

THE POLITICS OF DRUG POLICY

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Academic Unit: SPP

Semester/term, year: Fall 2019

Course level (MA, PhD): MA, 2 credits

Course Description

The contemporary institutions, norms and approaches of international narcotic drug control are now over a century old. The record of progress toward a 'drug free world' is however poor, with 2018 figures for global narcotic drug use, production and drug crop cultivation (coca for cocaine, opium poppy for opiates such as heroin and morphine) at record highs, as are figures for the manufacture and use of synthetic drugs (MDMA, amphetamine, methamphetamine), 'legal highs' and misuse of prescription pharmaceuticals.

This course examines the structure, decision making processes and record of international drug control in order to understand why policy approaches persist despite a record of evident failure. It focuses on the treaties, laws, institutions and organizations responsible for decision making on drugs issues, and the stakeholders who are involved in (or excluded from) the design, monitoring and evaluation of drug policies. Particular emphasis is placed on the challenges of researching illicit economies and behaviors for evidenced based policy approaches, how 'progress' is evaluated in drug policy and on the impact of enforcement on related policy areas such as security, development and public health.

The course assessment contains formative (ungraded) and summative (graded) elements.

- Submission of a 1,000 word discussion paper on a drug policy related issue of your choice -uploaded to moodle by OCTOBER 21st
- Comments on the discussion papers of a minimum of 2 of your peers by NOVEMBER 2.
- Submission of a 2,500 word fully referenced policy brief based on your discussion paper for deadline of 6pm December 20th

Your final policy brief will be marked down a grade unless you have commented on the discussion papers of 2 class peers by the November 11th deadline. Comments should offer advice and suggestions on for example structure and sources of information. A minimum of a paragraph of comments is expected.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this course students will be able to demonstrate

- Detailed knowledge of drug control frameworks, drug policy decision making processes, the drug policy 'cycle', official metrics for evaluation and prospects for system reform;
- Understanding of the impacts of drug policy enforcement in relation to security, health and development rights and goals;
- Comprehension of illicit market dynamics and the methodological challenges of researching 'hidden populations'

Course Requirements

Delivery of the course is based on fortnightly double sessions. It will be based on interactive lectures using media resources and outlining key themes, issues, and literatures, followed by class discussion and analysis of concepts, materials and policy debates. Students must prepare for each session **and from the beginning of term**. Before the first class, students must have read the [1961 Single Convention](#) and [Booklets 2 and 3 of the 2018 UNODC World Drug Report](#)

Course Schedule

The course is delivered in a condensed series of 6 sessions that are intended to deliver high learning impact. The course will run from the afternoon (3.30-7pm – with plenty of breaks) on Thursday 26th September on alternate weeks.

Core internet resources include:

- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime:
<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/publications.html>
- Transnational Institute (TNI)
<http://www.tni.org/work-area/drugs-and-democracy>
- International Harm Reduction Association
<http://www.ihra.net/>
- Open Society Foundations Global Drug Policy program
<https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/about/programs/global-drug-policy-program>

- Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)
http://www.wola.org/program/drug_policy
- GDPO Swansea
<http://www.swansea.ac.uk/gdpo/gdpositionanalysis/>

For an historical overview of drugs and drug control issues see J Buxton (2006) *The Political Economy of Narcotics* – it is dated but provides historical and institutional context. Please buy second hand if you purchase and note Zed the publisher is a collective so there is no financial benefit on the part of the author. Core journal is International Journal of Drug Policy
<http://www.journals.elsevier.com/international-journal-of-drug-policy/>

The readings and breakdown of the schedule of teaching are listed below. *Students must read a minimum of six of the listings for each of the sessions* (remember sessions are fortnightly so this is equivalent to three readings per session). Many of the readings overlap different sessions.

Session, dates, topics and reading
<p>1. Sept 26th</p> <p>Interpreting current drug market trends</p> <p>Global treaty framework; drug control institutions, principles and approaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the drug ‘problem’? • Drug market trends – consumption, distribution and use • What are the core principles and approaches of drug control and how does national level legislation reflect international treaty obligations? <p>Booklets 2 and 3 of the 2018 UNODC World Drug Report</p> <p>The 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs https://www.unodc.org/pdf/convention_1961_en.pdf</p>

J. Buxton, The Historical Foundations of the Narcotic Drug Control Regime (World Bank)

<http://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/abs/10.1596/1813-9450-4553>

