

Drugs, Crime, and Society CJUS 3630.401 - Spring 2026

Instructor Information

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Course Description

Examines the relationship between drugs, crime, and human behavior. Explores the relationship between drug abuse and crime and the policy proposals developed to control drug trafficking, drug abuse, and drug-related crime, as well as the multi-faceted aspects and effects of chemical abuse and dependency.

Course Structure

This course will take place completely online through Canvas. The course is composed of several modules. Modules will last 1-2 weeks and the length of each is noted on the course calendar. Each module contains the relevant chapter outlines as well as other supplementary material as needed. Note not all modules will contain supplementary materials or require extra reading beyond the textbook. The students will also participate in four (4) discussions through Canvas during the course. The students will also take eight (8) module quizzes. The final project will be one (1) drug policy infographic.

Learning Objectives

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Describe the historical context surrounding drug controversies and demonization.
2. Differentiate between criminological theories explaining drug use.
3. Explain the effects of legal and illegal drugs.
4. Describe the patterns of legal and illegal drug use in the U.S.
5. Identify the policies used to prevent drug use.
6. Evaluate the effectiveness of various types of drug treatment programs.
7. Discuss the impact of various policies that have been enacted to regulate legal and illegal drug use.
8. Compare U.S. drug policies with policies in other countries.

Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses

Federal regulations state that students may apply only 3 fully-online semester credit hours (SCH) to the hours required for full-time status for [F-1 Visa \(DOC\)](#) holders. Full-time status for F-1 Visa students is 12 hours for undergraduates and 9 hours for graduate students.

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website (<http://www.ecfr.gov/>). The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

Teaching Philosophy

My teaching philosophy is that students interact with course materials and one another using critical thinking skills. Students should engage with each other throughout the course through the class discussions. At the beginning of each week, the student should refer to the course schedule (see below) for their reading assignment for that week. After completing each reading assignment in its entirety, the student should open the corresponding module and study the notes. As noted on the course calendar, throughout the semester the student will have discussion posts to complete. They will respond to material that is pertinent to the theme of the course that week and then respond to one of their peers' posts. The textbook chapters and the online modules will help you complete the discussion posts and satisfy all learning objectives. The textbook chapters and online modules will assist the students in completing the case studies and online quizzes as well.

General Policies

Communication Expectations

Correspondence for this course will take place primarily through Canvas Announcements. This means that all emails sent through the course will go to your Canvas Inbox and should also go to your official UNT Email. Therefore, it is **your responsibility** to read any messages you may receive. You must also make sure to check your official UNT email, or make sure you received official UNT emails to your preferred email address. You may also correspond with other classmates this way. Please make sure to check this frequently for any change to the course or schedule.

Connect with me through email and/or by attending office hours. During busy times, my inbox becomes rather full, so if you contact me and do not receive a response within two business days, please send a follow up email. A gentle nudge is always appreciated

ADA Policy

The University of North Texas makes reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. To request accommodations, you must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) by completing an application for services and providing documentation to verify your eligibility each semester. Once your eligibility is confirmed, you may request your letter of accommodation. ODA will then email your faculty a letter of reasonable accommodation, initiating a private discussion about your specific needs in the course.

You can request accommodations at any time, but it's important to provide ODA notice to your faculty as early as possible in the semester to avoid delays in implementation. Keep in mind that you must obtain a new letter of accommodation for each semester and meet with each faculty member before accommodations can be implemented in each class. You are strongly encouraged to meet with faculty regarding your accommodations during office hours or by appointment. Faculty have the authority to ask you to discuss your letter during their designated office hours to protect your privacy. For more information and to access resources that can support your needs, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access) website (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>).

Academic Success Resources

UNT strives to offer a high-quality education in a supportive environment where you can learn, grow, and thrive. As a faculty member, I am committed to supporting you, and I want to remind you that UNT offers a range of mental health and wellness services to help maintain balance and well-being. Utilizing these resources is a proactive way to support your academic and personal success. To explore campus resources designed to support you, check out [mental health services \(https://clear.unt.edu/student-support-services-policies\)](https://clear.unt.edu/student-support-services-policies), visit unt.edu/success, and explore unt.edu/wellness. To get all your enrollment and student financial-related questions answered, go to scrappysays.unt.edu.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

How to Succeed in this Course

This course is delivered fully online and does not include scheduled lecture sessions or designated class meeting times. Instruction is provided through assigned readings, recorded materials, and other posted resources. As a result, students are expected to independently review and study all course content to achieve the learning objectives. Success in this course requires a high level of self-discipline, effective time management, and consistent engagement with the materials. While the instructor will provide guidance, clarification, and feedback, students are responsible for actively managing their learning and seeking assistance when questions arise. I am here to support you and strongly encourage you to take advantage of all available academic resources, including scheduling appointments during office hours for additional guidance and clarification.

