

CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY

PSYCH 545 AND 445

FALL, 2017

DR. NORA NOEL

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

Class Meeting Room: TL2012

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OVERVIEW

This course is designed as an advanced consideration of substance abuse problems 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.

For graduate students, the prerequisites for this course are Drugs and Behavior (Psych 245) and admission to the graduate program. The next graduate course in the sequence (Psych 551) will consider treatment strategies for people who abuse substances. Psych 551 is open only to Graduate Students in the COSUD concentration.

For undergraduate students, 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. (For students enrolled in PSY545) Led a well-integrated and research-supported discussion of at least one of these theories in the seminar setting.
5. (For COSUD students) Communicated how these theories can be integrated into the assessment and treatment of future clients with alcohol and drug problems.

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 a book for several of the readings, so I recommend that you 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 (graduate and undergraduate) 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. The class will be divided, so that everyone will read a base reading or two. Then, each student will be assigned a third reading, while other students will be assigned a different third reading. Each student must come to class prepared to explain his/her third reading to the rest of the group who did not read it, and vice versa. I will explain more as we proceed.

I recommend that the SATP graduate students planning to take Psych 551 keep copies of all readings from this class, since I will expect you to be familiar with them in the Spring semester and on your Comprehensive exams.

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) 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).

To read more on seminars, please note that I have attached an explanation that I have often found helpful for advanced undergrads who are taking a seminar for the first time. Please ask me if you have any questions.

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, all students (undergraduate as well as graduate) will be required to write an in-class reaction paper periodically (it's a pop quiz—I won't tell you ahead of time). 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 reactions as well as on 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 a reaction before each class.

Overview: 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 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?

Graduate students have an additional participation requirement (noted above). I expect you to be

able to articulate a more in-depth understanding of the topics in substance abuse, so here is how it will work. Each graduate student will choose a week and lead the discussion of the readings for that week. You must read and integrate the material for a coherent presentation. This will also involve doing some extra reading for that week and preparing a presentation of at least one extra paper in a way that facilitates discussion of the other work. Obviously, you will need to meet with me ahead of time. This is to 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 and before the class and come prepared to discuss it. In addition, if one of the undergraduates wants to try this one week, I can make arrangements and help out with that.

GRADING

Your grade will be determined by your seminar participation including your reaction papers and participation in the class discussions (50 %), your performance on the midterm (20 %), and your performance on the final exam (30 %). 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.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Week 1; August 22:

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; August 29:

Defining and Addressing Substance Abuse

Week 3; September 5

Some Examples of Very Negative Consequences of Addiction

Week 4; September 12:

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

Weeks 5; September 19:

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

Week 6; September 26:

Why Do People (Ab)Use Psychoactive Substances? Learning + Developmental Hypotheses

Week 7: Midterm October 3

Weeks 8 & 9: October 10 & 17

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

Week 10: October 24

How do Family issues Influence Substance Abuse?

Week 11: October 31

Ethnic, Cultural and Social Issues Associated with Drug Abuse

Weeks 12 & 13: November 7 & 14

Paths to Recovery: Treatment, Self-Help Groups & Natural Recovery

Week 14: November 28

Evidence-Based Treatment (What does that mean?)

Exam Week: FINAL EXAM