

## CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY

PSYCH 445

FALL, 2018

DR. NORA NOEL

Class times: Tuesdays, 5:00 - 7:45 pm      Office Hours: M W 2 - 3

Class Meeting Room: TL1006

Office: TL3044; 962 - 4044; e-mail: NOELN@UNCW.EDU

### OVERVIEW

This course is designed as an advanced consideration of substance use and abuse from a bio-psycho-social perspective. We will be reading and discussing ideas about how processes interact to produce dependence on and abuse of psychoactive substances. The class format will be seminar style. There will be weekly readings, reaction papers and group discussions.

Chemical Dependency 445 has **two prerequisites**: Psych 245 (Drugs and Behavior) and Psych 355 (Research Methods in Psychology). If you have not passed these two courses, or have an equivalent background approved by me, then you should not be in this course.

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will have:

1. Read and discussed reviews and primary source material regarding a variety of the traditional and empirically-derived theories of chemical dependency.
2. Used the knowledge, skills and abilities learned in this and other courses to understand the basic tenets of each theory, how they can be integrated or where they differ fundamentally, and how each can be applied to understanding the development of alcohol and drug dependence.
3. Articulated their views, with supporting evidence based on research, both in a seminar setting and in a written format (on the midterm and final examinations).
4. Led a well-integrated and research-supported discussion of at least one of these theories in the seminar setting and followed up with a summary paper at the end of the semester.

### READINGS

The required readings for the course will be listed from week to week. They are a mixture of "classic" articles, recent reviews and recent research reports. We will also use some chapters from a book for several of the readings, so you might want to buy it, although it is not necessary. The book is **"Rethinking Substance Abuse" edited by William R. Miller and Kathleen M. Carroll (Guilford Press, 2006)**. I will give you an overview of the next week's material at the end of each class, so that you can think about some of the important issues while you are reading. Everyone is required to do the readings each week, every week. Because this is a seminar, you will be expected to have read the assigned material before each class and to come to class prepared for a discussion of the issues raised in the material. I will freely call on you, by name, in class to answer questions about the material, so come prepared. The reading is spread out pretty evenly, with about three or four readings per week.

### SEMINAR PARTICIPATION

Since some of you have not taken a seminar before, it might be helpful to know what to expect. A seminar is defined as, "a small group of students in college or graduate school engaged in original research or intensive study under the guidance of a professor." It is from the Latin word seminarium

which means "seed plot" or a place where new ideas are grown. Originally, for the Romans and the Greeks, seminars were small informal "wine and cheese" gatherings of learned men (before affirmative action allowed women to participate) to discuss important and new ideas. It gradually changed to refer to a class, but retained the idea of discussion, so, ironically, in this class we have a seminar to discuss wine (if not cheese).

Because this is a seminar, class attendance and participation are required. If you miss a class, I will have to deduct points from your participation grade. You cannot participate in a seminar that you do not attend. As a rule of thumb, students who miss two or more classes will lose a whole grade, for example, going from A to a B, or worse, a B to a C. In addition, each week there will be at least one recent research paper among the readings. You should be able to discuss how the more theoretical papers relate to the research presented. These reactions will serve to promote discussion and focus our work each week. Be prepared. Your participation grade will be based, in part, on the quality of your in-class discussion. Note that you cannot "react" if you have not read and thought about the material before class so you might even want to prepare some reactions before each class.

Overview of Reactions: In order to provide an understanding of addictive behaviors, a theory has to address four important questions: 1) Why do people in general use psychoactive substances?; 2) Why do some people use more than others?; 3) Why do some people become dependent/ addicted/ abusers/whatever?; and 4) What can be done to alleviate this dependence/ addiction/abuse/whatever? You should think about how each reading answers these questions, and how effectively the reading answers the questions (e.g. do the authors have good data or other evidence to back up their hypotheses? Do they provide a good description or definition of the phenomenon they discuss? Is the theory plausible?)

Class Discussions: Examples of some discussion from past classes include: 1) How do 12-Step treatment approaches relate to disease models of alcohol and drug addiction? 2) Are all "addicts" physically dependent on a substance? If not, how does one decide if they are dependent? What are the important issues influencing this decision? Is there such a thing as psychological dependence without physical dependence? 3) Should drug laws be changed based on the actions or the consequences of the drugs? Should all/some drugs be banned? Should some drugs be openly available? 4) Can we predict the development of alcoholism on the basis of genetic or personality factors? 5) How do Cultural factors, Ethnicity and Gender influence substance use? Does knowledge of this influence lead to stereotyping and stigmatization?

Additionally, each graduate student will choose a week and lead the discussion of one of the readings for that week. You must read and integrate the material for a coherent power point presentation with the rest of the papers. This will also involve doing some extra reading for that week and preparing a presentation in a way that facilitates discussion of the other work. Obviously, you will need to meet with me ahead of time. This will give you the experience of leading a seminar discussion. Note that this does not relieve the other class members of their duty to read all the class material assigned before the class and come prepared to discuss it. Finally, each presenter needs to complete a short (5 - 7 page) paper on some additional recent research on your particular topic and turn in the paper on the last day of class (December 4).

## GRADING

Your grade will be determined by your seminar participation including your participation in the class discussions (30 %), your specific presentation and paper (30%), your performance on the midterm (20 %), and your performance on the final exam (20 %). Requirements for participation are discussed above. The midterm and the final will be essay exams, so be prepared to write. The final exam will be

comprehensive for the course. The grading scale is 90 - 100 = A; 80 - 89 = B; 70 - 79 = C; 60 - 69 = D; and anything below that is an F.

### CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Week 1; August 28:

Introduction

Nature of class (What is a seminar?)

How the class will be conducted

What will be covered in the class

Short assessment of your current knowledge

Week 2; September 4:

Defining and Addressing Substance Abuse

Week 3; September 11

Some Examples of Very Negative Consequences of Addiction

Week 4; September 18:

Why Do People (Ab)Use Psychoactive Substances? "Traditional" Formulations and Models

Week 5; September 25:

Why Do People (Ab)Use Psychoactive Substances? Neuroscience, Genetics and Development

Week 6; October 2:

Why Do People (Ab)Use Psychoactive Substances? Learning Theories

Week 7: October 9

Why Do People (Ab)Use Psychoactive Substances? Cognitive and Social Learning Theories

Week 8: October 16

MIDTERM

Week 9: October 23

How do Family and Social issues Influence (Ab)Use of Psychoactive Substances?

Week 10: October 31

Ethnic and Cultural Issues Associated with (Ab)Use of Psychoactive Substances

Week 11: November 6

Paths to Recovery: Self-Help Groups & Natural Recovery Research

Week 12: November 13

Paths to Recovery: Formal Treatment Research

Week 13: November 20

No class; Outside class assignment: Work on Paper

Week 14: November 27

Evidence-Based Treatment (What does that mean?)

Week 15: December 4

Wrap-up, Revisit your views and how changed (or not)

PAPERS DUE TODAY!

Exam Week: FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, December 11, 7 - 10 pm