

teaching note

Marijuana Legalization and its Impact on Hotel Operations

Summary

An open discussion format supported by team oriented written assignment questions (see below) from the instructor works well with class sizes of 32 students and below. If the class size is larger, the instructor may wish to structure teams of 15 to 20 students and assign questions for the students to research and then present their findings to the overall class.

An in-class Case Study Analysis approach and process using “role-playing” methodology can be effective in classes of 16-32 students.

Assignment and/or Case Study Analysis Questions:

(Total in-class discussion time: 60-90 minutes or longer per question depending on the extent of the Assignment and/or Case Study Analysis, as determined appropriate by the individual instructor.)

1. What learning outcomes will students achieve from this case?
 - a. Investigate the regulatory issues relating to the legalization and the use of medical and recreational marijuana within the State of Colorado.
 - b. Explore the consequences of the use of marijuana in the State of Colorado as relating to the hotel industry.
 - c. Understanding of the decisions made by Colorado-based hotels to address the consequences relating to the use of medical and recreational marijuana in guest rooms and in public areas within the hotels.
 - d. Create strategies to address the unintended consequences relating to the use of medical and recreational marijuana in the hotel industry in the State of Colorado, including operational issues, legal related issues, human resource issues, fines and financial issues.
 - e. Develop implementation plans and timelines to present innovative solutions to address the functional and financial challenges facing Colorado hotels and hoteliers relating the use of marijuana.
2. What are the laws in Colorado relative to the use of medical marijuana? How does it differ from recreational marijuana?
(The following website provides answers to the above question and is for use by the instructor to help facilitate the student research and discussion of this question.)

- Brief History of Colorado Medical Marijuana Use
<http://www.coloradomedicalmarijuana.com/medical-marijuana-legalization.htm>

3. What are the laws in Colorado relative to the use of recreational marijuana?

(The following website provides answers to the above question and is for use by the instructor to help facilitate the student research and discussion of this question.)

- <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/enforcement/laws-constitution-statutes-and-regulations-marijuana-enforcement>

4. What are the fines imposed by Colorado hotels relating to any guest, who smokes in hotel rooms or on hotel properties?

(The following summary to the above question is for use by the instructor to help facilitate the discussion of this question.)

- Although the fines imposed by Colorado hotels vary with each hotel management company, the following website provides details of the policy followed by the Marriott Corporation based on the information relating to on property smoking.
- <http://www.marriott.com/marriott.mi?page=smokefree>

5. What are the challenges facing the Colorado hotels relating to any guest, who smokes in hotel rooms or on hotel properties?

- Unlike cigarettes, marijuana’s odor generally dissipates over a reasonably short period of time, so the smell of the room alone is not always the dead giveaway. Instead, hotels encourage housekeeping staff and other employees to secure “proof” or “evidence” that there was smoking in the room.

Other Research Opportunities for Students: Critical Thinking

Should the instructor choose to pursue critical thinking initiatives, here are 4 questions to stimulate further research and discussion

1. Based on research you have conducted relative to the study of the legalization of Recreational Marijuana in Colorado, how would you explain and recap the progression of recreational marijuana since its approval?
Answers can be found at: <https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2016/02/21/from-colorado-glimpse-life-after-marijuana-legalization/rccuzhMDWV74UC4lxXIYJ/story.html>
2. What evidence is there, if any, that the laws concerning the use of recreational marijuana in the state of Colorado have changed since its used was approved in 2010?
Answers can be found at: <https://www.coloradopotguide.com/marijuana-laws-in-colorado/>
3. Identify the various appeals and initiatives that have taken place in the state of Colorado, since the legalization of recre-

ational marijuana in 2010?

Answers can be found at:

[https://ballotpedia.org/Colorado_Marijuana_Legalization_Initiative_Amendment_64_\(2012\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Colorado_Marijuana_Legalization_Initiative_Amendment_64_(2012))

4. What might happen to the teenage community in Colorado, as a result of the legalization of recreational marijuana in 2010?
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/06/21/colorado-survey-shows-what-marijuana-legalization-will-do-to-your-kids/>

This case study also has opportunities for discussion and further research on several tangents. Depending on the level of education, this case study is suitable for an undergraduate or a graduate program.