Supporting Your Success and Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment

I value the many perspectives students bring to our campus. Please work with me to create a classroom culture of open communication, mutual respect, and belonging. All discussions should be respectful and civil. Although disagreements and debates are encouraged, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, we can ensure a safe and welcoming classroom for all. If you ever feel like this is not the case, please stop by my office and let me know. We are all learning together.

Required/Recommended Materials

- Mosher, C. J., & Akins, S. M. (2020). *Drugs and Drug Policy: The Control of Consciousness Alteration*. Sage.
 - Paperback ISBN-13: 9781544351124.
 - Available at the UNT Bookstore.
 - eBook ISBN: 9781544351117, 1544351119
 - Available via Vital Source.

Note: In addition to the required text, journal articles, documentaries, and other sources of reference **may** be used to further enhance students' learning and will be made available on Canvas.

Course Technology & Skills

This course has digital components. To fully participate in this class, students will need internet access to reference content on the Canvas Learning Management System and other required equipment or software such as a webcam, microphone, Adobe Photoshop, etc. If circumstances change, you will be informed of other technical needs to access course content. Information on how to be successful in a digital learning environment can be found at [Learn Anywhere \(https://online.unt.edu/learn\)](https://online.unt.edu/learn).

Minimum Technology Requirements

- Computer
- Reliable internet access
- Speakers
- Microphone
- Plug-ins
- Microsoft Office Suite
- [Canvas Technical Requirements \(https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements\)](https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements)

Computer Skills & Digital Literacy

- Using Canvas
- Using email with attachments
- Creating and submitting files in commonly used word processing program formats (.doc, .pdf)
- Downloading and installing software

Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UIT Help Desk: [UIT Student Help Desk site \(http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm\)](http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm)

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940-565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130

Walk-In Availability: 8am-9pm

Telephone Availability:

- Sunday: noon-midnight
- Monday-Thursday: 8am-midnight
- Friday: 8am-8pm
- Saturday: 9am-5pm

Laptop Checkout: 8am-7pm

For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help \(https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328\)](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328)

Course Requirements

Module Quizzes (180 points total)

There will be a total of eight (8) quizzes in this course, with the **six (6) highest scores counting towards your grade** for a total of 180 points (each worth 30 points). *Therefore, your two lowest quiz scores will be dropped.* Each quiz will consist of 15 multiple choice and true/false questions. Each quiz will cover all module note material, videos, assigned material in the classroom text, and other assigned reading material. Once you start the quiz you will have only 20 minutes to take it. **Quiz due dates are listed in the course calendar below.**

Discussion Posts (200 points total)

Each student will be required to respond to 4 Canvas discussions throughout the course of the semester. Each Canvas discussion is worth 50 points, for a total of 200 points towards your final grade. Discussion posts should include your response to the post, and a response to a classmate's post. Initial responses of the Canvas discussions should be a minimum of 250 words. **Students must reply to at least one other student's posts for full point potential** (responding appropriately and meaningfully). The discussion assignments will be posted on Canvas and available a few days before they are noted on the syllabus schedule. **Discussion due dates are listed in the course calendar below.**

Your discussions will be graded on depth of explanation, utilization of sources, connection to course materials, specific efforts to back up your arguments with logical points and sources, grammar and spelling, and adhering to the assignment. **A detailed rubric for the discussions is provided at the end of the syllabus and on Canvas.**

To locate the discussion boards, click the Discussions tab to the left of the main screen. Select the appropriate Canvas Discussion assignment. Next click on the appropriate forum. To post a comment select "Create Thread." In order to receive full credit, you must post an original response and respond to at least one other students' post. **Note that you will NOT be able to see any other students' posts until you have first posted a thread yourself.**

Drug Policy Infographic (120 points total)

The purpose of this assignment is to examine the effects of a drug policy in the United States. For this assignment, students will choose **ONE (1)** drug policy or program and provide a summary of the rationale behind when the policy/program was created, the (2) societal impact of the policy/program, and (3) the effectiveness of the policy/program. **Detailed Instructions and a rubric for the infographic is provided at the end of the syllabus and on Canvas.**

Your infographic must contain the following information about your topic:

1. **Title**
2. **Summary of the Drug Policy/Program**
 - a. Provide an overview of the policy and program and why it was created. You can include text and/or visuals to explain the theory.
3. **Societal Impact of the Policy**
 - a. What impact has the policy/program had on society?

