Honors First-Year Seminar: War on Drugs

Drug use in the US is more common today than ever. Much of this drug use is illegal and has a tremendous impact on our national resources. Our nation has had an ongoing "War on Drugs" for nearly four decades and the effectiveness of that war has been continuously debated. Once again, questions of the benefit of our war are a common news item because of the great economic difficulties faced at local, state, and federal levels and the amount being expended to battle the "war."

We will look broadly at illicit drug use in America and examine alternative strategies for dealing with the problems associated with illicit drug use. Initially we will cover background information that will make us better informed. Then we can generate questions that we would like to address, divide into groups to address these questions, and bring the answers back to the class as a group to formulate effective drug policy.

The format of this course will be active discussion and group participation with grading based on short papers and group projects.

Aug 25    The scope of the problem
Aug 27    History of drug use
Sept 1    No Class
Sept 3    History of drug use
Sept 8    Drug use in American history
Sept 10   Drug use in American history
Sept 15   Overview of American drugs laws
Sept 17   Who’s using what now
Sept 22   Group breakdowns and survey design
Sept 24   No class – groups finalize survey
Sept 29   Survey outcome and discussion
Oct 1     Group project meeting times
Oct 7 (Wed)    Medical Marijuana Hearings: 12:00 to 7:00 BSB
Oct 6, 8, 13 Group presentations
Oct 15    What to do