



UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
COLLEGE OF GENERAL STUDIES

FALL 2019 DRUGS AND BEHAVIOR
Neuroscience 0081-7510 (CRN 24780)

Instructor: Dr. April Dukes
(she, her, hers)

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Contacting the Professor: Please use email or the Canvas Discussion Board “Help Me!” Expect responses from the professor within *24 hours*. The quickest response times are from 8am-4pm. After *36 hours*, please send a follow-up email or post.

Course Objectives:

The overall goal of this course is to provide you with a broad overview of the relationship between drugs and your brain and how this interaction influences behavior.

After completing this course, students should be able to:

1. Describe the basic concepts and principles of brain anatomy and physiology.
2. Summarize how drugs can modify communication between neurons.
3. Infer how drugs alter behaviors by affecting different aspects of neural communication.
4. Examine the relationship between the symptoms of psychological disorders, changes in the brain associated with these disorders, and drugs used to treat these disorders.
5. Use the knowledge gained in this class to evaluate scientific claims.

Course Materials:

- Log into this course’s TopHat site  **by Wednesday, August 28th**.
 - You will receive an invite at your Pitt email address, or you can join at <https://tophat.com>. The course Join code is **994183**.

Class Format Overview:

- This is an online-only course with most assignments due *midnight on Wednesdays*.
- TopHat, Turnitin/Peermark, and Canvas will be used to manage the course.

Tips for Success:

- Make time at least *every other day* for course material and assignments.
- Check your Canvas notifications settings, ensuring that you receive course and assignment announcements on a device or email which you check often.
- Read assignment directions early, so you can ask questions prior to deadlines.

Assessments/Assignments:

⇒ Your grade will be assessed from several types of assignments designed to measure student achievement of course and topic objectives.

Curving and Extra Credit Policy

- Do not expect a final curve.
- If the class performs poorly on a particular assignment, extra credit linked to this assignment may be assigned at the professors' discretion.
- The **reflection assignments** provide opportunities for students to earn "extra credit" points throughout the semester.
- Please check the Canvas Content Area "Reflection Assignments" weekly for extra credit opportunities. In general, you will be notified but not reminded for extra credit assignment due dates.

Quizzes and Midterms:

- Purpose: To assess student's gains in achieving the course-level and lecture-level content knowledge learning objectives.
- Submission Location: Canvas
- Quizzes:
 - Total Points: 13 quizzes worth 10 points each; drop lowest 3
 - Due dates: Wednesday at midnight (primarily, with a few exceptions)
- Midterms:
 - Total Points: 3 Midterms worth 30-35 points each, total 100 points
 - Due dates: See Schedule

Writing Assignments:

- Purpose: To reinforce class content, to provide practice communicating concepts, and to connect class content to current areas of scientific discovery.
- Submission Location: Turnitin, with link from Canvas
- Total points: 4 assignments worth 50 points each = 200 points total
 - Graded peer-feedback component worth 20% of the total assignment.
- For more info: See Schedule and the Writing Assignment Handout (Canvas).

Cultural Engagement Assignment:

- Purpose: Find, share, and discuss class-related cultural references.
- Submission Location: Canvas
- Total points: 80 points total from 4 discussion boards, where students must include an original post and one response to a classmate's post.
- Due Dates: See schedule and the Cultural Engagement Assignment Handout (Canvas).

TopHat Homework:

- Purpose: Low-stakes self-assessment of course content comprehension.
- Submission location: TopHat
- Total points: 20 points total; 50% participation and 50% correct answer
- Due Dates: Wednesdays at midnight (primarily, with a few exceptions).

Reflection Assignments:

- Purpose: Provide alternative opportunities to foster student learning and practice using higher-order thinking skills.
- Submission location: Canvas
- Total points: maximum 20 points
- Due Dates: Throughout the semester, see Canvas for due dates.

Grading:

⇒ Your final grade will be calculated from your scores on the assessments as outlined above and illustrated in the table below.

