

ADDICTIVE BEHAVIORS
PSYC 6130, Section 001
Fall 2026 Syllabus
University of North Texas
Tuesdays at 9:00-11:50 AM in Terrill Hall 127

Instructor:	Dr. Casey Guillot	TA:	Not applicable
Office:	Terrill Hall 382 (TH 382)	Office:	N/A
Hours:	By appointment only in person or via Zoom	Hours:	N/A
Email:	casey.guillot@unt.edu	Email:	N/A
Phone:	940-369-8480		

CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR

Email is the best way to contact the instructor. Sending messages through Canvas is also acceptable.

CONTACTING YOU

Please pay close attention to announcements posted to Canvas. If necessary, I also may contact you through your UNT email address or Canvas messaging system.

COURSE BACKGROUND

This course gives an overview of the history, etiology, theories, cognitive neuroscience, and psychological and behavioral effects of addictive behaviors (mostly substance-related but also non-drug-related).

Coverage of the history of substance use and other addictive behaviors is vital to being informed of their origins and development over time as well as being able to place addictive behaviors in a modern context. This includes discussion of historical abuses or prejudices (e.g., propaganda) in relation to substance use and more modern biases or disparities in relation to drug-related legal offenses and research/treatment.

Etiology refers to the study of the causes of addictive behaviors, with the understanding that there is no single cause of addiction, but rather a complex set of factors that combine to influence vulnerability to addiction. These include biological factors (e.g., genetic, physiological, sex/race-related), psychological factors (e.g., beliefs, mood, personality, psychopathology), and contextual factors (e.g., cultural, ethnic, or regional differences and socioeconomic and environmental influences).

Cognitive neuroscience encompasses the study of brain activity that underlies cognition (e.g., consciousness, thought processes, emotions) and is focused on the functionality of different brain regions, neural pathways in the brain, and other aspects of neuropsychopharmacology (e.g., neurotransmitters, receptor sites).

Psychological and behavioral effects refer to the mental and bodily effects of addictive behaviors, including acute and short- and long-term effects (i.e., effects that occur while actively engaged in addictive behaviors, soon after ceasing addictive behaviors, and from chronic engagement in addictive behaviors).

Lastly, I will attempt to integrate information pertaining to the assessment and treatment of addictive behaviors to some extent throughout the semester but also as part of a later section dedicated to this.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Doweiko, H. E., & Evans, A. (2023). *Concepts of Chemical Dependency* (11th ed.). Boston: Cengage.

ASSIGNED READINGS AND SUGGESTED VIDEOS

Assigned or suggested readings will be uploaded to Canvas at various points throughout the semester, and suggested videos or other media will be shared on occasion.

PRIMARY COURSE OBJECTIVES

- ☐ Increase knowledge concerning the history of addictive behaviors (including the “War on Drugs”).
- ☐ Be able to identify causal factors involved in the development of addictive behaviors.
- ☐ Have broad knowledge of the theories that have been proposed to explain addiction.
- ☐ Develop a fundamental understanding of the cognitive neuroscience of addictive behaviors, including a basic understanding of the neuropsychopharmacology of addictive behaviors.
- ☐ Become more familiar with the psychological and behavioral effects of addictive behaviors.
- ☐ Be able to critically analyze research on and controversies related to addictive behaviors.
- ☐ Become more familiar with how diversity and development relate to addictive behaviors.
- ☐ Become more familiar with the assessment and treatment of addictive behaviors

Exams and Grading Procedures

Grade Breakdown

Introductory Assignment: 15 points just for introducing yourself

Online Discussions (6): 90 points (up to 15 points each; to be scored according to the Discussion Post Grading Rubric that will be made available in Canvas)

In-Class Discussion/Attendance: 45 points (5 points for attending/participating on each of nine days: specifically, on the Movie Day and on the days when Discussions and other assignments are due, except for the Introductory Assignment)

In-Class Presentation: 75 points (~15-20 minutes each on topics selected from a list to be provided)

Reaction/Personal View Paper: 75 points (4-6 pages related to drug use/legalization, TBD)

300 Total Possible Points (not including potential extra points at discretion of instructor)

- A = 90-100% (270-300 points)
- B = 80-89% (240-269 points)
- C = 70-79% (210-239 points)
- D = 60-69% (180-209 points)
- F = 0-59% (179 points or less)

***NOTE:** There will be no rounding up of final grades!

Discussions: Discussions will involve responding with approximately 10 sentences in response to posted Discussion topics in Canvas. Students are expected to submit complete sentences that are thoughtful, accurate (if any information is presented as factual), and well-written (e.g., few/no typos). **Discussion assignments will be due on selected Tuesdays, as noted in the schedule.** Discussion assignments will be announced through Canvas approximately one week ahead of each due date. Discussion responses will be scored from 0-15 according to the Discussion Post Grading Rubric available in Canvas. If approved by the instructor, in rare instances additional time may be allowed for completing a Discussion assignment.