- Monetary
- Political
- Criminal Justice System
- Public Health

4. Policy/Program Effectiveness

- a. Based on the research, does the policy/program reduce substance use and/or criminal behavior?
- Be sure to review the rubric to maximize your score on this assignment. The assignment is due on Sunday, May 3rd, 2026, by 11:59PM. You are to submit it through the Turnitin.com portal on Canvas.

Schedule

Students will be notified by Eagle Alert if there is a campus closing that will impact a class. The calendar is subject to change in line with the [Campus Closures Policy \(https://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-006\)](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-006).

Course Schedule (Spring 2026)

Introduction to the course

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Points Possible	% of Final Grade
Week 1	01/12-01/18	Introduction to the Course	Introduction Post		

Module 1: Drug Controversies and Demonization

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Points Possible	% of Final Grade
Week 2	01/19-01/25	Chapter 1: Drug Controversies & Demonization	Module 1 Quiz	30 pts.	6%

Module 2: Theories of Drug Use

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Points Possible	% of Final Grade
Week 3	01/26-02/01	Chapter 2: Theories of Drug Use	Module 2 Quiz	30 pts.	6%

Module 3: The Effects of Drugs

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Points Possible	% of Final Grade
Week 4	02/02-02/08	Chapter 3: The Effects of Drugs Part I	Discussion 1	50 pts.	10%
Week 5	02/09-02/15	Chapter 4: The Effects of Drugs Part II	Module 3 Quiz	30 pts.	6%

Module 4: Patterns of Drug Use

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Points Possible	% of Final Grade
Week 6	02/16-02/22	Chapter 5: Patterns of Illegal Drug Use	Discussion 2	50 pts.	10%
Week 7	02/23-03/01	Chapter 6: Patterns of Legal Drug Use	Module 4 Quiz	30 pts.	6%

Module 5: Drug Prevention & Treatment

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Points Possible	% of Final Grade
Week 8	03/02-03/08	Chapter 7: Drug Prevention Programs	Discussion 3	50 pts.	10%
Week 9	03/09-03/15	Spring Break			
Week 10	03/16-03/22	Chapter 8: Drug Treatment	Module 5 Quiz	30 pts.	6%

Module 6: Drug Policies Regulating Legal Drugs

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Points Possible	% of Final Grade
Week 11	03/23-03/29	Chapter 9: Policies Regulating Legal Drugs, Part I			
Week 12	03/30-04/05	Chapter 10: Policies Regulating Legal Drugs, Part II	Module 6 Quiz	30 pts.	6%

Module 7: Drug Policies Regulating Illegal Drugs

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Points Possible	% of Final Grade
Week 13	04/06-04/12	Chapter 11: Policies Regulating Illegal Drugs			
Week 14	04/13-04/19	Chapter 11: Policies Regulating Illegal Drugs	Module 7 Quiz	30 pts.	6%

Module 8: Drug Policies in Other Countries

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Points Possible	% of Final Grade
Week 15	04/20-04/26	Chapter 12: Drug Policies in Other Countries	Discussion 4	50 pts.	10%
Week 16	04/27-05/03	Chapter 12: Drug Policies in Other Countries	Module 8 Quiz; Drug Policy Infographic	30 pts. 120 pts.	24%

Assessing Your Work

This course is made up of a series of assignments and assessments to assist you in achieving the course learning objectives. Each week you will work on various combinations of readings, discussions, and quizzes. Modules will become available students on the week corresponding to the course calendar. Students can expect their grades and feedback to be released to them within 3 business days. There is a total of **500** points that can be earned in this class. The grading policy along with other class requirements is presented below.

