



Boston University School of Public Health

SPH MC 783: Substance Use among Minoritized and Marginalized Populations

Noel Vest, PhD, SPH Faculty
TA: Ally Cogan, MPH

Wednesdays, Jan 24 – Sunday May 10, 2025, 6-8:50pm
Location: INS 214
Spring 2025 - 4 Credits

Required Reading Materials

Humphreys, Keith. *Addiction: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2023.

Vakharia, Sheila P. *The Harm Reduction Gap: Helping Individuals Left Behind by Conventional Drug Prevention and Abstinence-only Addiction Treatment*. Taylor & Francis, 2024.

Description

Addiction is a powerful brain-based behavioral disorder that interferes with many lives. The National Survey on Drug Use and Health has estimated that 21.5 million Americans aged 12 and older are classified as having a substance use disorder, an extraordinary 8.1% of the population. The field of public health is advancing the understanding of this disorder through research, education, innovation, and policy guidance. This class aims to help students better understand drug use and addiction in our world by offering a window into the drivers, patterns, and consequences of substance use among diverse populations throughout the lifecourse.

Students will develop the knowledgebase and framework to critically evaluate the science behind addiction and how to apply this knowledge to address the addiction epidemic in our world. Through assessment of current evidence, reflection and discussion, application of multilevel theoretical frameworks, and engagement with practitioners and researchers, we will explore the complexity of sex, gender, and racial-ethnic differences in substance use and health service utilization. We will review current trends in substance use among different communities, explore specific topics of public health significance (e.g., pregnancy, interpersonal relationships, sex and gender differences, infectious disease transmission, stigma, and disparities), contrast understandings of substance use acquired through quantitative and qualitative research methods, and critically evaluate the provision of care. This course will provide you with a deeper understanding of the significance and complexity of substance use and related issues among people with diverse identities and backgrounds.

Course Learning Objectives

- 1) Evaluate the science of addiction and recovery from the disease model perspective.
- 2) Assess selected trends in substance use and related harms among diverse populations in the United States and globally, building on knowledge and assessment skills acquired from other courses or experience.
- 3) Describe complex substance use issues affecting diverse populations such as pregnancy, infectious diseases, stigma, incarceration, interpersonal relationships, and intersections with racial/ethnic/sexual minority status.
- 4) Investigate a selected substance use issue affecting a specific population, lifecourse stage, and/or geographic region through a group research project.

- 5) Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery approaches used to address substance use and related issues in specific marginalized populations.

Class Organization

Unless otherwise instructed, lectures will be at INS 214 on Wednesdays from 6:00-8:50 PM. In general, a didactic class on a weekly topic will be presented and the students will either complete an in-class activity or lead a discussion related to the topic during the following class. Attendance and active participation in this class are vital to the class dynamics.

Course Administration

This course is under the direction of Dr. Noel Vest

Dr. Noel Vest

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Virtual Office Hours 7:30 AM to 10 AM Wednesdays: [Dr. Vest BU Zoom Link](#)

Teaching Assistant

Ally Cogan, MPH

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Office hours: M 8am – 9am; Thursday 5pm – 6pm: [Ally's Zoom Link](#)

II. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice

Names/Pronouns and Self Identifications

Boston University School of Public Health recognizes the importance of a diverse student body, and we are committed to fostering equitable classroom environments. We know that name and gender identity are central to most individuals' sense of self and well-being and therefore I invite you, if you wish, to tell us how you want to be referred to both in terms of your name and your pronouns (he/him, she/her, they/them, etc.). The pronouns someone indicates are not necessarily indicative of their gender identity and their pronouns may change over time. In addition, many people (e.g. international students, trans people, and others) might go by a name in daily life that is different from their legal name. In this classroom, we seek to refer to people by the names that they would like us to use.

Additionally, how you identify in terms of your gender identity, race, class, sexuality, religion, and dis/ability, as well as all aspects of your identity, is your choice when and whether to disclose (e.g. should it come up in classroom conversation about our experiences and perspectives) and should be self-identified, not presumed or imposed.