D Bewley-Taylor and M Jelsma, *The UN drug control conventions: The Limits of Latitude*, (Amsterdam: Transnational Institute & International Drug Policy Consortium, Series on Legislative Reform of Drug Policies, Nr. 18, 2012)

<http://www.tni.org/sites/www.tni.org/files/download/dlr18.pdf>

H. Levine, 'Global Drug Prohibition: Its Uses and Crises,' *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 14, 2 (2003), 145-153

C. Fazy The Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme: politics, policies and prospect for change (International Journal of Drug Policy)

[http://www.ijdp.org/article/S0955-3959\(03\)00004-5/pdf](http://www.ijdp.org/article/S0955-3959(03)00004-5/pdf)

J Buxton and T Bingham (2015) The Rise and Challenge of Dark Net Drug Markets

<http://www.swansea.ac.uk/media/The%20Rise%20and%20Challenge%20of%20Dark%20Net%20Drug%20Markets.pdf>

Session 2 10th October

Metrics, Process and Enforcement

- How is progress in meeting drug control targets measured, what are the limitations of these indicators?
- What are the key methodological challenges in evaluating drug related data, including UNODC data
- How do we account for the primacy of criminal justice approaches in drug policy (over health, education specialists etc) and what are the consequences of policing prohibition?

R. Muggah et al *Measurement Matters, Designing new metrics for a drug policy that works*, Igarape,

http://ceulearning.ceu.edu/pluginfile.php/169193/mod_resource/content/0/AE-12-Measurement-mattes-07h-jan .pdf

Z. Sloboda (2002) 'Drug abuse epidemiology: an overview' *Bulletin on Narcotics*, vol. LIV, Nos 1 and 2.

http://www.unodc.org/pdf/bulletin/bulletin_2002_01_01_1.pdf#page=8

D Bewley Taylor, GDPO 2016, *The 2016 United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem: An opportunity to move towards metrics that measure outcomes that really matter*

<http://www.swansea.ac.uk/media/GDPO%20UNGASS%20Metrics%20Working%20Paper%20Jan%202016draftBravo.pdf>

ICSDP 2016, A Call for A Reprioritization of Metrics to Evaluate Illicit Drug Policy

https://www.unodc.org/documents/ungass2016//Contributions/Civil/ICSDP/ICSDP_Open_Letter_EN_Web.pdf

Peter Reuter, Harold A. Pollack and Bryce Pardo *If Tougher Enforcement Cannot Reliably Raise Drug Prices, What Are Appropriate Goals and Metrics?* in LSE (2016) *After the Drug Wars*

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/LSE-IDEAS-After-the-Drug-Wars.pdf>

P Reuter 'Systematic Violence in Drug Markets'

http://faculty.publicpolicy.umd.edu/sites/default/files/reuter/files/systemic_violence.pdf

M. Shiner *Drug Policing: What is it Good For? (2016) LSE After the Drug Wars*

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/LSE-IDEAS-After-the-Drug-Wars.pdf>

Harris G, *Threshold Quantities for Drug Policy: Conviction by Numbers*, TNI Drug Law Reform Series No. 14 2011,

<http://www.tni.org/briefing/conviction-numbers>

Session 3 24th October

Impacts: Criminal Justice, Race and Gender

- What accounts for the rise in international incarceration rates for non-violent drug offences, and what are the implications of this trend?
- How, if at all, are men and women differentially impacted by drug policy enforcement?
- Is the drug 'war' a 'race' war?

K Malinowska and Olga Rychkova 'Measuring the Impacts of Repressive Drug Policies on Women', LSE (2016) After the Drug Wars
<http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/LSE-IDEAS-After-the-Drug-Wars.pdf>

IDPC Briefing Paper - *Women, drug offences and penitentiary systems in Latin America*
<http://idpc.net/publications/2013/11/idpc-briefing-paper-women-drug-offenses-and-penitentiary-systems-in-latin-america>

Flavin, J., & Paltrow, L. (2010). Punishing pregnant drug using women: Defying law, medicine and common sense. *Journal of Addictive Diseases*. Special Issue on Women, Children and Addiction, Volume 29, Issue 2.
http://advocatesforpregnantwomen.org/publications/Flavin_Paltrow2010_Journal%20of%20Addictive%20Diseases.pdf

WOLA Project, Coletta Youngers: Women Drug Policy and Incarceration
http://www.wola.org/commentary/women_drug_policies_and_incarceration_in_the_americas