Assignment	Points Possible
Module Quizzes (6)	<i>180 points</i>
Discussion Posts (4)	<i>200 points</i>
Drug Policy/Program Infographic (1)	<i>120 points</i>
Total Points Possible	<i>500 points</i>

Grading Scale

A = 450-500

B = 400-449

C = 350-399

D = 300-349

F = Below 300 points

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. To read more about the policy, please visit: [Academic Integrity Policy \(PDF\)](#).

Every student in my class can improve by doing their own work and trying their hardest with access to appropriate resources. Students who use other people's work without citations will be violating UNT's Academic Integrity Policy. Please read and follow this important set of [guidelines for your academic success](#) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>). If you have questions about this, or any UNT policy, please email me or come discuss this with me during my office hours.

Generative AI Use

In this course, the use of GenAI tools is limited as directed by the instructor. Any additional use requires explicit permission, proper citation, and authentic student work.

Throughout the semester, you will or may use specific Generative AI (GenAI) tools for certain assignments, with guidance on responsible use. These assignments help build ethical resilience and GenAI literacy, preparing you for careers in a GenAI oriented workforce.

I use GenAI to enhance materials, streamline tasks, generate prompts, create scenarios, draft syllabi, build study guides, and analyze performance. I will always disclose how I use GenAI, and I expect the same from you.

In accordance with the UNT Honor Code, unauthorized use of GenAI tools is prohibited. Using GenAI content without proper credit or substituting your own work with GenAI undermines the learning process and violates UNT academic integrity policy. If you're unsure whether something is allowed, please seek clarification

Late Work

There are no make-up tests/assignments in this class with the exception of authorized absences according to University policies prescribing authorized absences in certain situations. I reserve the right to consider extreme circumstances and modify this rule. Those in athletics, those who are absent for religious holidays, and/or those involved in other school supported activities that require being absent from class will be allowed make up if proper procedures are followed in requesting an excused absence. I must have written documentation in advance that you will be away from class for the absence to be excused (e.g., traveling for a basketball game, observing a religious holiday). If you were critically ill in such a way that you could not complete any required assignment or exam, you must submit a doctor's note to me within calendar 3 days.

There is absolutely no make-up for assignments turned in late unless authorized as a result of university related absence or through prior consultation and approval by me. Make-up assignments as a result of authorized absences must be turned in within 3 days of returning from the authorized absence. To be excused, any authorized absence must take place over the entire submission window. That is, if a student has an authorized absence for 1 day of a 3-day submission window for an exam or any other assignment, then they will not be excused and will not be able to take a make-up. I strongly recommend *not* waiting until the last day to complete an assessment in case this occurs.

Extra Credit

There is no extra credit offered for this course.

Attendance and Participation

Students are required to login regularly to the online class site. The instructor will use the tracking feature in Canvas to monitor student activity. Students are also required to participate in all class activities such as the discussion board.

I have great respect for students who are balancing the demands of their coursework with the responsibilities of caring for family members. If you run into challenges that require you to miss a class, please contact me or my TA. There may be some flexibility we can offer to support your academic success.

Syllabus Change Policy

I reserve the right and have the discretion to change this syllabus. While every effort will be made to follow this syllabus as closely as possible, it is sometimes the case that it must be modified. In the case that it needs to be adjusted, I will announce such adjustments to the class. I will make every effort to ensure that any changes to the syllabus benefit the class as a whole. It is the student's responsibility to check announcements/email so that all changes are documented. Failure to obtain syllabus changes because of failure to check and read announcements/email does not constitute a defense against a missed Reading, test date, or other applicable changes.

