

# Psychoactive Drugs (Psy 383)

Fall Term, 2012; University of Oregon

## *The Instructor:*

Dr. Peter Sparks ([psparks@uoregon.edu](mailto:psparks@uoregon.edu))

Office Hours: MW, 4-5:10pm (Rm. 326, Straub)

## *The Teaching Assistant:*

Lauren O'Neil ([oneil@uoregon.edu](mailto:oneil@uoregon.edu))

Office hours: By Appointment Only (via email)

## *The Meeting Time:*

TR, 4:00-5:20pm

129 McKensie Hall (MCK; [Map](#))

## *The Textbook:*

C. Hart and C. Ksir *Drugs, Society and Human Behavior* (14<sup>th</sup> ed.) McGraw Hill Pub.

**Welcome to Psychoactive Drugs!** This course is meant to be an introduction to biological, psychological and sociological issues related to the use of the most popular legal and illegal drugs (such as alcohol, nicotine, stimulants, narcotics, hallucinogens, as well as psychotherapeutic drugs and supplements). More specifically, this course will introduce you to the basic pharmacology and neuroscience of drug effects, the clinical effects of drugs including addiction and therapy, and finally a sociological account of drug use such as describing who uses drugs and why, discussing issues related to crime and legalization within a historical context. This course is meant to provide you with a basic understanding of the issues relating to drug use so that you can make informed decisions about your own behavior. Just say "Know"!

### Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understand basic pharmacological and neurological concepts and as related to drug use
2. Understand the clinical effects of the most popular legal and illegal drugs including the health concerns
3. Recognize, compare and contrast various theoretical perspectives used to explain drug use and addiction.
4. Identify and critically discuss different points of view of legal and social issues related to drug use
5. Identify historical and present-day governmental regulations of drug use
6. Apply critical thinking to assumptions, claims, and common sense ideas about drug use.

**To achieve these goals**, there are a number of topics which I hope we will cover this term. I emphasize the word "hope" since no one can never predict the future. What we do cover depends entirely on the time it takes to cover certain topics, the pace of the lectures and the interest of the students. In addition, this "Drugs" field is always changing with new and interesting twists occurring all of the time. I am very open to discussing something at the spur of the moment. Covering all of these topics would be great, but may not happen. Thus, the description of the course presented below could change. The best thing is to simply come to class, and pay attention to the announcements in the Blackboard component of class. **The exam dates will not change.** Therefore, the exams will only concern what material we have covered in class since the last exam. Detailed subject outlines will be handed out at the start of a new topic, which will help you follow along with the lecture and keep track of details such as definitions.

**Course Website:** (accessed via <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu>) All handouts, homework announcements, grades, copies of lecture power points, lecture worksheets, and other materials, will be posted in Blackboard. Nothing will be handed out in class (on paper) except the exams.

**Readings and Lecture Schedule:** Presented below is the lecture and readings schedule. Please be aware that there will be other readings as handed out by me via Blackboard. These additional readings will be announced in class and via Blackboard. Often they will be associated with a homework assignment.

<b><u>Subject Matter</u></b>	<b><u>Book Chapter</u></b>
<b>Week 1 (Sept. 24-29)</b>	
Introduction:	Chapter 1 (p1-7)
The Basics:	
Pharmacology	Chapter 5
Neuroscience	Chapter 4
<b>Week 2 (Sept. 30 – Oct. 6)</b>	
The Basics: (Continued)	
Neuroscience	Chapter 4
The Drugs:     Alcohol	Chapter 9
<b>Week 3 (Oct. 7-13)</b>	
The Drugs:     Tobacco	Chapter 10
The Drugs:     Caffeine	Chapter 11
<b>Week 4 (Oct. 14-20): Exam 1 Tuesday (Oct. 16)</b>	
Narcotics	Chapter 13
<b>Week 5 (Oct. 21-27)</b>	
The Drugs:     Stimulants	Chapter 6
The Drugs:     Depressants and Inhalants	Chapter 7
<b>Week 6 (Oct. 28 – Nov. 3)</b>	
The Drugs:     Cannabis	Chapter 15
Hallucinogens	Chapter 14
<b>Week 7 (Nov. 4-10): Exam 2 on Thursday, Nov. 9<sup>th</sup></b>	
The Drugs:     Psychotherapeutic Drugs	Chapter 8
Supplements and Performance Drugs	Chapter 12, 16
<b>Week 8 (Nov. 11-17)</b>	
Why do we do drugs?	Chapter 1 (p7-22)
Who is doing them?	
Toxicity and Addiction	Chapter 2
Therapy and Prevention	Chapter 17-18
<b>Week 9 (Nov. 18-24) Thanksgiving! (No class Thursday/Friday)</b>	
Drug Culture and ritual	
History of Government Control	Chapter 3
<b>Week 10 (Nov. 25 – Dec. 1)</b>	
Crime and the Economy	TBA (Supplemental Reading)
Legalization?	
Course Summary	
<b>Week 11 (Dec. 2-8) Final Exam Week!!</b>	
<b>Our exam is <u>scheduled</u> for <u>Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, at 1pm</u>. Make note of the different time!!!!</b>	
<i>During this time, we will take our 3<sup>rd</sup> exam. It will only cover the material covered after the second exam, and therefore is <u>NOT</u> an all comprehensive exam.</i>	

