

SOCIOLOGY 335
Survey of Drugs and Society
Spring 2011

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Course Description & Objective

The use of intoxicants is found in every known society and drug use is as old as it is widespread. Drugs serve medical, religious, recreational and many other functions. This course will attempt to explain the fascination humans have with intoxication. To do so, we will focus on drug use from a cross-cultural and historical perspective and center our attention on drug use within the context of various social institutions.

The course is organized into several broad topics. The class begins with a discussion of the nature of sociology and the sociology of drug use. Throughout the course, it will be important to remember we are employing a sociological perspective. The course focus then shifts to the consumption of drugs. Patterns of use in Africa, Asia, North and South America, Europe and Oceania will be discussed and explanations of these patterns will be offered. Then, we will review the historical patterns of drug consumption in the United States. The third topical area deals with institutional controls over drug use. We will discuss the legal control of drugs in the United States. The control over drugs that religious institutions exert and the informal social control that the drug subculture wields will also be analyzed. We will then examine the distribution of drugs. We will consider both legal and illegal distribution systems and note the similarities and differences between these systems. The emphasis of the course then briefly shifts. Instead of analyzing drugs as a dependent variable, we will analyze drugs as an independent variable. That is, what behaviors are caused by drug use? Finally, we will develop a model that explains the process of becoming a drug user by integrating several theories of use. We will also discuss the process of "maturing out." The course is both empirical and theoretical. We will concern ourselves with the facts of drug use and then attempt to order these facts with testable theories. Overriding course themes illustrate how drugs are a social and political phenomenon, as well as a chemical one.

REQUIREMENTS

Drug Use and Abuse: A Comprehensive Introduction (ISBN 9780495093398).

STUDENT EVALUATION

Your grade will consist of the following:

10 attendances taken at random	15 points
First exam	25 points
Second exam	30 points
Final exam	40 points

Total

100 points

Class attendance is critical for learning the material and will have a strong influence on your final grade. If you are absent from a class, you are responsible for all material covered during that class. If the professor is late for class, students are excused at 15 min after the state of class. **Students should regularly check their Hawaii email account for messages.**

SOME IMPORTANT ITEMS:

- NO TEXTING EVER - you will be asked to leave class if spotted**
- NO MAKE UPS FOR QUIZZES**
- NO EXTRA CREDIT IS AVAILABLE FOR THIS COURSE UPON REQUEST**
- NO GRADE NEGOTIATING**

Doing well in this class: In order to do well in this class, it is important that you a) attend all the lectures, pay attention and take notes, and (b) do all required readings

It is critical that you do the readings. Doing the readings will help you to better understand lectures and focus your paper topics to the relevant areas that we have been covering.