Discussion Post Rubric

Criteria	Inadequate 4 pts	Developing 6 pts	Accomplished 8 pts	Exemplary 10 pts
Ideas & Argument	Ideas expressed lack an understanding of the discussion topic. Comments are irrelevant, off-topic, and/or confusing to follow. Viewpoint, if given, is not supported with evidence or examples.	Ideas expressed in discussion posts show a minimal understanding of the discussion topic. Comments are general in nature and/or occasionally may not be relevant. Rehashes or summarizes ideas with limited analysis, original thought, and/or supported viewpoints.	Ideas expressed in discussion posts are mostly substantive and relevant to topic; some original thought. Demonstrates logical thinking, reasoning, and/or analysis for most part. Viewpoint is supported with evidence and/or examples.	Ideas expressed in discussion posts exceed expectations in original thought, substantial depth, and are relevant to topic. Viewpoint shows strong logical thinking, reasoning, and analysis with evidence and examples. Construction of new meaning and insights are evident.
Connection to Course Materials	No connections are made to readings or other course materials (lectures, media, resources, etc.), and/or if made, are not clearly stated and are largely personal opinions.	Minimal direct connections are made to readings and/or other course materials (lectures, media, resources, etc.). Connections are largely inferred and somewhat unclear at times.	Some direct connections are made to readings and/or other course materials (lectures, media, resources, etc.) and are clearly stated for the most part.	Strong, direct connections are made to readings and/or other course materials (lectures, media, resources, etc.) and are clearly stated.
Contribution to Learning Community	Negligible contribution to the learning community. Rarely engages with students and generally ignores others' posts and/or has a negative effect through misrepresenting content in other posts, inappropriate comments	Somewhat contributes to the learning community but the focus is generally on own posts. Occasionally interacts with others' postings but little attempt to involve other students in the discussion. Short	Contributes to the learning community. Often attempts to direct group discussion to present relevant viewpoints and meaningful reflection by others. Interacts	Effectively contributes to the learning community. Frequently initiates dialogue and motivates group discussion by providing feedback to students' postings, asking follow-up questions,

	made, and/or attempts to dominate the discussion.	statements such as “I agree with...”.	respectfully with students.	and through thoughtful, reflective comments. Respectfully encourages a variety of viewpoints and invites contributions from others.
Adherence to Instructions and Clarity	Does not provide any citations. Initial post does not meet minimum 250-word count.	Some significant errors in APA citations. Initial post does not meet minimum 250-word count.	Some minor errors in APA citations. Initial post meets minimum 250-word count.	Proper use of APA citations. Initial post meets minimum 250-word count.
Writing Quality	Posts show a below average/poor writing style that lacks standard English, and/or is difficult for readers to follow. Contains frequent errors in grammar, punctuation, usage, and spelling. Does not provide any citations. Initial post does not meet minimum 250-word count.	Posts show an average and/or casual writing style using standard English that is generally clear but contains some errors in grammar, punctuation, usage, and spelling.	Discussion posts show above average writing style that is clear using standard English with minor errors in grammar, punctuation, usage, and/or spelling.	Discussion posts are well written and clearly articulated using standard English, characterized by elements of a strong writing style with correct grammar, punctuation, usage, and spelling.
Required Response	Deduct 10 points	Deduct 3 points	No points deducted	No points deducted
	Required response post is missing/inadequate.	All required postings completed; however, response post only agrees/disagrees and does not provide additional insight.	All required postings by deadline; an adequate response post is given that provides some additional insight.	All required postings by deadline; response is extremely thoughtful and provides additional insight.

Drug Policy Infographic Rubric (120 points)

Criteria	Exemplary 20-16 points	Developing 15-11 points	Inadequate 10-0 points
Summary of the Policy/Program	Clear overview of the chosen policy/program including the target population and substance(s).	Somewhat clear overview of chosen policy/program including the target population and substance(s).	Incorrect overview of chosen policy/program. Does not provide the target population and/or substance(s).
Societal Impact of the Policy/Program	Provides multiple societal impacts of the policy/program. Explains how the policy/program has impacted specific groups.	Provides at least one societal impact of the policy/program. Explains how the policy/program has impacted specific groups.	Does not identify any societal impacts of the policy/program. Does not provide how the policy/program has impacted specific groups.

Effectiveness of the Policy/Program	Uses strong research evidence related to the effectiveness of the policy/program.	Uses some research related to the effectiveness of the policy/program.	Uses no or inaccurate research related to the effectiveness of the policy/program.
Layout	The infographic has a great layout, with applicable graphics.	The graphics were somewhat applicable with an average layout. There is a disproportionate amount of text.	The graphics are unrelated to the topic and/or have a poor layout. There is an overload of text.
Visual Appeal	The font is legible, color scheme enhanced the graphic, there was a cohesive style to the infographic. It is clear the creator put time and consideration into the style of the infographic.	The font was somewhat legible, and the color scheme didn't affect the graphic. The overall style was somewhat disorganized.	The font was illegible, the color scheme was distracting or detracted from viewability. The style was disorganized.
Citations/Sources	Citations for the infographic's data were included, and the creator utilized reputable sources.	Citations for some of the data were included and/or citations were a mix of reputable and un reputable sources.	No citations of the data were included and/or sources were un reputable.