



SOC 350 01W: Drugs and Society

COURSE SYLLABUS: Summer 1 2026 6/1 to 7/2

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: (Name & Title) Dr. Nicole Farris, Professor
Office Location: Ferguson 218
Office Hours: By appointment
Office Fax: 903-886-5330
University Email Address: Nicole.Farris@tamuc.edu
Preferred Form of Communication: **Email**
Communication Response Time: **24-48 Hours**

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required:

Product: Drugs, Society, and Human Behavior

Edition: 18th

Author: Carl Hart, Charles Ksir

ISBN10: 1264169787

Books should be available in the University bookstore and from a variety of online sources

Software Required Access to course website- you need to have an active email username and password. I will post your grades to the course website, as well as your powerpoints, assignments, and supplemental articles that I see fit to include in lecture.

Optional Texts and/or Materials None

Course Description

This course examines the major categories of drugs - stimulants, depressants, hallucinogens, and narcotics. It also investigates other drug related topics and events such as the use of steroids and inhalants; the abuse of over-the-counter drugs; dependency and addiction; and intervention topics. This course includes critical thinking about drug culture, and emphasis is placed on a cross-cultural perspective and integrating the viewpoints of other disciplines and professions.

Student Learning Outcomes

Course Objectives:

Sociology 350, Drugs and Society, is designed with the following objectives in mind. In a broad sense these are items that students ought to be able to accomplish, perform, or know after successfully completing this course.

1. The student should know or be familiar with basic terminology concerning drugs and drug-taking behavior.
2. The student should know and understand the reason why people take drugs or are involved in the drug scene.
3. The student will become familiar with treatment, prevention, and generally achieve a level of education about drug involvement.
4. The student will be encouraged to develop a degree of critical thinking skills as he/she relates to the topic - drugs and behavior.
5. The student will obtain some experience in communicating ideas about drugs through the forms of writing and speaking.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. The student will be able to articulate a variety of social, individual and biochemical factors that impact definitions of drugs, as well as how these factors influence a drug's effect.
2. The student will demonstrate an understanding (through written or verbal form) of the process of the social construction of drug use as a social problem.
3. Students will display a familiarity (through the passing of exams or being successful in written assignments) with the various biological, psychological and sociological theories that seek to explain drug using behavior, including an analysis of their basic assumptions, limitations, and implications for social policy.
4. Students will display (through written forms) knowledge of the various drugs, both legal and illegal, used in American society, as well as the social reality that surrounds their use.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Using the learning management system, using Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, using presentation and graphics programs, etc.

Instructional Methods

Main Course Meetings: This course is entirely online, where the method of instruction will consist of a combination of lectures, discussions, and other assignments.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

Student Responsibilities and Tips for Success:

Participation: Participation is a crucial aspect of learning and contributes to a deeper understanding of course material.

Readings and Assignments: Complete all assigned readings and assignments on time and come prepared to discuss key concepts, theories, and case studies. Take thorough notes during lectures and readings to reinforce understanding and retention of course material.

Critical Thinking: Approach course material with a critical mindset, questioning assumptions, evaluating evidence, and considering alternative perspectives. Engage in thoughtful analysis and interpretation of sociological concepts and theories.

Collaboration and Communication: Collaborate with classmates, ask questions, and seek clarification when needed. Foster a supportive and inclusive learning environment where diverse viewpoints are respected and valued.

Time Management: Manage your time effectively to balance coursework with other responsibilities and commitments. Create a study schedule, set goals, and prioritize tasks to ensure consistent progress and success in the course.

Seek Help When Needed: Don't hesitate to reach out to the instructor or classmates for assistance or clarification on course material. Take advantage of office hours, tutoring services, and online resources to address any challenges or questions you may have.

Stay Engaged and Motivated: Stay motivated and engaged in the course by connecting course material to real-world issues, personal experiences, and future goals. Take ownership of your learning and actively seek opportunities for growth and intellectual development.

By adhering to these responsibilities and tips for success, you can maximize your learning experience in the course and achieve your academic goals in the study of deviance and other sociological concepts.

AI in Dr. Farris' Classroom

You're welcome to use AI tools (like ChatGPT), Grammarly, or similar support services in this class—as long as you're using them the way you'd use me: as a resource to support your learning, not as a shortcut to avoid doing the work.