The War on Black Women with Dinah Ortiz. <http://wearemany.org/v/war-on-black-women>

Media:

Barbara Harris Founder of Project Prevention in Oklahoma.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Edt10iuePIY&spfreload=10>

Race

Alexander M, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, 2012, The New Press, New York

Eastwood N, Shiner M & Bear D, *The Numbers in Black and White: Ethnic Disparities in the Policing and Prosecution of Drug Offences in England and Wales*, Release, 2013,

<http://www.release.org.uk/sites/release.org.uk/files/pdf/publications/Release%20-%20Race%20Disparity%20Report%20final%20version.pdf>

Edwards Ezekiel et al., *The War on Marijuana in Black and White*, ACLU, 2013
<https://www.aclu.org/criminal-law-reform/war-marijuana-black-and-white-report>

Levine et al, *Arresting Latinos for Marijuana in California: Possession Arrests in 33 Cities, 2006-08*, Drug Policy Alliance, 2010,
[http://www.drugpolicy.org/sites/default/files/ArrestingLatinos English.pdf](http://www.drugpolicy.org/sites/default/files/ArrestingLatinos%20English.pdf)

Session 4 7th November

Enforcement Impacts: Development and Security

- What are the causes and consequences of illegal drug crop cultivation in the coca areas of South America and the opium poppy areas of South West and East Asia?
- Why have Alternative Development (AD) programs had limited success in moving drug cultivating communities into the formal economy
- Why is coca and opium poppy cultivation in Colombia and Afghanistan at historic highs?
- Is drug policy enforcement (eradication, interdiction) developmental?

Buxton, J. (2015). *Drugs and Development: The Great Disconnect*. Global Drug Policy Observatory. Swansea University.

<http://www.swansea.ac.uk/media/The%20Great%20Disconnect.pdf>

UNODC Alternative Development homepage and reports

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/alternative-development/index.html?ref=menuse>

Goodhand, J. (2005). 'Frontiers and Wars: The Opium Economy in Afghanistan', *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 5 (2)

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1471-0366.2005.00099.x>

Philip Keefer and Norman Loayza (Eds), *Innocent Bystanders: Developing Countries and the War on Drugs*, The World Bank, 2010, pp. 61-93.

<http://www.druglibrary.stir.ac.uk/documents/536410PUB0Inno101OfficialUse0Only1.pdf>

UNDP (2015) *Perspectives on the Development Dimensions of Drug Control*
https://www.unodc.org/documents/ungass2016/Contributions/UN/UNDP/UNDP_paper_for_CND_March_2015.pdf

W. Byrd and D. Mansfield, *Licensing Afghan Opium for Medicinal Use: Why It Won't Work*, Peacebrief 179 (Washington, D.C.: USIP, 2014).

Javier Sagredo, Rebecca Schleifer and Tenu Avafia (UNDP) *Addressing the Development Dimensions of Drug Policy in LSE After the Drug Wars*

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/LSE-IDEAS-After-the-Drug-Wars.pdf>

E Gutierrez (2015) *Drugs and Illicit Practices: Assessing their impact on development and governance*, *Christian Aid Occasional Paper*

<http://www.christianaid.org.uk/Images/Drugs-and-illicit-practices-Eric-Gutierrez-Oct-2015.pdf>

TNI Drugs and Conflict

<https://www.tni.org/en/drugs-conflict>

Session 5 21st November

Health Impacts

- Does drug policy (enforcement) contradict the right to health?
- What is the relationship between drugs, drug policy and the spread of infectious diseases like HIV and Hepatitis B?
- What are harm reduction based approaches, provide examples of successful programs and explain why they are contentious.

- Why do over 90% of the global population not have access to WHO essential medicines opioid analgesics for the relief of chronic pain and disease, including in relation to terminal illness?

Special section on drug control and human rights in the *Health and Human Rights Journal*

<https://www.hhrjournal.org/volume-19-issue-1-june-2017/>

Lancet special edition on drug policy and public health

<http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736%2816%2900619-X/abstract>

D Wolfe and J Csete (2015) *Harm Reduction*

<https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/harm-reduction-20151014.pdf>

The Global Commission on Drugs. (2012). *The War on Drugs and HIV/AIDS: How The Criminalization of Drug Use Fuels the Global Pandemic.*

http://globalcommissionondrugs.org/wp-content/themes/gcdp_v1/pdf/GCDP_HIV-AIDS_2012_REFERENCE.pdf

The Global State of Harm Reduction. Harm Reduction International.

