

HLTH 23: DRUGS, HEALTH & SOCIETY

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	4
Hours:	4 lecture per week (48 total per quarter)
Advisory:	One of the following: ENGL 1A or 1AH or ESLL 26.
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area 7: Lifelong Learning
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

Description

This course explores the world-wide crisis and challenge of substance abuse, including its historical effects on various societies and cultures. In addition to examining this from a social perspective, students receive an overview of the epidemiology and toxicology of substance abuse and its relevance to personal and public health. Students are introduced to the concept of substance abuse and dependence, the definition of licit and illicit drugs, and the pharmacologic, neurologic, and physiologic effects of selected substances on the human brain. Political, social, and economic factors involved in the supply and demand for drugs are discussed. Epidemiologic data on the prevalence, incidence, and trends of smoking, alcohol, and prescription and other drug dependencies globally are covered, as well as risk factors associated with the use and abuse of these substances. Current options for recovery are reviewed.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Explore and analyze global (world-wide) substance abuse and its historical effects on societies and cultures
2. Describe the psycho-therapeutic benefits (if any) and harmful effects of common substances of abuse, and identify the populations most at risk of using these substances
3. Distinguish the difference between drug use, misuse, and abuse
4. Identify the factors associated with the use of specific substances of abuse, including populations at most risk based on age, sex, education, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and age at first initiation
5. Apply basic knowledge of drug laws to evaluate historical legal cases and situations related to substance abuse
6. Describe the neurological and physiological responses to various types of drugs
7. Recognize the short and long term consequences of substance use and abuse
8. Analyze the current public health perspective on the issue of substance abuse, including broad political, social, and economic factors related to substance abuse

9. Interpret reliable public data sources to find statistical and epidemiologic data on incidence, prevalence, and trends in drug, tobacco, and alcohol use
10. Analyze arguments on both sides of a selected controversial issue, such as drug testing in the workplace or legalization of marijuana

Course Content

1. Exploration of world-wide substance abuse and historical effects on societies and cultures
2. Introduction to drugs and society
 - a. History of drugs and drug use
 - b. Prevalence and demographics
 - c. Epidemiological and statistical data
3. Definitions of drug use, misuse, and abuse
 - a. Origin and nature of addiction
 - b. Cycle of drug addiction
 - c. Signs of drug misuse and abuse
4. Identify the factors associated with the use of specific substances
 - a. Populations at most risk
5. Drug use, regulation, and the law
 - a. The role of federal agencies
 - b. Public policies in the U.S.
 - c. Current controversies
 - d. Historical legal cases
 - e. Federal agencies focused on drug abuse prevention
6. Homeostatic systems and drugs
 - a. Neurological and physiological effects on the central nervous system
 - b. The role of heredity
 - c. Other physiological effects
7. How and why drugs work
 - a. Pharmacology of drugs
 - b. Beneficial vs. harmful effects
 - c. Drug categories
 - i. CNS depressants
 1. Sedative-hypnotics
 2. Alcohol: pharmacological effects and behavioral perspective
 3. Narcotics (opioids)
 4. Marijuana
 - ii. Stimulants
 1. Tobacco
 2. Amphetamines
 3. Cocaine
 4. Caffeine
 - iii. Hallucinogens (psychedelics)
 1. Nature of hallucinogens
 2. Types of hallucinogens
 - iv. Inhalants
 1. Types of inhalants
 2. Current patterns and signs of abuse
 - v. Over the counter (OTC), prescriptions, and herbal drugs
 1. Use, misuse, abuse
8. Drug use within major sub-cultures

- a. Youth
 - b. Adults
 - c. High risk populations
 - d. Ethnic disparities
9. Social issues surrounding drug use, abuse, prevention, and laws
 - a. Impact on society
 - b. Drugs and crime
 - c. Political and economic factors
 10. Drug abuse prevention
 - a. Family-based programs
 - b. Community-based programs
 11. Treating drug dependence
 - a. Assessing addiction and readiness to change
 - b. Principles of treatment
 - c. Rehabilitation strategies

Lab Content

Not applicable.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

1. Computer projection equipment and document camera. Students need internet access.
2. When taught online, on-going access to computer with email software and hardware; email address.

Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Exams
Quizzes
Written assignments
Projects

Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lecture
Discussion
Case analysis and discussion questions
Online discussions/chat
Practice activities to gauge understanding of content
Review of comprehension of key concepts
Quiz knowledge of key terms

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Hanson, G.R., P.J. Venturelli, and A.F. Fleckenstein. Drugs and Society. 14th ed. 2022.

Abadinsky. Drug Use and Abuse. 2018.

Goldberg. Drugs Across the Spectrum. 2018.

Hart and Ksir. Drugs, Society and Human Behavior. 2018.

Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

1. Assigned reading from textbook and completion of post-tests at the end of each section of the course (approximately 50 pages/week)
2. Practice activities to gauge understanding of content
3. Review comprehension of key concepts
4. Quiz knowledge of key terms
5. Through case study investigation and analysis, apply learned concepts
6. Review of authoritative internet sources regarding world-wide substance abuse and historical effects on societies and cultures

Discipline(s)

Health