Category	Points	Points Applied to Final Average
Homework	>20 total (<1 point per question)	20
Engagement Discussion Board	4 at 20 points each	80
Individual Assignments	4 @ 50 points each	200
Quizzes	13 @10 points, drop 3	100
Midterms	3 @ 30-35 points each	100
Formative Reflection Assignments	1-2 points each, extra credit	20
TOTAL		500

Grading scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage Range	Points
A+	96.9 - 100	485-500
A	92.9 - 96.9	465-484
A-	89.9 - 92.9	450-483
B+	86.9 - 89.9	435-449
B	82.9 - 86.9	415-434
B-	79.9 - 82.9	400-414
C+	76.9 - 79.9	385-399
C	72.9 - 76.9	365-384
C-	69.9 - 72.9	350-364
D	60.0 - 69.9	300-349
F	59.9 or Less	0-299

Makeup/Late Assignment Policy:

1. Quizzes, Discussion Boards, and Writing Assignments only, which are turned in by the time I check them the following day (~8am) will not be considered officially “late.”
 2. I have a one-time, no-questions asked late policy for assignments. The first assignment turned in late *without* an University-excused absence (see Canvas for details) *will be accepted within 5 days* of the original due date.
 3. You can replace 1 additional *missing* Discussion Board, Writing Assignment, or Midterm by completing it for a max of 85% of the assignment’s total points up to 10 days after the due date.
- ⇒ Additional *unexcused* late assignments will be given a 0 grade.

The detailed **Excused Absence Policy**, **Cheating and Plagiarism Policy**, **Pitt Academic Policies**, and the **Natural Science General Education Requirement Addendum** Canvas in the “Course Policy” content area.

Course Schedule:

Unit 1: Introduction to the Nervous System					
Week of	Lesson #	Topic	Assignment (due)	Quiz (due)	Exams (due)
Aug 26-28			Sign up for TopHat, Read Syllabus, Watch Syllabus Videos (Aug 28)	Syllabus Quiz (Aug 28)	
Aug 29-Sept 4*	Lesson 1	Introduction Cells of the Nervous System	Writing Assignment 1: Secrets of How the Brain Works (Sept 4)	Quiz 1 (Sept 4)	
Sept 5-11	Lesson 2	Neuroanatomy	Peer Feedback: Assignment 1 (Sept 11)	Quiz 2 (Sept 11)	
Sept 12-18	Lesson 3	Neurophysiology	Engagement Discussion Board 1 Due (Sept 18)	Quiz 3 (Sept 18)	
Sept 19-25	Lesson 4	Neurotransmission Neurotransmitters	Writing Assignment 2: The Brain, Reimagined (Sept 25)	Quiz 4 (Sept 25)	
Unit 2: Drugs and the Human Body					
Week of	Lesson #	Topic	Assignment (due)	Quiz (due)	Exams (due)
Sept 26-Oct 2	Lesson 5A	Drug Laws	Peer Feedback: Assignment 2 (Oct 2)		Midterm Lessons 1-4 (Oct 2)
October 3-9	Lesson 5B	Pharmacodynamics Pharmacokinetics	Engagement Discussion Board 2 Due (Oct 9)	Quiz 5 (Oct 9)	
Oct 10-16+	Lesson 6	Addiction	Writing Assignment 3: Rethinking Dopamine (Oct 16)	Quiz 6 (Oct 16)	
Oct 17-23+	Lesson 7	Pain and Opiates	Peer Feedback: Assignment 3 (Oct 23)	Quiz 7 (Oct 23)	
Oct 24-30	Lesson 8	Stimulants: Caffeine, Nicotine, Cocaine, and Amphetamines	Engagement Discussion Board 3 Due (Oct 30)	Quiz 8 (Oct 30)	
Unit 3: Drugs- Legal and Illegal					
Week of	Lesson #	Topic	Assignment (due)	Quiz (due)	Exams (due)
Oct 31-Nov 6+	Lesson 9	Alcohol Cannabis		Quiz 9 (Nov 6)	Midterm Lessons 5-8 (Nov 6)
Nov 7-13+	Lesson 10	Hallucinogens	Engagement Discussion Board 4 Due (Nov 13)	Quiz 10 (Nov 13)	
Nov 14-22	Lesson 11	Affective Disorders Antidepressants	Writing Assignment 4: Happy with a 20% Chance of Sadness (Nov 22)	Quiz 11 (Nov 22)	
Nov 23-Dec 1*	Thanksgiving Break				
Dec 2-9	Lesson 12	Anxiety Disorders Anxiolytics	Peer Feedback: Assignment 4 (Dec 9)	Quiz 12 (Dec 9)	
Dec 10-13					Midterm Lessons 9-12 (Dec 13)

*Holidays

- Sept 2, 2019 (Labor Day)
- November 23-December 1, 2019 (Thanksgiving Break)

+ Dr. Dukes will have limited communication from October 13-19 and early in November (dates TBD) due to scheduled conference travel.