



University of North Texas
College of Health and Public Service
Social Work Department
SOCWK 4325/Intersection of Trauma and
Substance Use

Welcome to SOWK 4325! I look forward to working with all of you this semester as we learn about trauma-informed practices. Should you have any questions along the way, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

About the professor:

Dr. Dhru Mukherjee, Ph.D., LCSW-S is an Associate Professor in the Department of Social Work at the University of North Texas. His research focuses on community mental health, the intersection of trauma and substance use, clinical skill development, Internal Family Systems (IFS) therapy, and exploring worldview in the social work profession.

Instructor Information

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Course Description

This course examines the co-occurring nature of psychological trauma and substance use disorder (SUD), a significant challenge for behavioral health professionals in integrated healthcare settings. Students will explore how trauma and substance misuse intersect, leading to complex clinical outcomes. The course provides: (a) a detailed understanding of trauma and addictions and their interactions; (b) an overview of categories of substances and their physiological impact; (c) an examination of differential impacts on diverse demographic groups; and (d) a review of evidence-based assessment and treatment protocols. The curriculum addresses micro, mezzo, and macro interventions and integrates systemic, legal, and spiritual considerations in treatment.

Course Structure

This course is delivered 100% online with no face-to-face meetings. Weekly learning modules released on Mondays include readings, discussions, assignments, and quizzes. Assignments are due Sundays at 11:59 p.m. The semester is 16 weeks long.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify different types of traumatic stress and substance use disorders and their mutual co-occurrences and cultural influences.
 - CSWE Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior (applying knowledge to diverse populations)
 - CSWE Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
 - CSWE Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
2. Critically engage in the theoretical models of substance use disorders from pharmacological, cognitive, trauma-responsive systems, behavioral, and psychodynamic approaches.
 - CSWE Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior (theoretical application)
 - CSWE Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
 - CSWE Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
3. Distinguish effective assessment and screening protocols involving trauma and substance use in integrated healthcare settings.
 - CSWE Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
4. Assess basic intervention protocols involving trauma and substance use.
 - CSWE Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - CSWE Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
5. Evaluate best practices involving trauma and substance use.
 - CSWE Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
6. Locate local, state, and federal-level policies involving trauma and substance use.
 - CSWE Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Assignments and Grading

Assignments include weekly quizzes and discussions, a paper outline, a final paper, and a final exam. Discussion posts require thoughtful engagement and APA citation where applicable.

Assignment	Points	Due
Weekly Quizzes (15 total)	300	Weekly

Weekly Discussions (15 total)	300	Weekly
Paper Outline	50	Week 10 (Due Oct 26 th)
Final Paper	250	Week 16 (Due Dec 7 th)
Final Exam	100	Finals Week (Due Dec 12 th)

Weekly Schedule

Full reading lists and additional resources are available in Canvas. Chapters refer to the required text: Doweiko, H. E. (2018). Concepts of Chemical Dependency (10th ed.). Cengage.

Week 1 – Aug 18

Topic: Scope of the SUD Problem in the USA

Readings: Chapters 1 & 2 + additional readings

Assignments: Quiz 1, Discussion 1

Week 2 – Aug 25

Topic: Trauma-Informed Perspective

Readings: Additional readings

Assignments: Quiz 2, Discussion 2

Week 3 – Sep 1

Topic: Causes of SUD

Readings: Chapters 26 & 27 + additional materials

Assignments: Quiz 3, Discussion 3

Week 4 – Sep 8

Topic: Pharmacology of Addiction

Readings: Chapter 3 + additional materials

Assignments: Quiz 4, Discussion 4

Week 5 – Sep 15

Topic: Attachment, Trauma, and Addiction

Readings: Additional readings

Assignments: Quiz 5, Discussion 5

Week 6 – Sep 22

Topic: Co-Occurring Disorders, Trauma, and SUD

Readings: Chapter 25 + additional materials

Assignments: Quiz 6, Discussion 6

Week 7 – Sep 29

Topic: Co-Dependencies and SUD

Readings: Chapter 24 + additional materials

Assignments: Quiz 7, Discussion 7

Week 8 – Oct 6

Topic: The Landscape of Polysubstance Use

Readings: Chapters 4, 5, 7, 9 & 12

Assignments: Quiz 8, Discussion 8

Week 9 – Oct 13

Topic: Fentanyl, Opioid, and Meth

Readings: Chapters 8 & 11

Assignments: Quiz 9, Discussion 9

Week 10 – Oct 20

Topic: SUD Assessment

Readings: Chapter 28 + additional materials

Assignments: Quiz 10, Discussion 10, Paper Outline Due

Week 11 – Oct 27

Topic: Harm Reduction vs Abstinence Approaches

Readings: Chapters 32 & 33 + additional readings

Assignments: Quiz 11, Discussion 11

Week 12 – Nov 3

Topic: Interventions for SUD

Readings: Chapters 29, 30 & 31 + additional readings

Assignments: Quiz 12, Discussion 12

Week 13 – Nov 10

Topic: Stigma and SUD

Readings: Chapter 37 + additional materials

Assignments: Quiz 13, Discussion 13

Week 14 – Nov 17

Topic: Drug Endangered Children and Families

Readings: Chapters 17, 20 & 21 + additional readings

Assignments: Quiz 14, Discussion 14

Week 15 – Nov 24

Topic: Thanksgiving Week – No Class

Readings: —

Assignments: —

Week 16 – Dec 1

Topic: Populations in Addiction and Recovery

Readings: Chapters 18, 19 & 22

Assignments: Quiz 15, Discussion 15, Final Paper Due

Finals Week – Dec 6-12

Topic: Recovery-Oriented System of Care

Readings: Chapters 34 & 35 + additional readings

Assignments: Final Exam