

**CUYAMACA COLLEGE**  
**COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD**

**Health Education 203 – Substance Abuse and Public Health**

3 hours lecture, 3 units

**Catalog Description**

This course provides an overview of the epidemiology and toxicology of substance abuse and its relevance to personal and public health. Students will be 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 will be discussed. Epidemiologic data on the prevalence, incidence, and trends of smoking, alcohol, prescription and other drug dependencies in the U.S. will be covered, as well as risk factors associated with the use and abuse of these substances. Current options for recovery and a survey of local resources will be reviewed.

**Prerequisite**

None

**Course Content**

- 1) Drug use, misuse, abuse, and dependence
  - a. Patterns of use, misuse, and abuse
  - b. Progression
  - c. Addiction/Drug dependency
    1. Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSMR)
  - d. Risk factors
- 2) Pharmacological classifications
  - a. Depressants, including sedative-hypnotics
  - b. Stimulants
  - c. Opiates
  - d. Anabolic steroids and other performance-enhancing drugs
  - e. Marijuana
  - f. Alcohol
  - g. Nicotine
  - h. Prescription medications
  - i. Over-the-Counter (OTC)
  - j. Inhalants
  - k. Hallucinogens
- 3) Effects of drug use, misuse, abuse, and dependence
  - a. Short term and long-term effects
    1. Biological/Physiological
    2. Neurological
    3. Psychological
  - b. Social impact
    1. Individual
    2. Community
    3. Society

- 4) Epidemiological data
  - a. Usage
    1. Incidence
    2. Prevalence
    3. Trends
  - b. Dependency
    1. Incidence
    2. Prevalence
    3. Trends
  - c. Populations at risk
    1. Age
    2. Gender
    3. Education and socioeconomic status
    4. Race and ethnicity
    5. LGBTQ+
- 5) Laws, Policies, and Regulations
  - a. Social policies and laws
    1. Treatment versus incarceration
    2. Homelessness
    3. Scheduling of drugs (DEA)
    4. Enforcement and regulations
  - b. Laws and government regulations
    1. Legal distribution
    2. Illegal distribution
  - c. Economics
    1. The War on illegal drugs
    2. Sales and profit of legal drugs
    3. Cost of law enforcement
  - d. Marketing
    1. Pharmaceutical industry
    2. False advertising
- 6) Prevention, diagnosis and treatment
  - a. Protective factors
  - b. Signs and symptoms
  - c. Mental illnesses
    1. Dual Diagnosis/Co-Occurring Disorders
  - d. Evidence-based treatment strategies
  - e. Community resources
- 7) Drug Use Within Major Sub-Cultures
- 8) Social Issues Surrounding Drug Use, Abuse, Prevention and Laws

### **Course Objectives**

Students will be able to:

- 1) Distinguish the difference between current patterns of drug use, misuse, abuse, and dependence.
- 2) Identify various pharmacological classifications of psychoactive substances, illicit and licit.
- 3) Describe the biological/physiological, neurological, and psychological short and long-term effects of substance use, misuse, abuse, and dependence on the human brain and body.
- 4) Describe the biological/physiological, neurological, psychological, social, and economic effects of drug use, misuse, abuse, and dependence on the health of individuals, the community and society.

- 5) Identify the risk factors associated with the use, misuse, abuse, and dependence on specific substances, including populations at most risk based on age, gender, education, socioeconomic status, race, and ethnicity.
- 6) Interpret credible public health data sources to find statistical and epidemiological data on the incidence and prevalence of substance use, misuse, abuse, and dependency.
- 7) Analyze the historical, political, social, socioeconomic, and legal factors involved in the practice, marketing, distribution, and government regulations of legal and illegal drugs.
- 8) Analyze arguments on both sides of a selected controversial issue, such as drug testing in the work place or legalization of marijuana.
- 9) Describe contemporary methods used in prevention, diagnosis and treatment, including the Dual Diagnosis/Co-Occurring Disorders approach to treating people who suffer from both an addiction and a psychiatric disorder.
- 10) Identify community resources and options for prevention, diagnosis and treatment of addiction, including effective evidence-based strategies.

### **Method of Evaluation**

A grading system will be established by the instructor and implemented uniformly. Grades will be based on demonstrated proficiency in subject matter determined by multiple measurements for evaluation, one of which must be written essay exams, skills demonstration or, where appropriate, the symbol system.

- 1) Quizzes and exams that measure students' ability to compare and contrast drug abuse and dependence, identify various substances of potential abuse and their corresponding patterns of use, and describe sequelae of drug abuse in terms of physical, legal, social, and public health ramifications.
- 2) Written assignments that demonstrate students' ability to analyze the effects of substance abuse on society and the efficacy of various programs, organizations, treatments, etc., in the context of public health.
- 3) Written and orally presented assignments that demonstrate students' ability to evaluate the characteristics of a reputable journal, website, etc., designed for the dissemination of public health information regarding substance abuse.

### **Special Materials Required of Student**

None

### **Minimum Instructional Facilities**

Smart classroom

### **Method of Instruction**

Lecture and group discussion

### **Out-of-Class Assignments**

- 1) Assigned reading
- 2) Written research essays on class discussion topics
- 3) Project: interview with a current or former addict
- 4) Research paper on chosen substance of abuse

### **Texts and References**

- 1) Required (representative example): Hanson, et al. *Drugs and Society*. 15th edition. Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2024.
- 2) Supplemental: None

**Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Identify the psychotherapeutic benefits and harmful effects of common substances of abuse, while identifying risk factors of abuse.
- 2) Apply the current public health perspectives to evaluate the topic of substance abuse prevention.
- 3) Compare and contrast reliable public data sources to find statistical and epidemiologic data on incidence, prevalence, and trends in drug, tobacco and alcohol use.