



DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION & HEALTH SERVICES
College of Health and Public Service

Welcome to ADDS 3975 Addictions!

I am Sharon Cager and will be your instructor for this course. I am excited to work together and make this a great semester! If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me throughout the course.

Course Information

- ADDS 3975 - Addictions
- Summer 2026
- 3.0 Credit Hours
- Online
- No pre-requisites required

Instructor Contact Information

- Sharon Cager, MA, LCDC
As an adjunct instructor, I do not have traditional office hours. Please email me at the address below and we can schedule a time to talk via phone or zoom.
- sharon.cager@unt.edu ****preferred method of contact****

About the Professor

Professor Sharon K. Cager brings over 20 years of multidisciplinary experience to the classroom, combining expertise in psychology, criminal justice, and substance abuse counseling. She holds a Master of Arts in Psychology with a focus on Substance Abuse Counseling from Argosy University and is a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor in Texas as well as a certified NAADAC trainer. She currently serves as a Regional Clinical Training Manager for one of the nation's largest substance abuse treatment providers, where she oversees clinical education for a national network of behavioral health professionals. She has also completed CARF Surveyor Training and brings in-depth knowledge of accreditation standards and clinical quality assurance. In addition, she has contributed to the book *Addiction Counseling: A Real-World Guide to Getting Started in Your Career*, which supports emerging professionals in the field. Her teaching emphasizes evidence-based practice, ethical standards, and real-world application to prepare students for meaningful careers in rehabilitation and counseling.

-Required Materials – Text, Readings, Supplementary Readings

- Inaba, D., & Cohen, W. (2014). *Uppers, downers, all arounders: Physical and mental effects of psychoactive drugs* (8th ed.). Medford, OR: CNS Productions.
- Lectures and assigned articles will be posted on Canvas.



Course Description

Examines the biological, social-developmental, and psychological impact of substance use and behavioral-process addiction and its relationship to individual and family functioning. Investigates the relationship between substance use and chronic stress, trauma, and psychological health. Reviews current treatment methods and settings for substance use disorders in addition to current and historical social-political issues related to substance use and legislation.

Course Structure

This course takes place 100% online. There are 10 weeks of content that you will move through.

Course Objectives and Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Recognize several models for understanding substance use disorders and their implications for successful treatment
- Identify biological, psychological, and social processes which contribute to the development and maintenance of substance use disorders and behavioral process addictions
- Understand factors which promote successful treatment outcomes for individuals with substance use disorders
- Recognize the impact of stress and traumatic stress on substance use
- Identify risk factors that increase the likelihood of problematic substance use
- Understand the developmental impact of trauma and co-occurring mental health issues on substance related diagnoses
- Objectively evaluate empirically supported literature regarding their own health behaviors
- Understand basic mechanisms of drug actions
- Identify symptoms of substance use disorders, mental health disorders and process addiction
- Explain the role of family in the development and maintenance of substance use disorders
- Understand various employment opportunities working with addictions including the licensure tracks available and career development

Technical Requirements/Assistance

The following information has been provided to assist you in preparation for the technological aspects of the course.

- University Information Technology Help Desk: <https://it.unt.edu/helpdesk>
- Canvas Technical Requirements: <https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements>
- Internet Access with compatible web browser
- Word Processor

Minimum Technical Skills Needed:

- Using the learning management system
- Using email with attachments
- Creating and submitting files in commonly used word processing program formats
- Copying and pasting
- Downloading and installing software

Student Support

The University of North Texas provides student technical support in the use of Canvas and supported resources. The student help desk may be reached at:

- Email: helpdesk@unt.edu
- Phone: 940.565-2324
- In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130

Regular hours are maintained to provide support to students. Please refer to the website: <http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/hours.htm> for updated hours.