<https://www.hri.global/global-state-of-harm-reduction>

D Lohman and N Burke Shyne (2016) *The Impact of International Drug Policy on Access to Controlled medicines*

https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/impact-international-drug-policy-access-controlled-medicines-20151203_0.pdf

C. Hallam (2014) *The International Drug Control Regime and Access to Controlled Medicines*

<http://www.tni.org/report/international-drug-control-regime-and-access-controlled-medicines?context=595>

Lohman, D. (2009). "Please, do not make us suffer anymore...: Access to pain treatment as a human right." Human Rights Watch report.

<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2009/03/02/please-do-not-make-us-suffer-any-more>

Session 6 5th December

Rights Based Approaches: Global human rights frameworks and obligations

Alternative Models in Drug Policy

- Does the enforcement of prohibition based drug policy approaches violate human rights? If so, which and how?
- How can drug policy better integrate rights based approaches?
- Review recent examples of drug policy reform, including from Uruguay, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Bolivia, Jamaica, Canada, Norway, Georgia, Portugal and relevant US states. Bring your observations to the class with a view to the benefits and limitations of the reform initiatives.

S Takahashi, 'Drug Control, Human Rights, and the Right to the Highest Attainable Standard of Health: By No Means Straightforward Issues', *Human Rights Quarterly*, vol. 31, no. 3, August 2009, pp. 748—776

UN Office on Drugs and Crime, 'UNODC and the promotion and protection of human rights', 2012 http://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/UNODC_Human_rights_position_paper_2012.pdf

D. Bewley Taylor Emerging policy contradictions between the United Nations drug control system and the core values of the United Nations (*International Journal of Drug Policy*)

[http://www.ijdp.org/article/S0955-3959\(05\)00092-7/pdf](http://www.ijdp.org/article/S0955-3959(05)00092-7/pdf)

R. Lines, A 'Most Serious Crime?' – The Death Penalty for Drug Offences and International Human Rights Law, *Amicus Journal*, No. 21, pp. 21-28, 2010
http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1837551

J. Amon, R. Pearshouse, J. Cohen, & R. Schleifer (2013). Compulsory drug detention centers in China, Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos: Health and human rights abuses. *Health and Human Rights Journal*. 15/2.

<http://www.hhrjournal.org/2013/12/05/compulsory-drug-detention-centers-in-china-cambodia-vietnam-and-laos-health-and-human-rights-abuses/>

D. Barret (2011) *Children of the Drug War: Perspectives on the Impact of of Drug Policies on Young People*

[http://www.ihra.net/files/2011/08/08/Children of the Drug War%5B1%5D.pdf](http://www.ihra.net/files/2011/08/08/Children%20of%20the%20Drug%20War%5B1%5D.pdf)

N. Eastwood, E Fox and A Rosmarin (2016) Drug decriminalisation around the world: A quiet revolution, Release.

<https://www.tni.org/files/publication-downloads/a-quiet-revolution-march-31-2016.pdf>

A Dills and S Gofford (2016) *Dose of Reality: The Effect of State Marijuana Legalizations*, Cato Institute

<https://www.cato.org/publications/policy-analysis/dose-reality-effect-state-marijuana-legalizations>

J. Csete and P Grob Switzerland, HIV and the power of pragmatism: Lessons for drug policy development (International Journal of Drug Policy)

[http://www.ijdp.org/article/S0955-3959\(11\)00134-4/pdf](http://www.ijdp.org/article/S0955-3959(11)00134-4/pdf)

JP Grund & J Breeksema “Coffee Shops and Compromise: Separated Illicit Drug Markets in the Netherlands”, Open Society Foundations (2013)

<https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/coffee-shops-and-compromise-20130713.pdf>

Zabransky T, Mravcik V, Gajdosikova H, Miovskù M. *Impact Analysis Project of New Drugs Legislation Summary Final Report*. Prague: Secretariat of the National Drug Commission Office of the Czech Government, 2001

http://www.druglawreform.info/images/stories/documents/Czech_evaluation_2001_PAD_en.pdf

Domoslawski, A. *Drug Policy in Portugal. The Benefits of Decriminalizing Drug Use*, June 2011

M. Jelsma (2016) Prospects for treaty Reform UNGASS 2016

https://www.tni.org/files/download/treaty_reform_drug_policy_ungass2016.pdf