I will do my best to address and refer to all students accordingly and will support you in doing so as well.

We have an opportunity in class to hear from people with different viewpoints and open some lines of communication about difficult and/or emotional topics. All opinions are welcome, as long as they are grounded in the evidence and presented respectfully. As the professor I reserve the right to manage, intercede, side-line, or stop a conversation if it is leading us too far off track or if it is disrespectful to others.

[Sources: Oregon State <https://osucascades.edu/faculty-handbook/teaching/gender-identity-and-personal-pronouns-syllabus-guidance> and University of MD: <https://lgbtq.umd.edu/good-practices-names-and-pronouns>]

Commitment to Inclusive Teaching and Learning

Inclusive teaching is a core component of our shared commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) at BUSPH. I have evaluated this syllabus through a DEIJ lens using a structured assessment tool that addresses the following dimensions of DEIJ: Inclusion of perspectives, Accessibility, Critical engagement, Diverse pedagogical teaching techniques, Respect for student needs, Respect for student identity, Attention to language, and Facilitating discussion of different perspectives. This is a work in progress, and I invite any feedback to promote a more inclusive teaching and learning environment.

III. Guiding Principles, Values, and Policies

Expectations of Ourselves at Our Best

These are intended to be expectations of all members of our community, faculty, staff, and students, expectations we hold ourselves to, aspiring always to be our best selves.

We all aim to:

- Strive for excellence
- Exercise the highest integrity in all aspects of work
- Be open, flexible, realistic, and understanding
- Demonstrate professionalism and trustworthiness as a representative of Boston University and the School of Public Health
- Adhere to and uphold the policies and procedures of Boston University and the School of Public Health.

We aim to be guided by five behaviors, with corresponding expectations of ourselves for each behavior:

Behavior	Expectations
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Embrace responsibility for our work, learning, and all other activities• Work responsibly and collaboratively
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Receive constructive feedback from faculty, teaching assistants, mentors and others• Openly share expertise and experience to assure individual and team success
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide constructive feedback to faculty, teaching assistants, mentors and others• Seek support when needed• Use technology in a responsible and professional manner
Respect for others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respect the unique cultures, strengths, viewpoints and experiences of others• Show compassion and tolerance• Actively and respectfully participate in community and classroom discussions and activities
Helping others succeed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reach out to others who appear to be struggling• Seek ways to contribute to the success of others

Code of Conduct in the BUSPH Virtual Community

All of our virtual communities aim to cultivate important communication and strengthen connections with students, staff, and faculty by building a shared sense of community across the institution. This applies to all shared online virtual platforms such as Zoom, Blackboard, GroupMe, Slack, Twitter, Facebook Group forums, etc.

Each individual has the right to participate in an academic atmosphere that promotes safe and inclusive conversations regarding student academics and student life. Virtual forums prohibit unlawful discriminatory practices, including discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, national origin, genetic information, or any other characteristic. We expect that all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, and that all relationships among BUSPH community members, including in virtual communities, are free of bias, prejudice, and harassment.

Although students remain responsible for their own actions in virtual spaces, they are obligated to conform to all BUSPH-wide goals and expectations. Intrusive acts such as postings or comments that disrupt the learning experience or compromise the academic environment for other students will be removed, and violations of these standards may result in disciplinary action. All students are expected to uphold these policies, especially those related to academic integrity and the Code of Conduct. Violations of these policies can result in removal from virtual spaces, as well as other disciplinary actions. Instances of alleged misconduct involving BUSPH students are typically resolved through processes internal to the School of Public Health. Disciplinary action in response to misconduct can include suspension, expulsion, loss of course credit, or other sanctions.

Any member of our community who has questions or concerns about these policies should reach out to the Assistant Dean of Students or the Associate Dean of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice.

Boston University Academic Conduct Code

Students in the School of Public Health are expected to maintain high standards of academic honesty and integrity. Academic honesty is essential for students to attain the competencies the school expects of its graduates and to enable the faculty to adequately assess student performance. Academic dishonesty undermines the bonds of trust and honesty between members of the community and defrauds those who depend upon our knowledge and integrity.

