Sociology 309: Drugs & Society
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Spring 2021

Instructor: Patrick Habecker, PhD
Email: phabecker2@unl.edu
Office: 430D Oldfather Hall

Classroom: Online
Class Meeting Time: At Your Convenience
Zoom in Hours: Mondays 3pm-4pm, Thursdays 11am-Noon, other times by appointment

Prerequisites: Sophomore, Junior, or Senior Standing.

Course Description: Historical and contemporary patterns of drug use. Analysis of the antecedents and consequences of various forms of drug abuse. Examination of the types and effectiveness of legal responses to specific classes of drugs including: prohibition, decriminalization, and legalization. Prevention and treatment approaches to drug use.

Zoom in Hours: During these hours there will be a meeting room available through zoom (unl.zoom.us) where you can log-in and I will be available to answer questions. There is not a line for the room, so if there are multiple people present you may have to wait your turn to ask a question. If these times do not work for your schedule, please email me to setup a different time to meet.
Mondays 3pm-4pm (central): https://unl.zoom.us/j/93664660976
Tuesdays 11-Noon (central): https://unl.zoom.us/j/98508589205

In-person Meetings: There are no in-person meeting options for this semester.

Required Text:

Additional readings may be assigned throughout the term. These readings will be provided through Canvas and no more than one per week will be assigned.

Teaching Assistants: Our teaching assistant for the spring 2021 semester is Megan Kunitzer. Meagan is a graduate student in the Sociology department at UNL and will be helping me throughout the semester. Please do not email Meagan directly if you have questions about grading or other aspects of the class. All communication for this class should come through me.

Classroom Guidelines: This class will introduce you to a wide range of topics that most of you are not already familiar with. These topics will directly inform your performance on the exams, which make up most of your gradable material. As such, it is important to follow these guidelines whenever possible.
- Ask questions when you are curious or uncertain.
- Read the assigned materials and take notes for each module
- Watch any videos associated with a module and take notes
- Plan ahead for assignments and exams
- Let me know if you have any issues or needs in a timely manner.
- Be respectful and courteous of others’ points of view.

Communication: The best way to reach me is through email. I am generally attentive to email, but do not expect quick responses to messages that are sent in the evening, early morning, or weekend. When sending emails please be sure to include “SOC 309” in the subject line, describe any attachments in the body of the
email, and sign-off with the name you use on discussion boards. I do not monitor my spam folders and if you do not hear back from me in 24 hours you should follow-up with another email or telephone call. If you call my office phone number and leave a message I will get a digital copy of the message through email.

General Policies:

Accessibility: The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options privately. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). If you are eligible for services and register with their office, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so they can be implemented in a timely manner. SSD contact information: 232 Canfield Admin. Bldg.; 402-472-3787.

Academic Honesty: Cheating and plagiarizing are serious academic offenses. Students caught cheating on an exam will receive a “0” on the assignment. The incident will be reported to UNL’s Student Affairs and to Dr. Jolene Smyth, the Chair of the Sociology Department. If you plagiarize a written assignment I will first attempt to discuss the issue with you. If necessary, plagiarized assignments will received a grade of “0” and the instance will be reported to UNL’s Student Affairs and to Dr. Jolene Smyth, the Chair of the Sociology Department. It is your responsibility to be familiar with UNL policies concerning academic dishonesty, and what qualifies as academic dishonesty (http://stuafs.unl.edu/dos/code).

Non-Threatening Environment: At times, discussion boards may become controversial. While you may not agree with a topic, please respect the expressed opinions or beliefs. I expect you to show respect for others. This means thoughtfully listening to, or reading, the ideas/questions/experiences of others without judging them. Keeping an open mind is the key! This creates a positive learning environment for everyone. Thoughtful debate is welcomed and encouraged. Use these times to learn about a new topic and broaden your understanding. This is my challenge to you and it is my place to guide these discussions in a healthy direction to promote a positive learning environment. Harassment and disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated. Harassment of any kind is against university and classroom policy. The online environment does not excuse you from following these guidelines as you write and respond to discussion board posts. All faculty, staff and students are responsible for understanding and complying with harassment policies. For more information, visit http://www.unl.edu/equity.