Access and Navigation

Access and Log in Information

This is an online course and will be conducted through utilization of the University of North Texas' Learning Management System, Canvas. To access Canvas, please go to: <https://unt.instructure.com/login/ldap>

You will need your EUID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your EUID or have forgotten your password, please go to: <http://ams.unt.edu>.

Format & Procedures:

Each week will have a PowerPoint presentation that expands on the reading. It is expected that you read the PowerPoint presentations as these serve as the lecture for this online course. It is expected that you complete assigned readings prior to "class" or before moving on to the next module.

Course Organization

This course is organized into weekly lesson plans with specific topics for each week. All assignments will be due at the time they are noted on the course schedule. The class is organized on a weekly,

Monday-Sunday schedule. This means, each new module will be available on Monday and assignments are due by Sunday. Play close attention to due dates on the schedule. All materials can be offered in multiple formats for accessibility purposes.

Communications

Announcements may be communicated via the Canvas announcement tool. You are responsible for checking the announcement tool or forwarding this to an email address that you check regularly. If you have any questions about course material or assignments, please contact the instructor at Kelly.sevin@unt.edu.

Communication Practice with the Instructor

Connect with me through email. During busy times, my inbox becomes rather full, so if you contact me and do not receive a response within two business days, please send a follow up email. A gentle nudge is always appreciated.

I do not have regular office hours nor an office at UNT. If you would like to schedule a zoom meeting to discuss anything about this course, please email me with your request and we will schedule a meeting.

Assessments and Grading

Quizzes and Exams

Quizzes and Exams may consist of multiple choice, matching, fill-in-the-box, true/false, short essay and/or definition items. You will have one quiz that will launch on Canvas during the first week of class.

All quizzes and exams will stress core concepts and principles from each unit covered, content focuses mainly on:

1. Content from weekly readings
2. Items from PowerPoint "lecture"
3. General course themes

To Avoid Problems on Canvas

1. Avoid use of Wi-Fi connections - use a hard wired connection
2. Use a laptop or PC not a tablet or phone. Do not use Safari.
3. Avoid opening multiple windows. Even a small document can wreak havoc when a quiz is being done. Use of multiple windows is NEVER appropriate when taking a quiz as they imply the use of outside sources, i.e. cheating.

Violation of Any of the Above Will Void Your Test

If problems arise do not disconnect! Immediately contact the helpdesk and see if they can help. If the helpdesk cannot resolve the issue, email the instructor (sharon.cager@unt.edu). If you time out, the quiz will be graded as it was at the end of the allotted time period. Resets will only be granted if we can be assured that the problem was a system failure. A reset requires that any questions you did answer are deleted and you must start over.

Abstinence Project and 2 Papers

Starting on DATE you are asked to abstain from a substance, food, drink, activity for 10 days (until See dates in Module). You decide what you will give up for the project; however, this project may include Facebook, television, caffeine, gambling, fast food, smoking, drinking alcohol, etc. The purpose of this activity is help

you to gain empathy and understanding of what some individuals go through in recovery. I ask that you give something up that will be a true challenge for you, you will get much more out of this project. Whatever you choose to give up should be broad enough to be a challenge for example...instead of giving up French fries, try fast food. I also ask that you abstain from something that will not have an adverse effect on your health (physical, mental or emotional). If you are in recovery, please be mindful of this project, do not give up anything that will have an adverse effect on your own recovery, discuss your options with the instructor should you have concerns.

We will have an opportunity to discuss experiences in 2 papers you will submit to the instructor. Only the instructor will read your papers. You are asked to disclose to at least 2 individuals who are very close to you the substance/behavior that you are abstaining from, and you are asked to disclose the substance to your instructor.

You will have 2 short papers (2-3 double spaced pages) to complete regarding this experience. You will not be graded on your consistency with the project, BUT you must challenge yourself in order to have something to talk about in the papers. Students who did not engage in the project or take it seriously in the past had little content in their submissions that was meaningful. Grading for this project will be based on how well your experiences contribute to your understanding of addiction and how well you are able to integrate course material into your discussion, there will be an example paper posted on Canvas. More information will be provided on Canvas under the assignments tab regarding these submissions.