Academic misconduct is conduct by which a student misrepresents their academic accomplishments or impedes other students' opportunities of being judged fairly for their academic work. Knowingly allowing others to represent your work as their own is as serious an offense as submitting another's work as your own. Violations include but are not limited to:

- **Cheating on an examination or assignment.** Any attempt by students to alter their performance on an examination or assignment in violation of the stated or commonly understood ground rules.
- **Plagiarism.** Representing the work or ideas of another as one's own; and/or using another's work or ideas without crediting the source. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the following: copying the answers of another student on an examination; copying or restating the work or ideas of another person or persons in any oral or written work (printed or electronic) without citing the appropriate source; using audio or video footage that comes from another source (including work done by another student) without permission and/or acknowledgment of that source; and collaborating with someone else in an academic endeavor without acknowledging their contribution. Plagiarism can consist of acts of commission (appropriating the words or ideas of another as one's own), or omission (failing to acknowledge/document/credit the source or creator of words or ideas).
- **Misrepresentation, falsification, or fabrication of data**

- **Submitting substantially the same work in more than one course** without the consent of all instructors
- **Unauthorized downloading, uploading, sharing, and/or duplicating course materials**

It is the responsibility of every student to be aware of the [Academic Conduct Code's](#) contents and to abide by its provisions. In all charges of academic misconduct against a student, the student is entitled to procedural fairness in any disciplinary proceedings. A student who is found guilty of academic misconduct may be subject to sanctions, up to and including dismissal from the school. Additional resource: [Avoiding Plagiarism](#).

Student Questions or Concerns

If you have questions about course content, assessments, deadlines, or policies, please contact a course Teaching Assistant or your course instructor.

If questions or concerns remain unresolved, you may contact Mary Murphy-Phillips, Assistant Dean for Students, at mcmmurph@bu.edu.

If questions or concerns remain unresolved, you may contact Professor Lisa Sullivan, Associate Dean for Education, at lsull@bu.edu.

If questions or concerns remain unresolved, you may contact Dr. Michael Stein, Dean, at mdstein@bu.edu.

For confidential, independent, impartial and informal advice, you may contact the Office of the Ombuds at ombuds@bu.edu.

Teaching Methodology

Course and Teaching Philosophy: The best learning takes place in the context of interactions between students with faculty, and students with students, in increments over time, using theory and evidence as a foundation. In this course, we will cover a variety of complex, interrelated topics and diverse, sometimes divergent viewpoints. Foundational information will be relayed through lectures and readings that have been selected to inform and inspire your thinking. However, engaging with complex, stigmatized issues also requires confronting preconceived notions, conducting careful research (rather than relying on assumptions), and interacting with others in respectful, constructive ways. Said simply, we cover incredibly heavy topics in this class, and we will do our best to give space to absorb the information individually. That said, if you ever feel that you need to step out of class for any reason, please do so and return when you feel ready.

Communication and Assessment Skills: An additional goal of this course is to improve written and verbal communication and assessment skills. Clear and concise wording, originality and adequate citations (see below), creating arguments supported by evidence (not assumptions), and effective presentation delivery are essential in public health careers. As such, assessment, writing, and presentation quality will affect how assignments are graded. Making a solid case for the significance of your chosen topic will require a thorough review and analysis of the literature. Students in this course should become familiar with how to search the literature (see Learning Resources below).