Personal Emergencies: In the event of a personal emergency please contact me and make arrangements. You remain responsible for your school work. However, I am willing to make accommodations to allow for completion of the course, so long as it is within a reasonable time frame.

Grading: All assignments are due through Canvas. Should I make a mistake that is not related to content (e.g. incorrect grade entered in Canvas etc.) please let me know immediately. If you disagree with a grade in relation to the content of an assignment (e.g. you disagree with why you got a certain grade) you may submit a written argument which states your case for a different grade.

Late Assignments: Late work will be docked by 10 percentage points each day the assignment is late (including weekends and holidays). Day is defined as a 24 hour period which begins when the assignment is due.
Final Grades
There are 645 possible points available during this course. The assignments are not weighted. Approximately 43% of the available points come from the exams, 26% from the paper, and 31% from other assignments. Grades are determined by dividing the points earned by the points possible, converting to a percentage, and rounding to the nearest whole number. Numbers are rounded up when achieving .5-.9, and down for .1-.4. Letter grades are then assigned using the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97+</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-96</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-66</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An F is assigned for any grade less than 60</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Assignment Formatting
All written assignments must be typed in Times New Roman, using 11 or 12 point font, use 1” margins, and should be double spaced unless specified otherwise. Written assignments over 1 page in length should include page numbers. When possible please submit your assignments as a .doc or .docx file which includes your last name in the file name. All references and in-text citations should be in the American Sociological Association (ASA) format. A guide to using the ASA style can be found in Canvas.

Introductory Survey (10 points, 1.6% of the final grade)
Complete a brief survey that provides some basic information about your academic standing and work/life balance for the semester. The survey is available in Canvas by following the Modules > Intro Survey path. Due by the end of the day (11:59pm) on Friday 2/5.

Exams (3 Exams, 280 points total, 43.4% of the final grade)
There will be three exams in this class that will cover material from the book, lectures, extra readings, and any other extra material like a video. Each exam will cover either four or five weeks of material. The exams are not cumulative. Exam 1 will cover weeks 1-4, Exam 2 covers weeks 5-9, and Exam 4 covers weeks 10-14.

For each week of content, the exam will include two true/false questions (1 point each), four multiple choice questions (2 points each), and two short answer questions (5 points each). So each week of content leads to 20 points of question on an exam. Short answer questions are pulled from a larger list of possible questions that you will be able to see ahead of time. In the exam, four short answer questions are picked randomly and you can choose which two you want to answer.

Exams are taken online and do not require a proctor. That means the exams are open book, open note, and even open lecture if you want to review videos. Please do not take exams together or ask friends. The exams are timed, and you get 20 minutes of time per week of content covered by the exam. You can move through the exam to go back to previous questions, but can only take the exam once.

You have a full week to start the exam, but once you start, the timer begins to start your exam window. Exams take place the week after the last week of content that they cover. So Exam 1 opens during week 5 and covers weeks 1-4. Exams will be late if turned in after 11:59 pm (central) on the Friday of the exam week.

Make-up Exams: Make-up quizzes must be scheduled to take place within seven days of the original exam date or the final grade will be a zero. The final quiz cannot be made-up outside of finals week without extraordinary circumstances. Other exceptions for the seven day rule are granted for cases of student hospitalization with
notice to the instructor during the seven day period. Students are responsible for contacting the instructor to set a make-up exam time.

