%). Grades will be allocated as follows:

- Weekly class discussion 10%
- Concept map 5%
- Term paper (8-10 pages) 20%
- Weekly journal entries 15%
- Class discussion moderation 5%
- Weekly quizzes 20%
- Final Examination 25%

NOTE: Any student requesting an “incomplete” (INC) must first communicate with the instructor and complete the “Incomplete Contract” form through their MyLaverne system (see for more details: https://sites.laverne.edu/registrar/student-information/mylaverne-information/student-information-system/how-to-request-an-incomplete-inc-grade).

Final grades for the course will be assigned as follows:

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A NOTE REGARDING ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Academic dishonesty is taken very seriously at the University of La Verne. Plagiarism and cheating on examinations are considered to be major offenses. Plagiarism consists of buying term papers or essays, submitting an essay or term paper that you did not write yourself, paraphrasing the works of others without acknowledging (citing) your source or sources, using direct word-for-word quotations without putting them in quotation marks and acknowledging (citing) your source or sources, submitting an essay or term paper that you have written for another course (i.e., a double submission), etc. Cheating on examinations consists of copying from the work of other students, allowing other students to copy from your work, surreptitiously using aids—e.g., class notes, cheat sheets, cell phones, i-phones, i-pods—during examinations, etc. Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty can expect one or more possible penalties. The penalties for academic dishonesty generally include a written account being submitted to The Registrar, where it is retained on the student’s file, and a failing grade for the examination or assignment on which cheating took place (i.e., 0%). Other possibilities (on an escalating scale) include a failing grade for the course in which the cheating occurred, expulsion from the course, and, in egregious cases (or in cases where there is a repeated pattern of academic dishonesty), suspension or expulsion from the university.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students with one or more physical, medical, psychological, attention-deficit, and/or learning disabilities may qualify for certain reasonable accommodations and services to help them maximize their learning potential. Some examples of the services available to qualifying students include priority registration, assistance in scheduling classes in accessible locations, testing in a distraction reduced testing environment, reader and/or transcriber, Sign Language interpreters and/or captionists, and many others. If you would like more information about The Disabled Student Services Department (DSS) and the services they provide, visit the webpage here: https://sites.laverne.edu/disabled-student-services/.

TERM PAPER AND CONCEPT MAP:

Students are required to complete a term paper totaling approximately 8-10 pages (not including cover page and references cited page) by the end of Week 9 (August 12th). Papers should follow APA format and make reference to all required readings (i.e., textbook and at least three additional peer-reviewed journal articles). Further instructions about the term paper are available in the “term paper handout.”

Students will also construct a concept map outlining their approach to the term paper, which will be submitted for a grade and peer review in Week 4 (July 8th). A template will be available for review; however, students should ensure each of the following components are addressed in their concept map and term paper:
Topic: What aspect of the drug profile have you selected (e.g., opioid abuse epidemic, use of anabolic-steroids in sports, link to organized crime, drug policy classifications, etc.)

Drug type: What drug or drug type you will write about (e.g., cannabis, anabolic steroids, amphetamines, etc.)

Research question: What, specifically, is your research question or questions?

Evidence: How will you support your paper?

Organization: How is your paper organized? In other words, in what order will you talk about the subtopics of your paper? This is, essentially, an outline of your paper’s structure.

Conclusion/Take-home message: Provide a clear “take home” message as part of your conclusion section.

Reflection: The conclusion of your concept map and term paper should also include a reflection section where you provide some insights you gleaned from the writing assignment.

COURSE JOURNAL:

Students will track their progress throughout the online program by keeping a journal. Journal entries will vary from week-to-week, but will require that students (1) reflect on the course material; (2) make reference to required readings and lectures; and (3) demonstrate knowledge of weekly lesson plans and objectives. Journal entries should include a combination of personalized written and media entries, such as photos, short video clips, drawings/art, quotations and many other forms of expression that effectively convey how the course information was interpreted. Completed journals will be submitted during the final week of class (August 19th); however, the instructor will review and provide comments on a weekly basis. In total, journals will be worth 15% of the final grade, but a half point (0.5% of the total grade) will be awarded for completing entries during the week they are assigned. Therefore, the final grade breakdown is:

- 0.5% (x 10 weeks = 5%) for completing journal entries during the week they are assigned and
- 10% for submitting a completed journal no later than August 19th.
- Total = 0.5% x 10 weeks (5%) and 10% for completed journals (total 15%).

(Note: These figures are the possible number of points that can be received; completing tasks on time and in full does not guarantee that full marks will be rewarded)

WEEKLY CLASS DISCUSSION AND MODERATION:

Weekly discussions for this course will require students to first complete the assigned reading(s) and online lecture(s). Discussion topics will become available at 8:00 a.m. Monday and remain open until Sunday at 10:30 p.m. Students must participate meaningfully in the online discussion at least twice during the week it is available; while the discussion forums will remain open for students to use as a study aid, contributions made to the discussion after the week has ended will not receive credit.
The first entry must demonstrate a degree of reflection on that week’s prompt or question and reference the assigned reading(s), lecture(s), or both. The second entry must be a response to a classmate’s first entry and either challenge its merit (respectfully) or progress the dialogue in a meaningful way by referencing relevant course content. Note that outside sources, such as current events in the media and personal anecdotes, can be used, but are not considered adequate substitutes for the course content.