Substance Use Communication Skills: Topics and populations covered in this course are fraught with stigma and require careful thought and critical reflection. The language used to describe problems, behaviors, affected populations, and proposed solutions is particularly important (see chart here or at [Words Matter: Preferred Language for Talking About](#)

Instead of:	Try:
Addict	Person with a substance use disorder
	Person with a serious substance use disorder
Addicted to X	Has an X use disorder
	Has a serious X use disorder
	Has a substance use disorder involving X (if more than one substance is involved)
Addiction	Substance use disorder
	Serious substance use disorder
	<p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Addiction” is appropriate when quoting findings or research that used the term or if it appears in a proper name of an organization. • “Addiction” is appropriate when speaking of the disease process that leads to someone developing a substance use disorder that includes compulsive use (for example, “the field of addiction medicine,” and “the science of addiction”). • It is appropriate to refer to scheduled drugs as “addictive.”
Alcoholic	Person with an alcohol use disorder
	Person with a serious alcohol use disorder
Alcoholics Anonymous / Narcotics Anonymous / etc.	<p>Note: When using these terms, take care to avoid divulging an individual's participation in a named 12-step program.</p>
Clean	Abstinent
Clean Screen	Substance-free
	Testing negative for substance use
Dirty	Actively using
	Positive for substance use
Dirty Screen	Testing positive for substance use
Drug habit	Substance use disorder
	Compulsive or regular substance use
Drug/Substance Abuser	Person with a substance use disorder
	Person who uses drugs (if not qualified as a disorder)
	<p>Note: When feasible, “Drug/Substance Abuse” can be replaced with “Substance Use Disorder.”</p>
Former/reformed Addict/Alcoholic	Person in recovery
	Person in long-term recovery
Opioid Replacement or Methadone Maintenance	Medication assisted treatment
	Medication-assisted recovery
Recreational, Casual, or Experimental Users (as opposed to those with a use disorder)	People who use drugs for non-medical reasons
	People starting to use drugs
	People who are new to drug use
	Initiates

Source: White House Office of National Drug Control Policy

THE HUFFINGTON POST

[Addiction](#) for examples of less stigmatizing language). We will work together in this class to add less stigmatizing word choices to our vernacular.

Citations: Another essential component of professional writing and presenting is correctly and adequately acknowledging the bibliographic sources you have used. For this course, the APA style will be required. Guidance and examples can be found online.

Expectations: Successful students in this course will attend all class sessions, have read the assigned material prior to class, and actively participate in the classroom. In order to maximize learning and ensure an animated and productive class environment, each student is encouraged to participate actively in discussions, in-class exercises, and workshops.

IV. Resources

BUSPH Academic Support Resources:

Blackboard: Required and supplemental readings available on Blackboard provide essential background for lecture topics and group discussion activities. Given the pace at which new literature becomes available, readings may also be changed or added during the course.

Successful students will read these assigned readings before class and be prepared to participate actively in class discussions.

Successful research projects in this course require a thorough assessment of selected topics. The BU medical library provides excellent support with reviewing the scientific literature and available data (for appointments and tutorials, see <http://medlib.bu.edu/> and <http://medlib.bu.edu/tutorials/>). If you would like to make an appointment to meet with a librarian in person to get personalized assistance with a search you can contact them directly by email (refquest@bu.edu), phone (617 638-4228), or stopping by the reference desk on the 12th floor of the med school (Building L).

Additional assistance with writing and presentation skills is available through the BUSPH Public Health Writing Program: bu.edu/sph/writing and bu.edu/sph/present (for more information or to schedule an appointment, contact sphwrite@bu.edu; also see the BUSPH Writing Guide (bu.edu/sph/writing-guide).

V. Course Structure

Assessments

Assessments of student learning in this course are based on a combination of attendance and participation, including discussion of readings, tests, a frameworks project, and the completion of a course-long group project. The product of research project will be a high-quality presentation on the groups' selected sub-population and substance use topic. Development of the project should be informed by the material covered in the class, including the reading, lectures, guest speakers, and small-group discussions.

You should start to think about a topic and review the literature for your group project during the first week of class if not before. Check news, websites, and <http://www.bu.edu/aodhealth/> for topic ideas.