**Discussion Boards (10 points per assigned week, 100 points total, 15.5% of the final grade)**  
Starting in week 3, each week students are required to participate in weekly discussions. A question will be posed every week (starting in week 3, and skipping exam weeks) and can be found in the Discussion Board section of our Canvas page. These items may relate to current events, materials from the class textbook, or a wide variety of thoughts/ideas/questions. **DO NOT COPY** posts – any plagiarized posts will receive a zero grade. Students are required to post an original response to each discussion board (by 11:59 pm central on Wednesday), and to reply to two of the posts of your classmates (by 11:59 pm central on Sunday). Some discussion board assignments may require an additional activity prior to making your original post. Students should plan to complete the task/objective prior to posting their response. Do not leave to last minute! Comments such as “I agree” or “Great post” do not count – the replies must be substantive and should reflect your knowledge of the course material and critical evaluation. Students should use full sentences, proper punctuation, correct spelling, and correct grammar. Proofread all posts. As this is an online course, this activity is meant to take the place of the typical classroom discussion. This is an opportunity to share your opinions, experiences, and understanding of the course material as well as academically engage with your classmates. Please cite page numbers from the text when discussing concepts from the class. This activity will be as interesting and engaging as we make it. Only respectful and appropriate dialogue should be used when contributing to the discussion boards - please refer to the section on creating a ‘non-threatening environment’ in this syllabus for more information about this expectation. A complete description of the requirements for each Discussion Board and the grading rubric are available on Canvas.

**State Project (65 points, 10.1% of the final grade)**  
The purpose of the State Project is to familiarize yourself with two data sets frequently utilized to study drug use in the United States. In addition, this project provides an opportunity for you to practice data reporting. In the fourth week, you will be randomly assigned one of the 50 U.S. states and either the NSDUH or TEDS data set. You will use your assigned data set to create a short report comparing recent substance use trends in your assigned state to national trends. You will also need to use basic Census data to describe the state you were assigned. The NSDUH and TEDS data files are available on Canvas. The final report is due by 11:59 PM on Friday March 5th. A complete description of the requirements and the grading rubric are available on Canvas.

**Position Paper (170 total points, 26.4% of the final grade)**  
You are responsible for developing a position paper on a topic of your choice around substance use in the U.S. The goal of a position paper is to argue for a political policy outcome. This could be something like the decriminalization of various substances or increasing the legal drinking age. All position papers are required to address social, economic, and health outcomes as they relate to the topic. Each paper is also required to discuss a major counter argument to the position the paper advocates. Finally, each position paper will end with a brief summary of the argument presented in the paper and provide three concrete policy suggestions supported by the paper and are usable.

Example: A position paper that supports the legalization of recreational marijuana might discuss the social impact of removing criminal penalties upon users, the economic benefits of taxing marijuana in a legal marketplace, and ability to regulate the quality of marijuana that is provided for sale as a benefit for public health. A counter argument might be that marijuana can be addictive and harmful to your health and that by legalizing marijuana the state is normalizing a potentially dangerous behavior. Policy suggestions might include 1) the removal of criminal penalties for use, distribution, and production, 2) the establishment of regulatory bodies to oversee the production and distribution of marijuana, and 3) using tax money from marijuana to support prevention and treatment options for marijuana users.
Paper Components

*Position paper topic (10 points):* Submit a paragraph that includes your topic and why you are interested in this topic by 3/12 by 11:59 PM central. All topics must be about substance use in the U.S., although you may explore areas that are only loosely connected (e.g. the politics of international supply into the U.S.). You may not choose marijuana legalization as a paper topic, but there are no additional restrictions on topic choice. You can find additional details and a grading rubric on Canvas.

*Preliminary annotated bibliography (35 points):* Submit an annotated bibliography that includes at least five (5) peer-reviewed sources for your position paper. Each entry should begin with the full citation of the source in the American Sociology Association citation style. After the full citation write two sentences about the question the article attempts to address and how it fits your paper topic. Due by 4/2 at the end of the day (11:59 PM central). You can find additional details and a grading rubric on Canvas.

*Final Paper (125 points):* Submit your completed position paper. Your paper must include the following sections: introduction, social argument, health argument, economic argument, counter argument, summary of your argument, three policy suggestions, and reference page. Your paper must use at least ten (10) peer-reviewed research sources (journal articles or academic books) and these sources should properly be cited throughout the paper. You may only use one (1) direct quote in your paper. A full reference page should be included and formatted in the American Sociological Association style. Position papers must be at least 1,050 words in length, not including the reference page or title page (if you include one). The paper is due by 4/23 at the end of the day (11:59 PM central).

