WRTG 3020: Politics of Drugs
Fall, 2004

Instructor: Angela Buchanan
Office: ENVD 1861
Office Hours: Mondays, 2-5 p.m., or by appointment
Office Phone: 735-4385
email: angela.buchanan@colorado.edu

Textbooks: You are required to have a citation/style handbook for this course. If you have a handbook from a previous course, ask me if it is appropriate and/or up to date.

Course Goals and Objectives: In this course we will research and examine a variety of texts dealing with issues related to the relationships between drugs and American politics and society. You will read, analyze, and write about issues broadly related to drugs and society, such as: are class and race divisions apparent in the ways that certain drugs are legislated and prosecuted? How does Medicare and Medicaid legislation influence the lives of voters of different ages? What cultural and political influences are at play in the businesses of conventional and alternative medicines? How are research and development agendas set by pharmaceutical companies, and what are the broader social effects of those agendas? How do certain behaviors that are deemed outside of the social mainstream become medicalized, and what are the social and economic effects?

Attendance: You may miss three classes with no harm to your grade. There are no “excused” absences. Each absence exceeding three will lower your final grade by one level (a B- to a C+, for instance). Seven or more absences will automatically result in failure of the course, without exception. Excessive tardiness and/or leaving early will also result in a lowered grade. Note that exceptional circumstances such as hospitalization or trauma should be discussed with me as soon as possible, and documentation must be provided (contact the Dean in circumstances resulting in extended absence). Absences due to religious observations are excused with two weeks advance notice of the specific date(s), and verified military or athletic obligations must also be cleared in advance. Important: Any absence, for any reason, requires that you contact me and make arrangements for all missed work to be made up in a timely fashion.

Major Projects:
- Research Report on a Scholarly Article (20%)
- Literature Review of Field-Specific Research (20%)
- Short Proposal (10%)
- Group Paper (20%)
- Group Presentation (10%)
- In-class Assignments and Participation (20%)

All assigned work must be completed to pass the course, including early drafts.
**Grading:** I use the standard numerical scale detailed in your student handbook to calculate final grades. Some drafts of written work will be given benchmark grades to indicate where the work is at that time, while other assignments will receive a final grade and may not be revised (details of this are provided for individual assignments). All previous drafts with comments from me must be included with new versions of that assignment. I genuinely believe that A’s are only earned by work that is excellent in terms of thoughtful content, assignment expectations, and style. The difference between an A and a B paper is usually a matter of depth of research, quality of analysis, and stylistic/rhetorical choices. C work reflects less investment of thought and time, lower quality of research, content, and/or style; D or F work reflects minimal investment of time and thought and/or failure to meet the demands of the assignment.

**Participation:** This aspect of your grade reflects your mental attendance rather than your physical attendance. In other words, those who simply show up will not do well; those who are actively engaged in the course will succeed in this area. This is not a “lecture” course in nature or content, and you learn rhetorical skills primarily through guided, deliberate practice and participation. Participation includes a variety of things, including but not limited to providing quality written and oral feedback during peer reviews and workshops; asking intelligent and relevant questions during discussions and following presentations; acting professionally and in the manner of a colleague (meaning participating in a reflective and critical way, but in a manner that shows respect for others); and participating fully in all in-class exercises. Note that one of the primary goals for this course is to teach you about audience awareness and appropriate modes of discourse. Your primary audiences for this class are your peers and the teacher. Demonstrating rhetorical awareness and savvy in relation to these audiences is essential to your success. Note that general CU guidelines regarding expectations of classroom behavior are available online at [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/index.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/index.html).

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have physical, emotional, and/or learning disabilities requiring special accommodations, please notify me during the first two weeks of the course and, if appropriate, contact the Disability Services Office in Willard 322, phone number (303) 492-8671. If your disability is undocumented please discuss it with me anyway, and I will accommodate you to the best of my abilities.

Note that Disability Services’ letters indicate legally mandated reasonable accommodations, while other letters/requests from agencies such as health providers or therapists are recommendations, rather than legal mandates. Please discuss any extenuating circumstances with me as soon as possible so I can let you know if accommodations are possible.

**Honor Code:** We will discuss plagiarism in the upcoming weeks, but take time to become familiar with the Student Honor Code, available online at [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/index.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/index.html). Instances of unintentional plagiarism will be handled through in-depth discussion of citation expectations. Intentional plagiarism, such as turning in work that is not your own, will result in failure.