THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

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SSS 561
Drug Abuse: Treatment, Its Effectiveness, Policy and Politics
Spring 2012
(1 credit)
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I. COURSE PURPOSE

This course provides essential knowledge and engages students in critical thinking about drug abuse and dependence treatment and related public policies and their impact on individuals, families, and communities. It introduces students to the impact on clients and their families, especially ethnic minority populations, of disparate intent and impact of law, regulation, policy, and practice. Students will be introduced to the pervasive consequences of drug abuse and addiction upon the individual user attendant to associated problem behaviors, social problems, medical conditions, and even drug abuse history. Students will examine the consequences of policies that distinguish illegal drug abuse from abuse of tobacco and alcohol in terms of how the implementation of these policies affects their well-being and that of their family. Implications for accessing services for clients and advocating on their behalf will be addressed. This course is one of a series of three one-credit companion courses in drug abuse, each of which can be taken independently, with no prerequisite. Each has a different focus. The focus of this course is treatment, its effectiveness, policy and politics; the focus of SSS 560 is the conflict between individual and societal rights; and the focus of SSS 562 is current policy issues, their effect on clients, and the national debate.
II. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

A. To introduce students to the ideology underlying drug abuse and dependence treatment and related policies to understand why society treats treatment for drug abuse and dependence differently from that for other public health problems, including addictions to other substances, and the impact of this distinction on the poor, the underserved, and on minority populations.

B. To consider the dichotomy between the disease concept of drug addiction and the concept of acceptance of personal responsibility for one's behavior in terms of treatment readiness, acceptance, and acceptability.

C. To make students aware of the public health versus the public safety considerations attendant to drug policies and science versus ideology as policy drivers in issues such as treatment effectiveness and to provide the knowledge and skills necessary to advocate that drug abuse, as a public health problem, should be treated comparably to other medical conditions.

D. To consider the conflict between individual autonomy and personal responsibility to society through the study of compulsory drug testing policies, civil commitment, and compelled therapy.

E. To consider illegal drugs, treatment, and medicine through the lens of the national debate on “medical marijuana.”

F. To familiarize clinical concentrators on content on and analysis of treatment and treatment policies to understand the full range of issues faced by clients and their families and to prepare them to best advocate on their behalf.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Required Texts


B. Recommended Texts


C. **Required Journal and Other Articles**

Because of the intense and ongoing public debate related to issues of drug abuse, public health, and public safety, the content of this course is updated during the semester. Accordingly, additional readings or citations to websites, beyond the required readings that are listed in the Class Schedule for each class, are distributed in class for review and discussion.

D. **Other Recommended Readings**


E. **Course Assignments**

**Participation:** Each student is responsible for active oral class involvement on weekly assigned readings and interactive discussions on materials distributed in class for group exercises. Presentation of point of view and the arguments supporting them are expected and encouraged at each class. **Due Date: each class**

**Written Assignment:** Each student will develop a 7- to 10-page original paper examining drug treatment policy issue. Issues may include, but are not limited to, treatment versus incarceration for drug offenders, the regulatory schema for the medical prescription of methadone maintenance therapy, harm reduction approaches, and ethical issues relating to vaccine development. If a student chooses to write on one of these topics, no approval is needed. If a student chooses to write on another topic, prior consultation with and approval of the instructor is needed. **Due Date: March 16, 2012, which is two weeks after the last class.** Papers are to be submitted electronically.

F. **Grading Policy**

Grades for this course are based on the University grading system. The grade is based on content (substance, attention to assignment, attention to page limit), style (scholarly writing style, APA format), and timely submission (assignments submitted later than the assigned date, or an otherwise agreed upon date determined prior to the due date of the assignment, will be downgraded).
Active participation and involvement in discussions  40%
Written Paper  60%

G. Course and Instructor Evaluation

NCSSS requires written evaluation of this course and the instructor. Forms for this purpose will be distributed at the last meeting of the class. Additional, informal written or verbal feedback to the instructor during the semester is encouraged and attempts will be made to respond to requests.

IV. CLASS EXPECTATIONS

A. Scholastic Expectations

Please refer to NCSSS Announcements, or appropriate Program Handbook for Academic Requirements, including scholastic and behavioral requirements. All written work should reflect the original thinking of the writer, cite references where material is quoted or adapted from existing sources, adhere to APA format, and should be carefully proofread by the student before submission to the instructor for grading.

B. Academic Honesty

Joining the community of scholars at CUA entails accepting the standards, living by those standards, and upholding them. Please refer to University Policy and appropriate Program Handbooks.

C. Accommodations

Students with physical, learning, psychological or other disabilities wishing to request accommodations must identify with the Disability Support Services (DSS) and submit documentation of a disability. If you have documented such a disability to DSS that requires accommodations or an academic adjustment, please arrange a meeting with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss these accommodations.
# Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topics and Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Treatment Effectiveness, Part 1.</strong> Public health versus public safety; treatment versus incarceration, treatment in the criminal justice system during (and after?) incarceration; drug courts. Treatment of users who take drugs to feel good versus treatment of users who take drugs to feel better.</td>
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**Required Reading**

- Cohen, Chapter 16, pp. 307-318, 328-336
- Goldstein, Chapters 15, 16, and 10, pp. 158-163

**Recommended Reading**

- Kleiman, Chapter 6


**Required Reading**

- Cohen, Chapter 16, pp. 317-328
- Goldstein, Chapter 10, pp. 163-177
LongVersion.html


Required Reading

Cohen, Chapter 15
Goldstein, Chapters 12 and 18
Drug Abuse and Ethical Issues: Developing Vaccines against Drugs of Abuse. Issues raised by the potential availability of a cocaine vaccine or of a nicotine vaccine via genetic tests that can show vulnerability to drug use. Potential for harmful labeling of a target population and resultant negative consequences attributable to the fact that the presence of antibodies will identify those who have received the vaccine. Issues related to harnessing the science of chemical neurotransmitters to develop smart drugs.

Required Reading

Recommended Reading