Below is a beginning list of peer reviewed research journals that focus on substance use. These journals should be good places to find articles useful for your final paper. Using focused keyword sources within these journals is a safe way to find relevant articles to build your bibliography and develop your arguments.

- Addiction
- Addictive Behaviors
- Harm Reduction Journal
- International Journal of Drug Policy
- Journal of Drug and Alcohol Dependence
- Journal of Drug Issues
- Journal of Psychoactive Drugs
- Prevention Science
- Substance Use & Misuse

Other journals that may have related materials
- American Journal of Sociology
- American Journal of Public Health
- American Sociological Review
- Annual Review of Sociology
- Criminology
- Criminology & Public Policy
- Journal of Health and Social Behavior
- Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency
- Law & Society Review
- Social Forces

*Reflection Paper (20 points, 3.1% of the final grade)*

In that last week of the class you will be given three prompts that ask you think about the class. You will pick two of the three prompts, and then write a brief response to those prompts. More information about this assignment may be found on Canvas.
Extra Credit
At present there are no plans for extra credit. However, should an opportunity arise that warrants the development of an extra credit assignment, one or more assignments may be created. The total sum of extra credit that will ever be possible in this course will not exceed 20 points. To be clear, there should be no expectation for extra credit to be made available during this course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schedule – SOC 309 – Spring 2021</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week (M-Su)</strong></td>
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</table>
| 1 | 1/25 – 1/31 | Sociological Study of Drugs  
Chapter 1  
Becker (1953) |  |  |
| 2 | 2/1 – 2/7 | Classification of Drugs  
Chapter 3  
Lopez et al (2021) | Intro Survey (2/5) |  |
| 3 | 2/8 – 2/14 | Theories of Drug Use  
Chapter 5 | State Project  
Assignments Posted | Wed (2/10): Response |
| 4 | 2/15 – 2/21 | Data Sources about Drugs  
Chapter 4  
Sun (2/21): Two Replies |
| 5 | 2/22 – 2/28 | History of Drugs in the US  
Chapter 2 | Exam 1 (Weeks 1-4)  
Due by 2/26 |  |
| 6 | 3/1 – 3/7 | History of Drugs in the US  
Chapter 2  
Sun (3/7): Two Replies |
| 7 | 3/8 – 3/14 | Legal Responses  
Chapter 14  
A Day in the Life (Movie) | Topic Due (3/12) | Wed (3/10): Response  
Sun (3/14): Two Replies |
| 8 | 3/15 – 3/21 | Demographic Correlates  
Chapter 6  
Sun (3/21): Two Replies |
| 9 | 3/22 – 3/28 | Institutional Correlates  
Chapter 7 |  | Wed (3/24): Response  
Sun (3/28): Two Replies |
| 10 | 3/29 – 4/4 | Health Correlates  
Chapter 8  
Lyss et al (2020) | Prelim Bib (4/2)  
Exam 2 (Weeks 5-9) |  |
| 11 | 4/5 – 4/11 | Economic Correlates  
Chapter 9  
Sun (4/11): Two Replies |
| 12 | 4/12 – 4/18 | Violent & Criminal Correlates  
Chapter 11 |  | Wed (4/14): Response  
Sun (4/18): Two Replies |
| 13 | 4/19 – 4/25 | Prevention  
Sun (4/25): Two Replies |
| 14 | 4/26 – 5/2 | Treatment  
Chapter 13 |  | Wed (4/28): Response  
Sun (5/2): Two Replies |
| 15 | 5/3 – 5/7 | Finals Week  
Reflection (5/4) | Exam 3 (Weeks 10-14) |  |

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus and course schedule as deemed appropriate for educational purposes. All such changes will be announced through Canvas.