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## Drugs and the Brain PSYC 461- DL4/NEUR461- DL4

### Online

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Professor: William Kochen, Ph.D.

Office Location: Zoom

Office Hour: By Appointment via Zoom

Email: wkochen@gmu.edu

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**Course Goals:** The purpose of this course is to provide students with an introduction to psychopharmacology. The course will start with the history of psychological care and an introduction to the agencies and drug development process. The course will then move to a brief introduction to the regions of the brain and how chemical communication works within cells. The bulk of the semester will be spent covering different classes of drugs (depressants, hallucinogens) and the legal and illicit drugs within those classes.

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**Course Structure:** This course will be held entirely online asynchronously. The course is divided into four quarters of material that will be accessible through the course blackboard. Each quarter will be comprised of four chapters of material which will be presented via PowerPoint with accompanying video recorded by Dr. Kochen covering the material. Helpful links will be posted that cover the same material in different formats; students will not be tested on these materials, but they may help students understand material being presented. In addition, one writing assignment is due each quarter. In-depth details for each assignment can be found on blackboard. If students are unsure about a specific concept, they should first consult their textbook for more information and if still unsure, contact Dr. Kochen to arrange a zoom meeting to discuss the material.

Exams will be taken through blackboard using the Respondus Lockdown Browser. Students will be allowed a cheat sheet for all exams. Cheat sheets must be hand-written on single sheet of paper no greater than 8.5 by 11 inches (standard printer paper). Students may write on both sides of the cheat sheet and must show both sides for at least 5 seconds during the environment check portion of the LockDown Browser exam. Exams will be only multiple choice and will rely on material covered in Dr. Kochens lecture videos

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**Course Text:** There is no required textbook for this course. The recommended textbook is Drug Use and Misuse by Stephen A. Maisto, Mark Galizio, Gerard J. Connors 9<sup>th</sup> edition

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#### Course Grading:

**Introductory Video:** Within the first week of class, you are to submit a short introductory video that will be viewed by just the professor. Details about this assignment can be found on blackboard. Introductory Video is worth 5% of your grade.

**Exams:** There will be four exams in this course. Each exam will be made up of multiple-choice questions. The lowest of the four exams is dropped when computing the final average. Each of the three exams is worth 18.3% of your grade for a total of 55%

**Writing Assignments:** For each quarter of material a writing assignment will be due. Specific details for each assignment can be found on blackboard. Each of these papers will be worth 10% of your final grade with the four papers being worth 40% of the final grade.

**Grading Scheme:** Exams 55%, Writing Assignments 40 %, Intro video 5%

**Letter Grade Assignment:** A: 90.0-100 B+: 85.0-89.9 B: 80.0-84.9 C+: 75.0-79.9 C: 70.0-74.9 D: 64.5-69.9 F: <64.5

The numbers in the table are exact and grades will not be rounded; however, exam curving or extra credit may be offered at the sole discretion of the instructor. Extra credit if given will be offered to the entire class and not be granted on an individual basis.

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## **Schedule and Due Dates:**

**Intro Video Due by August 25<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 PM**

**Quarter 1: August 21<sup>st</sup> – September 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Material Covered: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4**

**Exam and Writing Assignments Due by 11:59 PM September 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Quarter 2: September 18<sup>th</sup> – October 13<sup>th</sup>**

**Material Covered: Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8**

**Exam and Writing Assignments Due by 11:59 PM, October 13<sup>th</sup>**

**Quarter 3: October 16<sup>th</sup> – November 10<sup>th</sup>**

**Material Covered: Chapters 9, 10, 11**

**Exam and Writing Assignments Due by 11:59 PM, November 10<sup>th</sup>**

**Quarter 4: November 13<sup>th</sup> – December 8<sup>th</sup>**

**Material Covered: Chapters 12, 13, 14**

**Exam and Writing Assignments Due by December 8<sup>th</sup> 11:59 PM, May 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Late Policy: All assignments in this course are due at 11:59 PM Friday night. There is a two-day grace period over the weekend during which late exams will be accepted and late papers/intro videos will not receive a penalty. At 12:01am Monday, all exams are closed and there are no make-ups or late exams allowed at that point; papers and introduction videos may be submitted late at 5% per day penalty starting on Monday.**

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## **Title IX Statement**

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking: As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Non-Confidential Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

## **The Honor Code**

Students in this course are expected to behave at all times in a manner consistent with the GMU Honor System and Code. (<http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>). Students are encouraged to study together as much as possible throughout the course, however, no assistance, sharing of information, or discussion of exam items or answers between students may take place. For all work, the name that appears on the paper must be the author. Violations of the Honor Code will not be tolerated in this course and will be immediately reported according to GMU procedures. The instructor reserves the right to use software to determine the extent to which the work is the student's. The instructor for this course reserves the right to enter a failing grade to any student found guilty of an honor code violation.

## **Disability Help**

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit <https://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: [ods@gmu.edu](mailto:ods@gmu.edu) | Phone: (703) 993-2474

## **Miscellaneous:**

Official Communications via GMU Email: Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their mason email account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly. As a tip, please include your G-number and the course section in the subject of the email in all email correspondences with all instructors. **Recording of classroom lectures is not allowed without explicit permission by the instructor.**

Students may not reproduce (including uploading to the Internet) any portion of the exam. Students who attempt to photograph or in any way capture information about the exam for others' use will be reported for an honor violation.

Life is stressful and we all need a little support sometimes. Students are encouraged to contact Counseling & Psychological Services (3129 Student Union Building I, <http://caps.gmu.edu/>) at 993-2380 for assistance with any kind of psychological/life problem or crisis situation. I can help with referrals for students with particular counseling needs so please feel free to talk with me for help with anything.