Attendance

Students are required to login regularly to the online class site. The instructor will use the tracking feature in Canvas to monitor student activity. Students are also required to participate in all class activities such as discussion board, chat or conference sessions and group projects.

Assignments

Over the course of the semester we will have five in class assignments (these do not include the online quiz (1), exams (2) or abstinence project papers (2)). These assignments might be quizzes-like format, while others will be more subjective in nature. The goal of each assignment is to assist you in integrating material from lecture and readings in order to prepare for exams.

Extra Credit Opportunities

Additional extra credit opportunities might come up throughout the course of the semester and the class will be notified of them through the announcements tab on Canvas. Since events change every semester, we do not know what will be available beforehand.

Assignment(s)	Points Possible
Online Syllabus Quiz (1)	50
Assignments (5)	250
Abstinence Project Papers (2)	400
Exams (2)	500
Attendance and Participation	200
TOTAL	1400

Grading

Grades will be rounded to the nearest whole number. For example, an 89.4 will remain a B, an 89.6 would be considered an A)

Letter Grade	% of total points	Total points
A	90 – 100%	1260-1400
B	80 – 89%	1120-1259
C	70 – 79%	980-1119
D	60 – 69%	840-979
F	Less than 59%	0-839

Course Evaluation

Course Evaluation instructions will be provided via the announcement tool in Canvas toward the end of the semester. I value your time and feedback in completing these surveys and have implemented changes in this course due to student suggestions. Because your time is valuable I will offer extra credit for completion of the final course evaluation. If 100% of the class completes the survey I will offer 20 points to the full class, 90% 15 points and 80% 10 points.

Course Policies

Late Work

No late work will be accepted (this is the correct answer on your first quiz). Utilize the course schedule to plan accordingly.

There are certain circumstances in which the professor will work with students regarding late work. **ONLY** if the following conditions are **ALL** met will the professor make consideration of late work: (a) a serious health crisis of the student or an immediate family member, (b) documentation of the health crisis (note from a doctor with dates, funeral announcement of immediate family member etc.), (c) the instructor must be notified **PRIOR TO THE DUE DATE**. This policy applies to course exams and in-class assignments as well, consideration of all late submissions will be at the instructor's discretion. This policy applies to all students, no exceptions are made for any situations that do not meet all of the aforementioned criteria.

Online Classroom Citizenship

The same guidelines that apply to traditional classes should be observed in the virtual classroom environment. Please use proper "netiquette" when interacting with class members and the professor. When emailing the professor or teaching assistant, please insert a greeting, clearly explain the issue or question that you have, and make sure you provide enough context for us to clearly understand your email. Please make sure to sign your name at the bottom as it is listed on the course roster.

Incompletes

Students are expected to complete the course within the session time frame. A grade of Incomplete will only be given if the student is (a) passing the course, (b) has completed 75% of the course requirement, (c) has very compelling special circumstances, and (d) provides adequate documentation. I will require that the course requirements be fulfilled by the end of the following semester. According to UNT policy:

An Incomplete Grade ("I") is a non-punitive grade given only during the last one-fourth of a term/semester and only if a student (1) is passing the course and (2) has a justifiable and documented reason, beyond the control of the student (such as serious illness or military service), for not completing the work on schedule. The student must arrange with the instructor to finish the course at a later date by completing specific requirements. These requirements must be listed on a Request for Grade of Incomplete form signed by the instructor, student, and department chair; and also entered on the grade roster by the instructor.
(<http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/incomplete.htm>, p. 1)

If you fail to complete the course requirements by the end of the subsequent semester the grade of Incomplete will be replaced with an "F". I strongly urge you to complete the course. If you find you are falling behind, or not passing, I recommend you consider withdrawing from the class so that your record and GPA is not negatively affected. Please come talk to me if you find yourself having any difficulties with keeping up with the assignments or are not doing well on the quizzes.