Think of it like this:

Would you ask me to write your discussion post for you?

Would you ask me to complete your final project or reflection?

Probably not—and if you did, I'd (kindly) say no!

But would you ask me to help brainstorm ideas, explain a sociological concept, give feedback on a rough draft, or suggest ways to structure your response?

Absolutely. That's using support in a way that still keeps the work (and the learning) yours.

If you do use any AI tools (including Grammarly or ChatGPT), you must note it at the bottom of your assignment.

Just a short line is fine—for example:

“I used Grammarly to check grammar and clarity.”

“ChatGPT helped me outline my initial ideas for this post.”

“I asked ChatGPT to explain symbolic interactionism in simpler terms.”

Being transparent helps build trust and keeps our academic work ethical and clear.

If you're ever unsure whether you're using AI appropriately, just ask yourself: Is this something I would ask my professor to do for me?

If the answer is yes, you're probably on the right track.

However, I want to see your knowledge and effort. If I find that a submitted assignment used AI in an unapproved way, penalties will range based on severity of academic dishonesty. For this course, the use of AI is NOT allowed aside from the aforementioned uses. The unauthorized use of AI will result in a grade of 0 for the assignment for the first offense. The second offense will result in a grade of F for the course and submission to the academic dishonesty committee.

A Note on AI/ChatGPT Use

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

For this course, the use of AI is NOT allowed. The use of AI will result in a grade of 0 for the assignment for the first offense. The second offense will result in a grade of F for the course and submission to the academic dishonesty committee.

GRADING

COURSE GRADE DETERMINATION:

A- 180- 200 points

B- 160- 179 points

C- 140- 159 points

D- 120- 139 points

F- 119 points or below

There is always a chance that papers or grades get lost in transit. Please keep a record of your grades in case something unexpected should happen. Any student who is dissatisfied with his/her grades during this course is urged to discuss this with the instructor.

Assignment	Points
Applied Activities (4 @ 15 points)	60
Quizzes (2 @ 25 points)	50
Infographic/Campaign	40
Final Project	50
TOTAL	200

Written work in the course will consist of the following:

Weekly Applied Activities (4 x 15 pts) = 60pts

Quizzes (2 x 25 pts) = 50 pts

Drug Education Campaign Project = 40 pts

Final Project (Choice-Based) = 50 pts

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

I prefer communication via email. I rarely answer my office phone and am much more likely to respond to email. I will respond to email within 24 to 48 hours, between normal business hours of 8am to 5pm. Please be sure that when you email me, you use a proper greeting (Dr. Farris, Professor Farris, Instructor Farris), an email body, and an appropriate closing. You should never send an email with just an attachment and no email body. Be sure you have an appropriate and informative subject line and include the name and section of the course you are enrolled in. See the attached page for some email expectations that would serve you well in all future communication with any professors or potential employers.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Students are expected to hand in assignments on time. However, late assignments (with the exception of discussions) will be accepted up to one week after they are due, and will incur a 10% penalty.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this

legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

Counseling Center Services

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit

www.tamuc.edu/counsel

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

6/1

Week 1: Drug Use in Modern Society

Readings: Text, Chapters 1,2,3

Due Sunday by 11:59pm: Activity 1: Myth vs. Reality

6/8

Week 2: How Drugs Work

Readings: Text, Chapters 4, 5 and 9

Due Sunday by 11:59pm: Quiz 1 (Covers Weeks 1 and 2) and Activity 2: Explain it Simply

6/15

Week 3: Uppers and Downers

Readings: *Text, Chapters 6,7,and 8*

Due Sunday by 11:59pm: Activity 3: Drug Comparison

6/22

Week 4: Familiar and Restricted Drugs

Readings: *Text, Chapters 10, 13 and 16*

Due Sunday by 11:59pm: Activity 4: Case Study
Snapshot and Quiz 2 (Covers Weeks 3 and 4)

6/29

**Week 5 (Short Week): Prevention and Harm
Reduction**

Readings: Text, Chapters 17 and 18

Due Sunday by 11:59pm: Final Project: Drug Education
Campaign