

Political Science and International Affairs
University of Northern Colorado

POLITICAL SCIENCE 260: DRUG WARS

Spring 2016
M/W/F, 1:25-2:15
McKee 424

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Office Hours: Mondays and Fridays, 10:15-11:30 am, and by appointment

Course Description:

From violent conflicts over drug trafficking routes to politically contentious government drug control strategies, “drug wars” take many, often intersecting, forms. This course examines the conflictual and contested terrain of drug production, distribution, use, and regulation, emphasizing questions such as: *How do societies and governments decide what drugs may be legally produced and consumed, and which are to be prohibited? What have been domestic and international responses to illegal drug production, use, and trafficking? When and how have “drug wars” served as proxies for other political, economic, and social objectives? How have attempts at drug control produced spillover effects like internal conflict, violence against women, and government corruption?*

This course starts with an introduction to analytical and conceptual tools that provide a basis for understanding drug-related conflicts at the domestic and international levels. The next part of the course examines “drug wars” from historical, comparative, and international perspectives, focusing on several regions and both licit and illegal drugs—including how politics shape the dynamics of drug prohibition and legalization. The final part of the course examines the costs and consequences of drug wars. Particular attention will be paid to economic impacts on states and societies, racialized incarceration in the U.S., violence and corruption in Mexico, and threats to democratic governance in West Africa.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES— READ CAREFULLY:

- 1. Attendance. (10%)** Attendance is mandatory and will be taken at the start of class (you run the risk of being marked absent if you arrive late). Missing more than five classes—i.e. almost two full weeks of class—will result in failing this course requirement. *Because of this attendance policy, you do not need to email me if you miss class. However, a written letter of explanation and in-person meeting with me during office hours is required if you miss five or more courses. Missing more than five classes will put you at risk for failing the course.*
- 2. Preparation and Engagement. (15%)** This course component is based upon your participation in class discussions, including your demonstrated thoughtfulness, respect for your peers, and evidence that you have completed the readings prior to coming to class. This category also includes short in-class quizzes and participation exercises. Note that bringing

the assigned readings with you to class with help you be engaged and participate during class. *Exercises and quizzes cannot be made up, nor are there late submissions accepted.*

3. **Case Study Paper. (25%)** This paper will examine a drug-related conflict of your choosing. The objective is to describe, analyze, and learn more in-depth about a particular drug-related conflict (or “war”) that interests you. Further details to be given in class.
4. **Midterm Exam.* (25%)** An in-class exam to be taken **Monday, February 29.**
5. **Final Exam.* (25%)** To be taken **Friday, May 6, 1:30-4 pm.**

* **There are no exam make-ups.** Please note the date of class exams on your calendar and talk to me ASAP if you foresee a problem with an exam date. Dates of final exams are determined by the University and cannot be adjusted.

Academic Integrity: *Any violation of academic integrity standards (plagiarism, etc.) will result, minimally, in failing the compromised course assignment, and potentially the entire class.* All violations of the Student Code of Conduct will be addressed in accordance with University policy. See http://www.unco.edu/dos/pdf/StudentCodeofConduct.pdf#nameddest=SC_integrity.

Technology Policies and Expectations: It is expected that during our relatively short amount of time together each week in class you will be respectful of your instructor and peers. This is demonstrated by **not using headphones in class and keeping phones off (or silenced) and in your bag -- not on your desk -- for the entire class period.** If you prefer to take notes on a laptop or other device, please sit towards the side of the classroom so as not to distract your peers.

Disability Accommodations: Any student requesting disability accommodations for this class must inform the instructor to receive appropriate and timely accommodations for the semester. All accommodations will be given on a confidential basis. Students are encouraged to contact the Disability Support Services office on campus (970-351-2289) to receive certified documentation and an accommodation letter to present to the course instructor. If you are unsure if you qualify for accommodations, please contact the Disability Support Services office at the number above.

Sexual Misconduct and Title IX: Title IX, part of federal law, makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. The University of Northern Colorado prohibits and will not tolerate sexual misconduct or gender-based discrimination of any kind. If you wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct, please contact the UNC Counseling Center (970-351-2496) or the Assault Survivors Advocacy Program (970-351-4040). If you would like to learn more about sexual misconduct or report an incident, please visit www.unco.edu/sexualmisconduct. **Other resources:** Know Your Title IX (<http://knowyourix.org/>); End Rape on Campus (<http://endrapeoncampus.org/>); SurvJustice (<http://survjustice.org/>). **Note:** UNC is legally obligated to investigate sexual misconduct (including, but not limited to sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, and intimate partner violence). If you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to a faculty member, they have an

obligation to report it to UNC's Title IX Coordinator. "Disclosure" may include communication in-person, via email/phone/text message, or through in/out of class assignments.