Academic Success Resources

UNT strives to offer you a high-quality education and a supportive environment, so you learn and grow. As a faculty member, I am committed to helping you be successful as a student. To learn more about campus resources and information on how you can be successful at UNT, go to unt.edu/success and explore unt.edu/wellness. To get all your enrollment and student financial-related questions answered, go to scrappysays.unt.edu.

Every student in this class should have the right to learn and engage within an environment of respect and courtesy from others. We will discuss our classroom's habits of engagement and I also encourage you to review UNT's student code of conduct so that we can all start with the same baseline civility understanding (Code of Student Conduct) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012>).

Copyright Notice

Some or all of the materials on this course Web site may be protected by copyright. Federal copyright law prohibits the reproduction, distribution, public performance, or public display of copyrighted materials without the express and written permission of the copyright owner, unless fair use or another exemption under copyright law applies. Additional copyright information may be located at: <http://copyright.unt.edu/content/unt-copyright-policies>.

Information about the University of North Texas' Attendance Policy may be found at:

<http://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-2-5>

Syllabus Change Policy

The course syllabus and course schedule provide a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. The instructor has the right to make adjustments to the syllabus and course schedule at any time during the semester. The instructor will notify students of any changes through the course announcement tool and will post an updated syllabus or course schedule to reflect the changes.

Policy on Server Unavailability or Other Technical Difficulties

The University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and also contact the UNT Student Help Desk: helpdesk@unt.edu or 940.565.2324. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

UNT POLICIES

Student Conduct and Discipline

The primary concern of the University of North Texas is the student. The university attempts to provide for all students a campus environment that is conducive to academic endeavor and social and individual growth. To that end, rules, regulations and guidelines governing student behavior and the student's relationship with the university have been formulated into a student code of conduct and discipline. Enrollment at the University of North Texas is considered implicit acceptance of these and other policies applicable to students, all of which are educational in nature and designed to help students understand expectations and accept responsibility for their own actions. Additional information can be found in the <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012>

Academic Honesty Policy

Policies regarding student conduct and academic honesty posted by the University Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities in the Student Handbook apply to this class. As stated in the Policy: http://www.unt.edu/csrr/student_conduct/misconduct.html, misconduct for which students are subject to discipline falls into the following categories:

A. Acts of Dishonesty, including but not limited to:

1. *Academic dishonesty - cheating. The term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to:*
 - a. *use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations;*
 - b. *dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments;*
 - c. *the acquisition, without permission, of tests, notes or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the University;*
 - d. *dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s);*
 - e. *any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage.*
2. *Academic Dishonesty — plagiarism. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to:*
 - a. *the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement and/or the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.*

Discipline may range from not having an assignment accepted for credit to expulsion from the course. For more information regarding policies regarding student conduct, please visit:

http://www.unt.edu/csrr/student_conduct/index.html

ADA Policy

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at [940.565.4323](tel:940.565.4323).

Add/Drop Policy

Please refer to the [Office of the Registrar](#) regarding the Add/Drop Policy.

Resources

- Student computer labs: <https://computerlabs.unt.edu/>
- UNT Portal: <http://my.unt.edu>
- UNT Academic Calendar: <https://www.unt.edu/catalogs/2018-19/calendar>
- UNT Writing Center: <https://writingcenter.unt.edu/>
- UNT Counseling and Testing: <http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>
- UNT Substance Abuse Resource Center: <http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/substance-abuse-resource-center>
- UNT Multicultural Center: <https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center>
- UNT Pride Alliance: <https://edo.unt.edu/pride-alliance>
- UNT Student Affairs (Dean of Students): <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/>
- Collegiate Recovery Program: <https://recovery.unt.edu/>
- UNT Libraries: <http://www.library.unt.edu/>