Overview of Assignments and Grading:

<u>Assignment:</u>	<u>Grade %</u>	<u>Class/Date Due:</u>
Attendance	10%	Weekly
Class Engagement	10%	Session Breakouts (5 points each– 12 breakouts)

Reflections	20%	1 Page Reflection Due Sunday after class
Breakout Discussion Lead	5%	One Assigned Session
Questions for Guest Panel	5%	Before Session 6 (due 48 hours before session)
Final SEM Project Summary	5%	Session 7
Examinations – In class	20%	Week 4 and Week 7
Community Engagement	5%	Week 15
Final SEM Project Presentations	20%	Week 16

Grading Policy: Students will be assigned the following final letter grades, based on course assessments. All SPH candidates must have a minimum 3.0 GPA at SPH to graduate. Please review the full Boston University School of Public Health [grading policy](#).

Course	Final
94-100	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
60-69	D
<60	F

Description of Assignments

Attendance (10%): Each of the course sessions will be designed to allow for review of critical course content through interactive presentations, workshops, and student-led discussions. To complement this material, we will interact with practitioners and researchers who will discuss real challenges and successes in working to address substance use and related harms among diverse populations. It will be imperative that you attend class to demonstrate critical thinking and mastery of the material.

Class Engagement (10%): To engage in critical thinking and employ communication and informal presentation skills, it is necessary to prepare and discuss required readings with peers in small groups in most class sessions. In addition to the completion of and ability to discuss required readings, and careful, considerate provision of feedback to classmates, there are in-class workshops that are designed to provide hands-on practice utilizing the skills you are expected to demonstrate for the group presentation assignment and final essay.

Participation and breakouts will be graded according to the following scale:

- **5 points:** regular and insightful contributor to discussions, evidence of completed and critically evaluated readings, active class participant, helps keep class on target toward reaching objectives, demonstrates thorough mastery of the material, and **uses technology as appropriate** (please see *Technology in the Classroom* note below for guidance).
- **4 points:** regularly contributes to discussions, evidence of completed readings, active class participant, some weaknesses in understanding the material, and generally uses technology appropriately.
- **3 points:** only contributes to discussions occasionally, satisfactory preparation, evidence of some incomplete readings and general weakness in understanding class material, limited participation, and sometimes uses technology inappropriately.

- **2 points:** evidence of limited completion of readings and understanding of material, inactive during class, and often uses technology inappropriately.
- **1 point:** little to no evidence of completed readings or understanding of material, inactive during class, is disruptive or detracts from class meeting objectives, frequently uses technology inappropriately.

Reflection Assignments (20%): By midnight each Sunday after class, you will submit a short reflection paper outlining what you learned in the previous class or gleaned from the coursework readings. Generally, you will be given three prompts to provide about one paragraph (100-200 words each prompt) response to after class. These reflections are intended to provide each student an opportunity to reflect on what you took away from each session. These should be highly individualized and personal reflections based on your experiences and training up to now. A rubric is provided on Blackboard. There are 12 Reflections assigned, but you will only need to turn in 10 to get full credit (you can skip 2 throughout the class).

Discussion Lead (5%): Students will rotate leading the reading discussion each week for the different breakout groups. Leads will be expected to prepare several (3-5) thought-provoking, open-ended questions. The questions generally do not have “right” answers but rather explore differences in perspectives in these discussions. The Leads should post questions on the Blackboard discussion board at least 24 hours prior to the assigned class session (by 6pm). Students will lead discussions one time during the course. You will be assigned lead sessions in advance on Blackboard.

Questions for Guest Panel (5%): Informed by the topics presented in the course or through literature review, each student will submit 3 questions/issues for discussion by the guest panel. Questions will be compiled and moderated during the discussion. Details on the guest panel will be provided in the Week 6 agenda. Questions should be submitted to Blackboard 48 hours before session 6 (by 6 pm). All or none point distribution for a minimum of 3 questions.

Examinations (20%): There will be a total of two tests given throughout the course. Students will be provided with a comprehensive study guide for each test a minimum of one week before the test. The tests will be a mix of multiple choice, T/F, and open-ended answers. Tests are “closed book and technology”. All tests are graded on a curve.

Final Group Socio-Ecological Model (SEM) Presentation Topic Summary (5%): Students will be randomly assigned to teams and together prepare a topic summary for the SEM group project. The summary should be roughly 1 page double spaced and include the following: sub-population of interest, specific substance use issue, and a few sentences on what makes the issue a public health concern and HOW the SEM will help to provide insight on the issue. The topic summary should be submitted by one member of the group in the 9th week of class by Friday at 9 PM. Also, see detailed assignment description and rubric for the group project posted on Blackboard.