REQUIRED TEXTS

The following texts must be purchased or rented for the semester:*

- Scott, Peter Dale. (2003) *Drugs, Oil, and War: The United States in Afghanistan, Colombia, and Indochina*. Roman and Littlefield.
- Wat, Peter and Roberto Zepeda. (2012) *Drug War Mexico: Politics, Neoliberalism and Violence in the New Narcoeconomy*.
- M. Alexander. (2010) *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New Press.

*Other required texts for the course will be available as PDFs on Blackboard.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEKS 1-2: "What's the Problem?" The Social and Political Construction of Drugs and Drug Control Regimes

- Jan. 11* Course Introduction
- Jan. 13/15* Goode & BenYehuda, "Moral Panics: Culture, Politics and Social Construction"
- Jan. 18* **NO CLASS – Martin Luther King Jr. Day**
- Jan. 20/22* Jelsma, "The Development of International Drug Control"

WEEKS 3-7: "Drug Wars" as Foreign Policy

Drugs, Oil, and War

- Jan. 25* Newsinger, "Britain's Opium Wars," *Monthly Review* 49(5), 2007.
- Jan. 27* Scott, *Drugs, Oil & War*, Intro & Chapter 1
- Jan. 29* Scott, *Drugs, Oil & War*, Chapter 2
- Feb. 1* Scott, *Drugs, Oil & War*, Chapter 3
- Feb. 3* Scott, *Drugs, Oil & War*, Chapter 4 & 5
- Feb. 5* Scott, *Drugs, Oil & War*, Chapter 6

Feb. 8/10 Peceny & Durnan, “The FARC’s Best Friend: U.S. Anti-Drug Policies and the Deepening of Colombia’s Civil War in the 1990s”

Feb. 12 *In-class debate*

Drugs, Neoliberalism, and Violence in Mexico

Feb. 15 Watt & Zepeda, *Drug War Mexico*, Intro and Chapter 1

Feb. 17 Watt & Zepeda, *Drug War Mexico*, Chapter 2

Feb. 19 Watt & Zepeda, *Drug War Mexico*, Chapter 3

Feb. 22 Watt & Zepeda, *Drug War Mexico*, Chapter 4

Feb. 24 Watt & Zepeda, *Drug War Mexico*, Chapter 5

Feb. 26 **In-class review for midterm exam** – bring your notes and questions!

Feb. 29 **Midterm exam**

WEEKS 8-9: Power, Profits, and Pharmaceuticals

March 2/4 Kremer, “Pharmaceuticals and the Developing World”

March 7 Buckley & O Tuama, “International pricing and distribution of therapeutic pharmaceuticals: an ethical minefield”

March 9 ICAD, “Access to HIV/AIDS Treatment in Developing Countries”
The Guardian, “Millions with HIV Die for Lack of Access to HIV Drugs,”
<http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/dec/01/millions-hiv-die-lack-access-aids-drugs>

March 11 *In-class debate*

March 12-20 **NO CLASS – Spring Break**

WEEKS 10-12: Drug Wars as Social Control: “The New Jim Crow” in the United States

March 21 Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, Intro

March 23 Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, Chapter 1

March 25 Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, Chapter 2

March 28 Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, Chapter 3

- March 30** *In-class film*
- Apr 1** **NO CLASS** – Professor at conference
- April 4** Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, Chapter 4
- April 6** Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, Chapter 5
- April 8** Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, Chapter 6

WEEKS 13-15: Costs, Consequences, and Solutions

- April 11** Watt & Zepeda, *Drug War Mexico*, Chapters 6 and 7
- April 13** Martin, “Casualties of War: How the War on Drugs is Harming the World’s Poorest”
- April 15** Cockayne, “Transnational Threats: The Criminalization of West Africa and the Sahel”
- April 18/20** Kopel & Burrus, “Reducing the Drug War’s Damage to Government Budgets,” *Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy* 35(2), 2012.
- April 22** *Case study papers due*
- April 25/27** Jenner, “International Drug Trafficking: A Global Problem with a Domestic Solution”
- April 29** *Course conclusion/review*
- Final Exam:** Friday, May 6, 1:30-4 pm

