



Course Syllabus: Introduction to Substance Abuse
College of Health Sciences and Human Services
SOWK 4323 x10
Fall 2020 August 23-December 11, 2021

Contact Information

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Course Description

This course is intended for the distance education learner. An overview of drug use in society and as a social problem is provided. Preventing and treating substance abuse will be addressed. Laws regulating to drugs will be reviewed. The way various drugs work in the body, affect mood, thought and behavior will be covered. Specific drugs addressed in detail will be stimulants, depressants and inhalants, medications for mental disorders, alcohol, tobacco, caffeine, over the counter drugs, opioids, hallucinogens, marijuana, and performance enhancing drugs.

Program Objectives

Graduates demonstrate the ability to:

Objective 1: Apply critical thinking skills, and empirical knowledge of a generalist social work practice in the initial assessment through goal setting, implementation, evaluation and termination.

Objective 2: Practice with the values, ethics and principles of the social work profession.

Course Objectives:

1. Recognize the difference between addiction, abuse, and other key concepts in substance abuse.
2. Understand the pharmacology, tolerance, and effects of legal and illegal substances.
3. Respect cultural differences in attitudes toward and use of substances.
4. Become familiar with substance abuse treatment and prevention.

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the effects of drugs on behavior and how behaviors are influenced by psychological, social, and cultural variables.
2. Identify drug policies and regulations and their effects on social problems.
3. How drugs interact with the brain and nervous system to produce effects on behavior, thoughts, and emotions.
4. Identify the difference between stimulants, depressants, and inhalants and how these compare to drugs used in treating mental disorders.
5. Discuss alcohol, how it affects the body and brain, and its influence on individual's relationships with others and impact on society.
6. Identify the psychological effects of over the counter drugs, tobacco, and caffeine.
7. Describe restricted drugs, such as opioids, psychedelics, marijuana, and performance-enhancing drugs.
8. Utilize resources in relation to prevention and harm reduction and discuss various policies and strategies implemented to prevent substance abuse.
9. Recognize the difference between addiction, abuse, and other key concepts in substance abuse.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Hart & Kasir. (2015). *Drugs, Society & Human Behavior* (17th Ed). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Recommended:

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

Writing Assistance

Begin drafting papers as early as possible and take advantage of the [Tutoring & Academic Support Programs](#), located off the first floor of the Moffett Library. The MSU TASP Learning Center offers drop-in tutoring support for most general subject areas including but not limited to Writing, Math, Science, Business, and Foreign Languages. Students check in to work one-on-one with a tutor typically for an hour regarding specific concepts.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

Grading

Table 1: The student's achievement will be evaluated on the basis of discussion board assignments, a research paper, and quizzes/exams.

Assignments	Percentage
Discussion board assignments & discussion thread participation	30%
Quizzes	30%
Drug Research paper	20%
Final Exam	20%

Table 2: Weighted average will be used to calculate final grade.

Grade	Percentages
A	90-100
B	80 to 89
C	70 to 79
D	60 to 69
F	Less than 60

Social Work Program Grade Policy

A course grade of below a C or an average of below 70% will be considered a failing grade. ***Students must repeat social work courses in which they receive a grade of D or F.***

Discussion Board Participation:

As indicated in the course schedule, the instructor will post question(s) on D2L for the class. Unless specified otherwise, everyone should post an initial response to the question(s) and should also respond to at least two peer's posts. The discussion board is a mandatory component. Students are expected to read all discussion board instructions and rubrics and to participate actively throughout the semester. Students are expected to write formally (no shorthand or text messaging abbreviations) and use APA format and referencing where appropriate. There will be general questions relating to the chapter(s), case vignettes, current events, and/or watching a video and posting your response. Thoughtful responses, constructive critique of fellow students, and meaningful participation are expected. Please keep in mind the discussion board is a formal assignment and part of your grade.

Discussion Thread Participation:

As stated earlier, the discussion board is a mandatory component. Discussion questions will be posted on the discussion board. Typically, your initial post to the discussion assignments are due by 11:30 pm on Thursdays and your response to at least two peers' posts (you may respond to as many peers' posts as you want) are due by 11:30 pm on Saturdays. Due dates will change at times during the semester (especially during holiday weeks) so it is the responsibility of the student to follow the due dates listed in each weekly post assignment.

If anyone fails to do the initial posts and fails to respond to peers' posts for any three discussion threads he or she may be dropped from the course.

I will review your posts and responses and give individual feedback when grading posts. I may respond in the discussion thread to a select few posts and/or responses or respond collectively to the class. This does not mean only the posts and/or responses of those to whom I respond are good and other posts and/or responses are not good.

Note: If needed, changes will be made in the syllabus while the sessions are on.

Quizzes

Students will complete weekly quizzes by 11:30 pm on Fridays based on the required book chapters and unit notes as indicated in the class schedule. The quizzes are open book and notes, but there will be only 30 minutes to complete them. **Quizzes cannot be made up if missed, and a grade of zero (0) will be recorded.**

Drug Research Paper

Due **Nov. 4th**: Students will complete a research paper on a drug, preferably one that is discussed in the text or is problematic in the student's geographic area. The paper must be double spaced, written in the format of the American Psychological Association (APA), and be no more than 3 pages in length (excluding title and reference pages).