The second half of the semester looks at specific drug profiles and, in doing so, offers students an opportunity to explore a drug topic in detail. Students will be partitioned into groups and assigned a drug profile. During the week that their drug profile is assigned (e.g., cannabis during Week 10), students assigned to that profile will compose a prompt to facilitate a discussion and then moderate the ensuing dialogue. The class discussion topic will be selected by members of the group assigned to that particular drug profile. Ideally, the discussion will center around an important and controversial “hot topic,” like the current “opioid epidemic,” the therapeutic use of performance-enhancing drugs by current professional and world-level athletes, or the changing political landscape of cannabis in the United States. Class discussion prompts must be submitted to the instructor for approval by Thursday night the week before the discussion begins. For example, the discussion prompt for Alcohol, Tobacco, and Caffeine (Week 5, July 9-15th) must be submitted to the instructor by Thursday, July 5th.

**WEEKLY TOPICS AND READINGS:**

You should look through this syllabus on a regular basis, as it contains a full listing of course topics and required readings for the semester on a week-by-week basis. Lectures will selectively emphasize essential issues, themes and content, and will introduce ideas and information that supplement and extend beyond the required readings. The schedule, lecture topics and assigned readings for the ten weeks of the course are as follows:

**WEEK 1:** (June 11-17, 2018)

Topic: Course Overview and Types of Drugs and Patterns of Use

Lecture 1: Course Overview and Types of Drugs and Patterns of Use

Reading 1: Ross et al. (2013). ‘Section 1. ‘Types of Drugs and Patterns of Use.’

Assignments/Activities: Online discussion #1, Journal entry #1, and Quiz # 1.

**WEEK 2:** (June 18-24, 2018)

Topic: Drug Effects and Settings

Lecture 2: Drug Effects and Settings

Reading 2: Ross et al. (2013). ‘Section 2. Drug Effects.’
Suggested readings:


Assignments/Activities: Online discussion #2, Journal entry #2, and Quiz # 2.

**WEEK 3:** (June 25-July 1, 2018)

Topic: Drug Policy, Treatment, and Problems

Lecture 3: Drug Policy, Treatment, and Problems

Reading 3: ‘Section 3: Ross et al. (2013). ‘Section 3. Drug Policy, Treatment and Perception of the Drug Problem.’

Suggested readings:


Assignments/Activities: Online discussion #3, Journal entry #3, Quiz # 3.

**WEEK 4:** (July 2-8, 2018)

Topic: Drugs and Culture

Lecture 4: Popular Culture and Drugs


*Suggested readings:*


Assignments/Activities: Online discussion #4, Journal entry #4, and Quiz # 4.

**Assignment due:** Term paper ‘concept map’ is due by 10:30 p.m. Sunday, July 8th.

**WEEK 5:** (July 9-15, 2018)

Topic: Drug Profile: Alcohol, Tobacco, and Caffeine

Lecture 5: Licit Drugs: Alcohol, Tobacco, and Caffeine


*Suggested readings:*


Assignments/Activities: Online discussion #5, Journal entry #5, and Quiz # 5.

**WEEK 6: (July 16-22, 2018)**

Topic: Drug Profile: Opium, Opiates, and Heroin
Lecture 6: Pain Relievers and Sedatives: Opium, Opiates, and Heroin


*Suggested readings:*


Assignments/Activities: Online discussion #6, Journal entry #6, and Quiz # 6.

**WEEK 7:** (July 23-29, 2018)

Topic: Drug Profile: Amphetamines, Cocaine, and Crack

Lecture 7: Stimulants and Uppers: Amphetamines and Cocaine


*Suggested readings:*


Assignments/Activities: Online discussion #7, Journal entry #7, and Quiz #7.

**WEEK 8:** (July 30-August 5, 2018)

Topic: Drug Profile: Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD), Phencyclidine (PCP), and Psilocybin mushrooms

Lecture 8: Party and Psychedelic Drugs: LSD, PCP and Mushrooms


*Suggested readings:*


Assignments/Activities: Online discussion #8, Journal entry #8, and Quiz #8.

**Draft due:** The final date to submit a term paper draft for feedback from the instructor is Sunday, August 5th at 10:30 p.m.

**WEEK 9:** (August 6-12, 2018)

Topic: Drug Profile: Performance-enhancing Drugs (PEDs)

Lecture 9: Bigger, Stronger, Faster Cheaters?: Anabolic-Androgenic Steroids (AASs) and other Performance-Enhancing Drugs (PEDs)


**Suggested readings:**


Assignments/Activities: Online discussion #9, Journal entry #9, and Quiz # 9.

**Term paper due:** The final date to submit term papers without receiving a late penalty is Sunday, August 12th at 10:30 p.m.

**WEEK 10:** (August 13-19, 2018)

Topics: Drug Profile: Cannabis

Lecture 10: The Changing Nature of Cannabis Cultivation, Distribution, and Use


*Suggested readings:*


Assignments/Activities: Online discussion #10, Journal entry #10, and Quiz # 10.

**Final examination:** The final examination, worth 25% of your final grade, will be available after the last week of classes. Exams must be completed in one sitting. The exam will be cumulative and include 20 multiple choice, 10 true/false, 5 short answer, and 2 long answer questions and total 50 points, which will then be divided by 2 to give a raw percentage score (out of 25%).

**Completed journal due:** The final date to submit course journals without receiving a late penalty is Sunday August 19th at 10:30 p.m.