Student Perceptions of Teaching Effectiveness (SPOT): Student feedback is an important part of participating in this course. The SPOT survey will be made available toward the end of the semester to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey, they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website at www.spot.unt.edu or email spot@unt.edu

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences: According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, forgery, and plagiarism. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions (possibly even expulsion). For more info: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>

Additional Warning about Writing Assignments: Writing assignments submitted through Canvas Turnitin are checked for both potential plagiarism (i.e., copying others' written work without proper citation or even one's own prior writing) and artificial intelligence (AI)-generated content (e.g., using ChatGPT). If Turnitin evidences a high percentage of prior written-content matching or probable AI-generated content (e.g., 40% or higher), then the amount of effort that the student devoted to completing the written assignment will come into question and ultimately may negatively affect the student's grade. So please paraphrase when possible and complete writing assignments largely on your own (with little or no assistance from AI).

Acceptable Student Behavior: Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be directed to leave the classroom, and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students office to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct (see <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012>).

ADA Accommodation Statement: UNT strives to make reasonable academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify eligibility. If a disability is verified, ODA will provide a student with an accommodation notice that will be emailed to instructors. Students may request accommodation at any time; however, notices of accommodation should be given as early as possible to avoid delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new notice of accommodation each semester. For more info, see the [ODA website](#). You can visit the ODA office in Chestnut Hall 102, call 940-565-4323, or email disability@unt.edu

Emergency Notification & Procedures: UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of university closure, please refer to Canvas or your UNT email address for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Grade Appeals: Any final grade appeals will be addressed per UNT Policy 06.040, Grade Appeals Policy. For more info: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-040>

SEMESTER DROP DATES

November 6th Last day to drop a course or all courses with a grade of W through my.unt.edu

November 7th Can begin request for a grade of I (Incomplete)

***Note:** The course schedule may be subject to change as the class develops.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE*

Date	Day	Class Topic(s)	Readings	Assignments/Activities
8/18	Tues	NO CLASS	None	
8/25	Tues	Intro to course and Instructor's Background Intro to substance use/addictive behaviors	Chapters 1-2	
9/1	Tues	Intro to pharmacology of addiction Alcohol (ethanol) use and misuse	Chapter 3 Chapters 4-5	Intro Assignment Due
9/8	Tues	Nicotine use and misuse Benzodiazepine use and misuse	Chapter 15 Chapter 7	Discussion #1 Due
9/15	Tues	Stimulant use other than nicotine use	Chapters 8-9	Discussion #2 Due
9/22	Tues	Cannabis use and misuse Opioid use and misuse	Chapter 10 Chapter 11	
9/29	Tues	Psychedelic use and misuse	Chapter 12	Discussion #3 Due
10/6	Tues	Inhalant, steroid, and other drug use Gambling/gaming/behavioral addictions	Chapters 13-14 No chapter	Discussion #4 Due
10/13	Tues	Women/pregnancy and drug use Disadvantaged/minority groups and drug use	Chapters 17-18 Chapter 19	Discussion #5 Due
10/20	Tues	Drug use from a developmental perspective Addiction-related comorbidity	Chapters 20-22 Chapter 25	Discussion #6 Due
10/27	Tues	Biopsychosocial theories of addiction	Chapter 26	
11/3	Tues	IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS		Presentation Due
11/10	Tues	The drug use/legalization debate	Chapters 37-38	
11/17	Tues	IN-CLASS FILM: Traffic (2000)		Movie Day
11/24	Tues	THANKSGIVING BREAK		
12/1	Tues	IN-CLASS DISCUSSION RELATED TO REACTION/PERSONAL VIEW PAPERS		Paper Due
12/8	Tues	NO FINAL EXAM		