

Supplement A: Psychopharmacology (PSYC 305) Syllabus

Psychopharmacology (Psychology 305)

Fall Semester, 2015

Class meets: M W F, 10:30-11:20 am

Dr. Susan Kennedy

Office: Room 404D Knapp Hall

Email: kennedys

Office Hours: Mondays and Fridays, 1:00-2:30, and by appointment

Books required for the course:

McKim, W.A. and Hancock, S. (2012). *Drugs and Behavior: An Introduction to Behavioral Pharmacology*. 7th Edition. Pearson Publishing.

Goldberg, R. (2012). *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Drugs and Society*. 10th Edition, McGraw Hill Publishing.

What is this course about?

Psychopharmacology is the scientific study of drugs and their effects on the brain and on mood, thought and behavior. This course is designed to provide students with an in-depth introduction to the field of Psychopharmacology. We will be introduced to the important basics of the field (pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics, dose response curves, half life, etc.), and then will examine the major classes of psychoactive drugs, including stimulants (cocaine, amphetamine), depressants (alcohol, heroin, oxycontin), hallucinogens (LSD, methamphetamine) and drugs to treat some psychological disorders (antidepressants, drugs to manage bipolar disorder, for example). Throughout the course, we will discuss some of the current controversial issues in Psychopharmacology, including the use of cannabis (marijuana) for medicinal purposes, the use (overuse?) of methylphenidate (Ritalin), and the view that we have become a society dependent on medication. In order to fully understand both sides of these issues, it is imperative to have a grasp on the basics of Psychopharmacology.

The course is appropriate for students in Psychology, Biology, Neuroscience, Sociology, or for any students with a genuine interest in the field.

I have a number of objectives for you as we move through the semester:

1. I expect that all students will work consistently and diligently to master new concepts and ideas in the field of Psychopharmacology
2. I expect that you will acquire a comfortable “working fluency” of the terms and concepts in the field
3. I expect that you will continue to work on written skills and oral communication skills in class discussions and on written assignments and exams

4. As we examine some of the controversial issues in the field, I hope that you will gain an appreciation of the importance of these issues and for both sides of the issues, even though you may not agree with both sides.
5. I hope that you will gain a sense of empowerment (and enjoyment!) as you plan and execute an action research project focusing on alcohol abuse on college campuses.

Please take advantage of my office hours if you are having difficulty with the course materials (lecture material, readings), or if you want to come in and talk about an issue in Psychopharmacology that is of particular interest to you.

Course format: exams, assignments, grading:

1. **Exams:** There will be three in class exams (100 points each) and a comprehensive final (200 points) to be given on Thursday, **December 17, 9-11 a.m.**, the date scheduled by the Office of the Registrar. **Please schedule your holiday travel plans accordingly!** No make up exams will be given. If you are ill and must miss one of the three **hourly** exams, additional points will be added to your final exam IF you notify me PRIOR to the start of the exam AND present me with a physician's note upon your return to class. Failure to do these two things will result in a "0 for the exam, with no opportunity to make up missed points. **ALL STUDENTS MUST TAKE THE FINAL EXAM ON THE SCHEDULED DATE.**

Exams are a mix of multiple choice, short answer and longer answer questions, based on material from readings, lectures, class discussions, films, etc. Please note that I prefer to give feedback on short papers and exams in person, rather than in writing. There is data suggesting that face to face feedback is more effective for students than is writing on papers and exams that are handed back.

Hourly Exams: 3 @ 100 points = 300 points

Final Exam: 1 @ 200 points = 200 points

2. **Critical thinking papers:** There will be two short critical thinking papers based on some issue or concept discussed in class or in the readings. These papers are worth 20 points and are due in hard copy at the start of class on their assigned due date. There will be a 10% deduction for every hour your paper is late, with no papers accepted after 2:30 pm on the assigned date.

Critical Thinking papers: 2 @20 points = 40 points

3. **Examining controversial issues on Psychopharmacology:** Based on the *Taking Sides* book, you will present either the "pro" or "con" side of an important and socially relevant issue to the class. Your presentation will be followed by class discussion. During the first full week of class, you'll be asked to provide me with your top three choices for your *Taking Sides* presentation; I'll then form small groups and provide you with the details of your presentations.

Taking Sides Presentation: 1 @ 20 points = 20 points

4. Final “action research” project: One of the major issues of concern on college campuses (such as ours) is the misuse of alcohol by college students. This semester, you will engage in an “action research” project designed to promote safer alcohol consumption on our campus (in other words, a “harm reduction approach”). Action research is a term used in Sociology, consisting of linking knowledge and information to social action and social change. For most of you, this will be a small group project; others of you may wish to work individually. You must meet with me to discuss the details and methods of your project by mid-October (fall break). Projects will be carried out during the second half of the semester. Here are some potential topics for your action research project:

---an interactive social media site to address the issue of irresponsible drinking and its potential consequences

---an on campus “campaign” that addresses effective “marketing strategies” to result in safer on-campus alcohol consumption (working with Office of Student Development)

---soliciting input from elected officials and local vendors to add “warning labels” on alcohol products, focusing on drug interactions

---working with *The Denisonian* to create weekly (?) editorials or feature stories related to alcohol abuse on college campuses.

