

HUSC 141

Introduction to Psychopharmacology

3 Credits

Community College of Baltimore County Common Course Outline

Description

HUSC 141 – Introduction to Psychopharmacology: is a course in which students survey the physiological and psychological effects of psychoactive drugs, such as alcohol and other depressants, opioids, stimulants, and psychedelics. This course will examine routes of administration, neurochemistry, metabolism, dependence, and drug elimination for each of the major categories of substances

Pre-requisites: ACLT 052 or ACLT 053 or (ESOL 052 and ESOL 054)

Overall Course Objectives

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

1. categorize substances into the appropriate major classifications;
2. label the components of a neuron and explain the function of each of its major structures;
3. explain the electrochemical process of neurotransmission;
4. illustrate the neurochemical effects of each of the major categories of substances;
5. identify and describe the major components of the nervous system;
6. identify the routes of administration and the onsets of action associated with each;
7. differentiate the various physiological and psychological responses to each category of drug;
8. apply the psychological and physiological impacts of each drug to its therapeutic uses to treat commonly-diagnosed mental disorders;
9. illustrate the impacts of various drug control policies on the individual and society, including the relationship between drug control policy and treatment trends;
10. describe the use of therapeutic drugs in the treatment of substance use disorders, including agonist and antagonist medications; and
11. apply principles of antagonist treatment by training and certifying in opiate overdose prevention.

Major Topics

- I. Classification of psychoactive substances
 - A. Alcohol
 - B. Depressants and inhalants
 - C. Opioids

The Common Course Outline (CCO) determines the essential nature of each course.
For more information, see your professor's syllabus.

- D. Stimulants (including caffeine and nicotine)
- E. Psychedelics
- F. Cannabinoids
- G. Psychotherapeutic drugs, including over-the-counter drugs and dietary supplements
- H. Performance-enhancing drugs
- II. History of psychoactive substances
- III. Drug control policies and trends in legislation
- IV. The nervous system and neurotransmission
- V. Neurochemical effects of each major substance category
 - A. Physiological and psychological effects
 - B. Dependency factors
 - C. Tolerance
 - D. Withdrawal syndromes
 - E. Therapeutic uses
- VI. The use of agonist and antagonist medications in the treatment of substance use disorders
- VII. Pharmacological treatments of mental disorders:
 - A. Mood disorders
 - B. Anxiety disorders
 - C. Bipolar disorders
 - D. Psychotic disorders

Course Requirements

Grading will be determined by the individual faculty member, but shall include the following, at minimum:

- Two examinations
- One written assignment demonstrating research skills, minimum 3 pages in length
- One written assignment demonstrating objective writing skills, minimum 2 pages in length

Written assignments and research projects: Students are required to use appropriate academic resources in their research and cite sources according to the style selected by their professor.

Other Course Information

This course meets the Maryland Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists requirement for Pharmacology. Students may become trained and certified in opiate overdose prevention practices within this course.

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