## Evaluation

**Homework:** There will be homework assignments this term, but they need to be timed with and announced in concert with the topics we cover in class. Thus, the "Assignments" folder in Blackboard starts off the term as hidden. It will appear soon! The purpose of these assignments is to get you to think a little bit more about the material discussed in class or tangential material that we didn't get into during lecture. The homework assignments will be posted on the announced in class and posted in Blackboard at various times throughout the term and will be worth 5-10pts each. They will mostly consist of reading articles and reflecting on them in essay format. In some cases, there may be some data to analyze (compile and interpret) or include a discussion board component where students work in groups to distill a position which becomes posted in a discussion board (via Blackboard). **All homework needs to be typed and turned in during class (i.e. A Hardcopy). Submission via email is not desired, but possible with a dire circumstance (it needs to be in DOC or RFT formats).**

**Paper:** There will be a paper assignment this term. There is much discussion concerning the topic of drugs and drug use in our society today, but unfortunately much of it comes from ideology rather than facts. The purpose of this class is to get you to have an opinion that is backed in fact. So I would simply like you to choose a topic dear to your heart and learn the facts. This is a position paper, meaning I want you to have an opinion, but you must do the research and find the truth (as far as you can). The paper should be 8-10 pages long, not including bibliography (a more clear description of the paper will be given to you later in the term), and use at least 8 citations. This paper will be worth 50 pts.

*Any assignment that has excessive spelling errors or very poor grammar will automatically be deducted 2 pts (or more). Use your spell and grammar check. I am not perfect myself in this respect, but frankly the work of some of my past students work has become that bad. Take pride in your work.*

**Lecture Worksheets:** There will be worksheets for each drug lecture ("The Drugs") to help you focus your note taking and studying. The questions on these worksheets will follow the lecture for each drug pretty closely and they should be answered. When all of the drug lectures are complete (after week 7, ending with 'Supplements'), you will then packaged them together (in a folder) and submit them. Do NOT submit them one at a time. They will not be graded for accuracy but for completeness and effort. They are worth 5 pts each (30-35pts total), and if you answered all of the questions, you will earn your 5 points. IF the answers are incomplete or missing, you will not get all of the points for that worksheet. You should work on each worksheet as we cover that drug in class. Waiting till the package needs to be turned in is not a good use of your time and will not facilitate the learning of this material.

**Exams:** There will be 3 exams this term. Each will be worth 100 pts and will only cover the material presented since the last exam; this includes the final or last exam. All exams will be composed of short answer questions and multiple choice questions. The material tested will come MOSTLY from my lectures, but items not covered in lecture, but part of your assigned readings, could make it on the exam as well. I will try to keep that situation to a minimum. Certainly, if it is in my lecture AND in the readings, you ABSOLUTELY will find it on the test. The point is that the book is there to help you and guide you, but come to the classes!!!! Those that come to class will do well, and those that do not, will not do well. **Also, a green "Scan Tron" is required; so be prepared!**

*As we get closer to an exam, I will be able to tell you exactly what topics will be on the exam.*

**Final grade:** The final grade will be determined by assessing the number of points that you get from the homework assignments and exams out of the total number of points possible. It is very likely that the exams will constitute 70% of your grade and the other assignments will make up the rest. Letter grades will be applied as follows:

97-100%= A+	83-86.99%= B	70-72.99%= C-	59.99%-below= F
93-96.99%= A	80-82.99%= B-	67-69.99%= D+	
90-92.99%= A-	77-79.99%= C+	63-66.99%= D	
87-89.99%= B+	73-76.99%= C	60-62.99%= D-	

A grade less than a 60% will be a failing grade. Do not fail this class. I will try to explain the material to the best that I can, but it is up to you to read the text book and to come to me if there is something that doesn't make sense or that you need help with. I can't help you if I don't know there is a problem. The homework assignments are a good assessment. If you do not recognize or understand the homework, come and see me as soon as possible!!!!!!

## Summary of Important dates

It is important to understand that there are many Academic deadlines this term. Be aware of them! While I tend to be pretty flexible is someone wants to withdrawal or change from decimal grading to Pass-No Pass, there are deadlines for such actions. [Click here to see the Academic Schedule](#).

## Final points:

**How to study:** Let me give some pointers on how to study for this course. The biggest issue for most students is that they do not understand how much effort it takes to do well. I expect my students to not only understand, but to remember the facts, terms, and concepts presented in this course. My tests are fair, but challenging. It takes a lot of effort to do well in this course. Studying a few hours the night before the exam will not work out so well for you. The main reason for this is simply that we will be covering a lot of information; it is not difficult to understand, but it is a lot. Start studying a week in advance! Organize your notes, compare them with the handouts and the book. Re-write them, it really helps. Outline the chapter, don't just read it. Then when you have stumbled on something which you don't understand, you can ask me and I will explain it to you. I am here solely to help you learn the material. If you start studying ahead of time, you will be able to take advantage of me. This really, REALLY helps. Clearly this advice is very brief. I have created an extended in-depth description of techniques that can be used and have posted it on my website. Please look it over. If you are not doing well, come and talk with me as soon as you can. Take responsibility for your efforts and do not expect the same strategy to lead to a better grade on the next exam. If you are not doing well, change your strategy!!!!!!

**Late Work/Make up Policy:** Homework and other assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. If the work is late, a point will automatically be docked for every day late. In the end, missing an assignment will be devastating to your grade, so turn them in! Because of the essay part of the exam, there will be little flexibility in terms of changing your exam date. You will need to have a fantastic excuse to make up an exam or to postpone an exam. I will be even more resistant to letting people take exams early.

**Attendance Policy:** Come to class! Your attendance will not affect your final grade directly, but I cannot overemphasize the fact that those who miss class WILL NOT do well. If you miss class, do not simply ask what we covered (and to give an impromptu lecture). I am an absent-minded professor and will not remember exactly what we did. Your job is to get the notes from a classmate, and if you need to, bring them to me and I can explain/go over them with you. You should get to know someone in class and get their phone number in case you miss a class.

**Cheating and Plagiarism:** Do not do these things. Cheating and Plagiarism are serious offenses and will be dealt with severely! This could mean failing the test or assignment, failing the class or being excused from this college. I have little to no patience with cheating and will deal with the issue with the most severe action at my disposal. It is always better to simply work hard and learn the material. If you are having a problem learning the material, come see me. I have plenty of time to help you. Do not resort to cheating!

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please let me know if there is anything I can do to help. If you think there is something "going on" which is inhibiting your ability to learn, please contact the [Accessible Education Center \(AEC\)](#) either by email ([uoaec@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoaec@uoregon.edu)) or by phone (1-541-346-1155) or come and talk with me. Don't be shy; I have had numerous students come to me after failing an exam and casually mention that they thought they were ADHD, Dyslexic, learning disabled or had anxiety issues. Support through the AEC is not special treatment, but is there to help you be the best that you can be. Let us help before the exam.

**Finally:** It is important that you do well and learn the material. So feel free to email me anytime with questions. I understand that many questions will come when you are studying at night. Get on the email or phone and leave a message, I will respond. Also, feel free to catch me after class or before class and ask me anything. I am there to help you learn and understand the material as much as I can. So use me!

In addition, the UO has numerous resources to help you become the best that you can be as well. Please consult the [Learning Services website](#). Performing poorly is more due to unrefined academic skills and effort than some inherent trait within the student. 99% of us need to work hard to learn the material; let us help you perform at your best.