Final project @ 100 points = 100 points

Final project presentation, self reflection and assessment @ 20 points = 20 points

Grades:

Grades are based on the earned percentage of total possible points (680 points possible), using the standard grading scale (90-100, 80-89, etc.), with + and – at the “tail ends” of each letter grade range.

Course policies: please read and practice these policies:

1. Attendance: I expect every student to be on time for, and engaged in, every class meeting. Missing or being tardy for more than two classes will result in a “friendly chat” at first, followed by ½ letter grade penalty for tardiness and absences thereafter.

2. Academic integrity: : <http://denison.edu/academics/curriculum/integrity>

Proposed and developed by Denison students and passed unanimously by DCGA and the faculty, the Code of Academic Integrity requires that instructors notify the Associate Provost of cases of academic dishonesty, and requires that ALL cases be heard by the Academic Integrity Board. In addition, the code makes students responsible for

promoting a culture of integrity on campus and acting in instances in which integrity is violated. Please read the Code of Academic Integrity and make sure you understand it.

3.Statement regarding disability: Any student who feels that she or he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately during the first week of the semester to discuss the specific needs of your disability. I rely on the Office of Academic Support and Enrichment (Doane 102) to verify the need for reasonable accommodations based on documentation from that office. Please plan to speak with Jennifer Vestal and me during the first full week of fall semester so that we can adequately address your need (quiet testing space, for example).

Tentative Course Syllabus (subject to some changes, if necessary)
Topics and required readings are shown by semester week

Section I: The critical basic concepts in Psychopharmacology

August 28: Syllabus review, course introduction

August 31: Basic pharmacology, Chapter 1

September 7: Chapter 1, cont'd., Taking Sides, Issue 1 (Should laws against drug use remain restrictive?)

September 14: How we adapt to drugs, Chapter 3

Friday, September 18: Taking Sides Issue 17 (Should schools drug test students?)

September 21: *Exam 1, Monday, September 21**

Basic Neurophysiology: the nervous system, Chapter 4

September 28: Basic Neurophysiology, cont'd.

Friday, October 2: Taking Sides Issue 5 (Should women who use drugs lose custody of their children?)

Section II: Classes of psychoactive drugs

Reminder: action project meetings with Dr K by fall break!!!

October 5: Central nervous system depressants: Alcohol, Chapter 6

October 12: Central nervous system depressants: Anxiolytics and Sedatives, Chapter 7

Wednesday, October 14: Taking Sides, Issue 3 (Should the U.S. drinking age remain at 21?)

October 15 and 16: Fall Study Break

October 19*****Exam 2, Wednesday, October 21—no class on Monday, October 19**

Psychomotor stimulants: cocaine and the amphetamines, Chapter 10

October 26: Chapter 10, cont'd

Friday, October 30: Taking Sides, Issue 12: (ADHD and Ritalin prescription)

November 2: The opioids, Chapter 11

November 9: Cannabis, Chapter 14; Taking Sides, Issue 9 (Should Laws prohibiting marijuana use be relaxed?)

Friday, November 13: Taking Sides Issue 16 (Should marijuana be approved for medical use?)

November 16: Hallucinogens, Chapter 15

November 23: Thanksgiving break

Section III: Drugs to manage psychological disorders

November 30: *****Exam 3, Friday, December 4**

Antidepressants and drugs to manage bipolar disorder, Chapter 13

December 7: Chapter 13, finish

*****Student brief project presentations – December 9 and 11 (last two days of classes)**

*****Final Exam on December 17 from 9-11 a.m.**

Supplement B: Tri-fold for first-year dining hall tables

Got plans to hang with
T-Pain for D-Day?

Gonna get spooky on
Halloween?

Check out these tips
for a super fun, super
safe weekend!

I'ma buy you a drank...
of water and a substantial meal



DID YOU KNOW...

It takes your body
THREE HOURS to
metabolize **ONE**
OUNCE of alcohol?
>>That means if you drink
3 ounces, it will take 9
hours for your body to get
rid of it!<<

DRUG INTERACTIONS!

It is very dangerous to drink alcohol
with perscribed medications such
as antidepressants, pain killers,
antihistamines, Ritalin, Adderall or
anti-anxiety medications.

Drinking alcohol with these
kinds of medications can
magnify the side effects of
the medications as well as
make the condition the
medications are meant to
treat **even worse**.