The paper should address, at a minimum, the following:

- What is the history of the drug?
- Why is the drug a problem to society?
- What are problems or issues that surround the drug?
- How does the drug work? What are the adverse health effects of taking the drug?
- What are the psychological and physiological effects of the drug?
- What is being done to combat the adverse health effects associated with the drug?
- Are there any current treatments for addiction to the drug? How effective are they?

Papers must cite and reference at least one source other than the text book. Grading will be based on the quality of the writing, the quality of the information presented, and adherence to APA formatting. Papers will be posted for your classmates to view. This paper will be 20% of the final course grade.

Final Exam

Due **Dec. 3rd**: The cumulative final exam will be posted in D2L. The final will be 20% of the final course grade.

Late Work

Students who fail to post required assignments on time will receive a lower grade, and the ones who do not complete the assignments will receive a grade of zero (please review the time submission criteria on the rubrics for each assignment). If anyone fails to post an original post or replies for 3 or more assignments, they will be dropped from the course or will be given a failing grade. There are no exceptions to this rule.

Make Up Work/Tests

Missed assignments & exams cannot be made up if missed. A grade of zero (0) will be recorded.

Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: August 23-26

Deadline to file for graduation: September 27 for December Graduation, October 4 for May Graduation

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" 4:00pm October 25

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Attendance

Students are responsible for checking emails and logging onto D2L regularly to ensure that messages from the instructor and fellow students are received in a timely manner. Students who wish to meet with me face to face or by Zoom should schedule an appointment in advance via email catherine.earley@msutexas.edu.

Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. ***Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.*** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. **Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world which is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Instructor Class Policies

All students registered for courses in the Social Work Department are expected to adhere to the responsibilities and behavior as articulated in both the [Student Handbook](#) and the NASW (National Association of Social Workers) [Code of Ethics](#). An essential feature of these codes is a commitment to maintaining intellectual integrity and academic honesty. I generally have a **zero-tolerance policy for cheating or plagiarism**, and violations will result in substantial penalties including a failing grade on the assignment with no make-up opportunity and/or a referral to the Dean of Students.

Repeated **accidental or willful cheating or use of someone else's words, ideas, or evidence without attribution will be met with a failing grade in the course and a referral to the Dean of Students**, regardless of whether the first occurrence was in this course. If you have any doubts or questions about what constitutes academic misconduct, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Students are expected to display professional decorum at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, respecting classmates and the instructor.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. **The law does NOT allow open carry on campus.** For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's webpage [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [Undergraduate Catalog](#)

Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule:

Online delivery with asynchronous interactions between students and students and teacher, interactive discussions, and assignments.

D2L will be used throughout the semester. The course materials (syllabus, discussion board, and other course items) will be posted onto D2L. Power points will consist of materials from the textbook and other sources.

Intro to Substance Abuse Course Schedule

(The instructor reserves the right to adjust the syllabus schedule as needed.)

Week & Dates	Topic	Reading & Assignments
Week 1 August 23 – August 28	Drug Use in Modern Society: An Overview & Drug Use as a Social Problem	- Introduction - Chapters 1 & 2 - Discussion 1
Week 2 August 29 – September 4	Drug Policy	- Chapter 3 - Quiz 1
Week 3 September 5 – September 11	How Drugs Work: The Nervous System The Actions of Drugs	- Chapters 4 & 5 - Discussion 2 - Quiz 2
Week 4 September 12– September 18	Uppers and Downers: Stimulants & Depressants and Inhalants	- Chapter 6 & 7 - Quiz 3
Week 5 September 19– September 25	Medication for Mental Disorders	- Chapter 8 - Discussion 3 - Quiz 4
Week 6 September 26– October 2	Alcohol	- Chapter 9 - Quiz 5
Week 7 October 3 – October 9	Familiar Drugs: Tobacco & Caffeine	- Chapters 10 & 11 - Discussion 4 - Quiz 6

Week & Dates	Topic	Reading & Assignments
Week 8 October 10 – October 16	Dietary Supplements and Over-the-Counter Drugs	- Chapter 12 - Quiz 7
Week 9 October 17 – October 23	Restricted Drugs: Opioids & Psychedelics	- Chapters 13 & 14 - Discussion 5 - Quiz 8
Week 10 October 24 – October 30	Cannabis	- Chapter 15 - Quiz 9
Week 11 October 31- November 6	Performance-Enhancing Drugs	- Chapter 16 - Drug Research Paper - Discussion 6 - Quiz 10
Week 12 November 7- November 13	Prevention and Harm Reduction: Preventing Substance Abuse	- Chapter 17 - Quiz 11
Week 13 November 14- November 20	Rethinking Drug Policy: What Works, What’s Possible, and What’s Feasible	- Chapter 18 - Discussion 7 - Quiz 12
Week 14 November 21- November 27	Thanksgiving Break- No Assignments Due	
Week 15 November 28- December 4	Final Exam	- Available from Nov.27-11:30pm Dec. 3