WHAT TO DO:
For all parts below, complete the assigned readings, then utilize those readings to answer the questions related to them. All assigned readings may be found on the Pre-Trip Assignments page of the trip’s Website. (Note: You are NOT responsible for information in any of the readings that do not pertain to marijuana and the related topics covered in these assignments.)

HOW TO SAVE AND SEND:
Make sure to save all typed responses as an MS Word 97-03 document if at all possible. (Do not save as a .docx file, please; if MS Word is not available, save in .rtf format.) E-mail all responses to the trip address prior the day of departure. The in-trip assignments below will be re-organized along with Prof. Golden’s on a separate page with relevant due dates.

CONTENT AND LENGTH:
In constructing your responses, be brief and concise, making sure to fully answer each item. Some items only need a sentence or two, while others should need no more than a paragraph or two. As you write, be certain to demonstrate that a) you have read the assigned articles, and b) you can analyze, integrate, and evaluate the information within those sources.

PART A – BACKGROUND AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Assigned Readings:
- Various selections from Alters & Kepos, ed’s, *Alcohol, Tobacco, and Illicit Drugs* (2010)

Pre-Trip Questions:
A1. What is the difference between legalization and decriminalization, and why is this important?
A2. Does decriminalization work in your opinion? Why or why not?
A3. Explain the “gateway theory,” including why it’s controversial. Is it true or false in your opinion?
A4. How dangerous is marijuana as a drug? What are its effects (physical, psychological, societal)?
A5. What are the benefits of marijuana (medical, physical, societal, etc.)
A6. What is the “war on drugs,” and what are the consequences of this war?
A7. How prevalent is marijuana use in the United States?
A8. Briefly list the goals of the US drug control strategy, and how the government tries to achieve them.
A9. List the major criticisms of anti-drug efforts in the United States. Are these criticisms fair?
A9. In your opinion, is the US winning or losing the war on drugs? Why?

In-Trip Question:
A1: In presentations and in your conversations with "locals" on the West Coast, do most of them seem to support legalization, decriminalization, or keeping marijuana illegal? Why do you think that is?
PART B – PRO’S AND CON’S OF MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION

Assigned Readings:
- Various sources, “Pros and cons of legalization”
- Various selections from Korsmeyer & Kranzler, ed’s, Encyclopedia of Drugs, Alcohol, & Addictive Behavior, 3rd edition (2009)

Pre-Trip Questions:
B1. List ten “pro” arguments, ranking them from strongest to weakest. Use the top three to build a strong argument in favor of legalization.
B2. List ten “con” arguments, ranking them from strongest to weakest. Use the top three to build a strong argument against legalization.
B3. Which groups seem to be in favor of legalization, and which are against it?
B4. Has marijuana ever been legal in the US? If so, when, and why was it eventually made illegal?
B5. When did medical marijuana start to become legal in the US, and at what level of government? Why is this different from true “legalization?”
B6. Is it illegal to possess marijuana paraphernalia, or just the drug? Why?
B7. How strong and persuasive are the DEA’s arguments against legalization?

In-Trip Questions:
B1: In presentations and in your conversations with “locals” on the West Coast, which of the “pro” arguments were used most often to argue for legalization or decriminalization?
B2. In presentations and in your conversations with “locals” on the West Coast, which of the “con” arguments were used most often to argue against legalization or decriminalization?

PART C – ISSUES OF FEDERALISM AND POSSIBLE ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Assigned Readings:
- Various sources, “Disputes between California and the Federal Government”
- Various sources, “Economic benefits of legalization”

Pre-Trip Questions:
C1. What is the current legal status of marijuana in the states of Washington and California? What is its legal status at the federal level?
C2. What is the nature of the dispute between the federal government and states that allow for the use of medical marijuana?
C3. What has the Supreme Court said with regard to this dispute? Who do they say is “in the right?”
C4. What is the federal government doing (or what were they doing) in states that allow for the use of medical marijuana that has gotten these states so upset?
C5. What did the US Justice Department announce in October, 2009 to address the dispute with states? Why do you think the federal government decided to do this?
C6. What is the “gray area” which some say now exists because of the October, 2009 announcement?
C7. In your opinion, should the federal government or the states have ultimate authority to decide on the legal status of marijuana?
C8. What are the economic benefits to California of its current policy on medical marijuana? What are the potential benefits if it legalizes marijuana altogether?
C9. What problems exist with regard to marijuana dispensaries in California? What has Los Angeles done to help address at least some of these problems?

In-Trip Question:
C1: In presentations and in your conversations with “locals” on the West Coast, how easy is it to get a permit to buy and possess marijuana, and does that system need to be made more strict?
PART D – CRIME, USAGE, AND THE WAR ON DRUGS

Assigned Readings:
- Various selections from Evans & Kepos, ed’s, *Crime, Prisons, and Jails* (2010)

Pre-Trip Questions:
D1. How bad has the “drug crime” problem been in the US since the 1950s, and how bad is it today?
D2. How much of this “drug crime” can be attributed to marijuana?
   (Hint: Look at percentages of both marijuana use and marijuana arrests over the last few years; there are stats in the Evans & Kepos reading.)
D3. How did the “war on marijuana” change its focus in the 1990s, and with what consequences?
D4. In your opinion, is the US winning or losing the “war on drugs” when it comes to marijuana?

In-Trip Question:
- None

PART E – PUBLIC OPINION AND THE 2010 BALLOT ISSUES

Assigned Readings:
- Various sources, “Public opinion about legalization”
- Various sources, “2010 California ballot issue”

Pre-Trip Questions:
E1. What does Lynch mean when she says that smoking marijuana is “an American pastime?” Do you agree or disagree, and why?
E2. What is public opinion nationally when it comes to medical marijuana? Outright legalization?
E3. What is public opinion in California when it comes to medical marijuana? Outright legalization?
E4. Is there any identifiable trend over time when it comes to Americans’ opinions about legalization?
E5. What is the disagreement which exists within the marijuana legalization movement, and why is it such a large issue?
E6. Briefly outline the timeline of important events in California since the 1990s with regard to marijuana.
E7. What is the “California Marijuana Legalization Initiative, and what will it do specifically?
E8. Why is not everyone who supports legalization enthusiastic about this initiative?
E9. If the measure passes in November, how will this affect federal law and the federal government’s actions in enforcing that law?

In-Trip Question:
E1: In presentations and in your conversations with “locals” on the West Coast, do you feel that most are in favor or against the legalization initiative that will appear on the California ballot in November?

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY
This assignment is not required, but you will be granted extra credit for completing it.

- Surf the Web to find websites that are exclusively or primarily dedicated to either supporting or opposing marijuana legalization. Compile a list that includes the best five sites you found that support legalization, as well as the best five sites that oppose it, and rank order them from your favorite to least favorite. For each, write a couple sentences to explain what you liked and/or didn’t like about each site.