TIPSTO STAY SAFE

Alternate! Drink plenty of **water**

Buddy System: anytime you go to a
party, have a buddy

Do not let strangers pour drinks
(OR drink jungle juice)

Do not leave any drink **unattended**

Do not let others hand you drinks

Do not feel **pressured** to drink
when you're around others

Eat **before** you drink and always
snack **during**

Responsible Drinking

=

Getting Drunk



Brought to you by Dr. Susan Kennedy's
Psychopharmacology class

Supplement C: Letters to elected officials and local vendors

Name and address here

XXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXX

November 6, 2015

Dear xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx,

Our names are _____ and we are undergraduates studying Psychology at Denison University in Granville, Ohio. We are currently taking a class in Psychopharmacology and are creating an action research project to address an issue surrounding drug and alcohol abuse on our campus. In this project, we are addressing local businesses and vendors, as well as elected officials to propose the addition of warning labels on alcohol products about the dangerous interactions of alcohol with other drugs.

The legislation addressing the labeling of alcohol products is of paramount interest to us as students at this institution. While Denison is a notable community of exceptional young scholars and leaders, our campus also has a problem with dangerous alcohol consumption. This issue directly impacts

our peers, the school itself, and the surrounding community, and is also a problem at other institutions across the nation.

We are primarily concerned about the interaction of alcohol and other drugs because of the harmful and sometimes fatal interactions between these substances, as well as the lack of general knowledge about this topic. Many consumers are unaware that the over-the-counter, prescription and recreational drugs which they are consuming will interact with any alcohol they consume. For example, taking both alcohol and simple antihistamine allergy medications can amplify both drugs' drowsiness-inducing side effects, and taking alcohol and prescription anti-depressants can slow a body's ability to fight infections. Despite these risk and many others like it, federally-mandated alcohol warnings do not reference drug interactions, possibly at the detriment of consumer health and safety.

We hope to mitigate the risk of alcohol interactions not by dissuading consumers from using alcohol altogether, but rather by making sure that they are aware of the risks involved. A 2014 study published by Gerald Thomas et al. in *The International Journal of Alcohol and Drug Research* stated that alcohol warning labels create a dialogue about the risks involved in alcohol consumption and have the potential to shift social norms regarding dangerous alcohol use. We understand that changing labels is a complicated process that is not undergone lightly; however, we propose that when considering the regulation of alcohol products, you take into account the dangers faced by uninformed consumers.

Although we have read reports of your positions, we realize this may not fully represent your viewpoint. Therefore, we will look forward to your reply expressing your opinions, and your current stance on the issue.

Thank you for your consideration of my viewpoint on this matter. We believe it is an important issue, and would like to see the legislation pass to ensure more informative labeling of alcohol products.

Sincerely,

Contact Susan Kennedy, Associate Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at kennedy_s@denison.edu

XXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXX

6 November 2015

Dear Sir or Madam,

Our names are _____, and we are undergraduates at Denison University in Granville, Ohio. We are currently taking a class in Psychopharmacology and are creating an action research project to address the issue of dangerous drug interactions. For our project, we have elected to contact local business and political leaders to propose the addition of warning labels on or near alcohol products to inform consumers about the dangerous interactions of alcohol with other drugs.

The legislation addressing the labeling of alcohol products is of paramount interest to us as students at this institution. While Denison is a notable community of exceptional young scholars and leaders, our campus also has a problem with dangerous alcohol consumption. This issue directly impacts our peers, the school itself, the surrounding community, and the nation at large.

We are primarily concerned about the interaction of alcohol and other drugs because of the harmful and sometimes fatal interactions between these substances and a lack of general knowledge about this topic. Many consumers are unaware that the over-the-counter, prescription and recreational drugs which they are consuming will interact with any alcohol they consume. For example, taking both alcohol and simple antihistamine allergy medications can amplify both drugs' drowsiness-inducing side effects, and taking alcohol and prescription anti-depressants can slow a body's ability to fight infections. Despite these risk and many others like it, federally-mandated alcohol warnings do not reference drug interactions, possibly at the detriment of consumer health and safety.

We hope to mitigate the risk of alcohol interactions not by dissuading consumers from using alcohol altogether, but rather by making sure that they are aware of the risks involved. A 2014 study published by Gerald Thomas et al. in *The International Journal of Alcohol and Drug Research* stated that alcohol warning labels create a dialogue about the risks involved in alcohol consumption and have the potential to shift social norms regarding dangerous alcohol use. This goal could be accomplished by the simple addition of a warning label near alcohol display cases which reads "This drug interacts with other prescription, over the counter, and recreational drugs, and may cause serious health problems. Please consult your health care provider if you have questions." If you are willing, we would be more than happy to produce such a sign to help inform your customers of the dangers of alcohol interactions.

If at all possible, we would greatly appreciate meeting with you in person to discuss our viewpoint on this matter. We believe it is an important issue, and we hope that we can make a difference by educating consumers to avoid dangerous drug interactions. Thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,

Contact Susan Kennedy, Associate Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at kennedys@denison.edu