Topics for review include:

- This is an excellent case to explore exactly what the smoking policies are for all hotels, in and out of Colorado.
- Hotel room repainting charges: Is this just another way to bring in revenue? Several stories already exist on the internet citing just that. Should hotels adjust their strict rules?
- "Return to non-smoking status" means different things to different hotel flags. Students can conduct research on their own local hotels to determine what this phrase means.
- Charges for returning to non-smoking status vary between types of hotels. What costs, both hard and soft, should be considered and passed on to the guest?
- Discussions with local concierges in Denver tell stories of how guests come to them and inquire "where to get it." Is it ironic that hotels have a never, ever policy, yet the concierges are bounded by customer service courtesies to comply with a guest's inquiry? How should this be reflected in a hotel's policy?
- Research can be conducted to determine marijuana sales by county. Do resort communities see increased consumption? Does consumption by month compare to occupancy by month?

ADDITIONAL READING

How Legal Marijuana is working in Colorado. (2016, March 01). Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnbRoEZPdrM>.

Know Your Medical Marijuana Laws in Colorado. (2016, March 03). Retrieved from <http://www.coloradomedicalmarijuana.com/medical-marijuana-legalization.htm>.

Laws: Constitution, Statutes and Regulations - Marijuana Enforcement. (2016, March 05). Retrieved from <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/enforcement/laws-constitution-statutes-and-regulations-marijuana-enforcement>.

Marijuana Resource Center: State Laws Related to Marijuana. (2016, March 08). Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/state-laws-related-to-marijuana>.

Americans for Safe Access. Federal Marijuana Law. (2016, March 08). Retrieved from http://www.safeaccessnow.org/federal_marijuana_law.

U.S. Legal. Smoking Regulations in Colorado. (2016, March 11). Retrieved from <http://smoking.uslegal.com/smoking-regulations-in-colorado/>.

The Marriott Smoke Free Policy. (2016, March 14). Retrieved from <http://www.marriott.com/marriott.mi?page=smokefree>.

The Leaf Online. Colorado Hotels Are Charging Tourists for Smoking Cannabis. (2016, March 16). Retrieved from <http://theleafonline.com/c/business/2015/01/colorado-hotels-charging-tourists-smoking-cannabis/>.

References

- Bonnie, R. J., & Whitebread, C. H. (1970). The forbidden fruit and the tree of knowledge: an inquiry into the legal history of American marijuana prohibition. *Virginia Law Review*, 971-1203.
- Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts. (2016). Retrieved from: <http://www.fourseasons.com/>.
- Hill, J. A. (2015, August). Banks, marijuana, and federalism. In *Case Western Reserve Law Review (Symposium Issue)*, 65, 597.
- Hudak, J. (2014). Colorado's rollout of legal marijuana is succeeding: a report on the state's implementation of legalization. *Case W. Res. L. Rev.*, 65, 649.
- Hyatt Corporation. (2016). Retrieved from: <http://www.hyatt.com/>.
- Kilmer, B., Caulkins, J. P., Pacula, R. L., MacCoun, R. J., & Reuter, P. (2010). *Altered state?: Assessing how marijuana legalization in California could influence marijuana consumption and public budgets*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.
- Light, M. K., Orens, A., Lewandowski, B., & Pickton, T. (2014). Market size and demand for marijuana in Colorado. The Marijuana Policy Group. <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite>.
- Marriott International, Inc. (2016). Retrieved from: <http://www.marriott.com/default.mi>.
- Matt, G. E., et al. (2014). Thirdhand smoke and exposure in California hotels: non-smoking rooms fail to protect non-smoking hotel guests from tobacco smoke exposure. *Tobacco control*, 23(3), 264-272.
- Monte, A. A., Zane, R. D., & Heard, K. J. (2015). The implications of marijuana legalization in Colorado. *JAMA*, 313(3), 241-242.
- Room, R. (2014). Legalizing a market for cannabis for pleasure: Colorado, Washington, Uruguay and beyond. *Addiction*, 109(3), 345-351.
- Segal, D. (2009). Pillow Fight at the Four Seasons. Retrieved from: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/28/business/global/28four.html>.