Community Engagement – Learning Outside the Class (5%): This opportunity consists of finding a community organization and getting exposed to the work that they do. This can include shadowing a healthcare or community provider, volunteering at a community organization (A-Hope, Recovery Community Center, or Smokeworks), attending the Together for Hope Grayken Addiction Conference 2025 (April 16-17 – scholarships available), or attending any open mutual-aid organization (AA, NA, Celebrate Recovery). The community engagement opportunity should be completed before session 13 so the experience can be presented to the class. This will be a short 5-minute presentation sharing your experience. The time commitment should be no less than 1 hour and no more than 3 hours. Please email Ally if you have an idea for Community Engagement but want to be sure it is an approved activity.

Final Group SEM Presentation (20%): As a team, identify a specific substance use issue among a sub-population of women, gender-diverse groups, marginalized or underserved populations, and propose a Socioecological Model (SEM) based on your findings from a comprehensive literature review. Be prepared to present your findings as a group to rest of the class during session 16 and be **prepared to respond to**

questions and comments. Also, see the detailed assignment description and rubric posted on Blackboard. Students must turn in Peer Evaluations before the final class period for credit.

Course Policies and Student Expectations

Late-Work and Make-Up Policy: Although exceptions may be granted for extenuating circumstances (e.g., illness or crisis events), no credit will be given for late assignments. If you must be late or absent, please email the ***instructor and TA in advance*** with “MC783” in a specific subject line. Requests for make-up assignments or tests will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Attendance and Participation Policy: Attendance and participation will be graded as described above.

Technology in the Classroom: The use of laptops and other mobile devices can be distracting and should only be used for course-related tasks (e.g., Zoom, note-taking, or researching relevant topics at appropriate times). ***To show attention and respect, unnecessary “multi-tasking” is strictly prohibited when guest speakers or peers are presenting.*** Use of generative AI (Chat GPT) in the classroom and on any assignments is generally not permitted unless indicated. Allowances are made for grammar checking, spelling, and double-checking citations in APA format. This specific approval is given to allow you to become familiar with AI tools, to increase your AI literacy, and to understand how to use AI in appropriate ways within an academic context.

Course Alterations: Efforts will be made to follow this syllabus as it is currently drafted but changes to the schedule are inevitable. You will be notified of any changes. There will be no changes in regard to test days or presentations timelines.

Week 1 Session (January 22): Welcome and Introduction to Course

Objectives

- Review the goals of the course, the course structure, and course expectations
- Describe stigmatizing language, the impact of stigmatizing language, and alternatives
- Identify the biopsychosocial drivers and consequences of substance use

Session Agenda

1. Lecture: Noel and Ally
 - Who are we?
 - Stigmatizing Language
 - An introduction to the biopsychosocial drivers and consequences of substance use in women
2. Discussion:
 - Syllabus Review and Course Expectations
3. Introductions: Everyone

Required Reading and Assignments Due (by the start of the session unless otherwise noted)

- Use AI to summarize and understand:
 - Skewes, M. C., & Gonzalez, V. M. (2013). The biopsychosocial model of addiction. *Principles of addiction*, 1, 61-70.
 - Alexander, B. K., Beyerstein, B. L., Hadaway, P. F., & Coombs, R. B. (1981). Effect of early and later colony housing on oral ingestion of morphine in rats. *Pharmacology Biochemistry and Behavior*, 15(4), 571-576.
- Read and understand as we will be covering this information in class:
 - NIDA, Commonly Used Drugs
 - SAMHSA Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) 51, **pp6-14**.
 - Kelly, Wakeman, Saitz. Stop talking 'dirty': clinicians, language, and quality of care for the leading cause of preventable death in the United States. *Am J Med*, 2015.
 - Humphreys, Keith. *Addiction: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2023. **Read Chapter 1 in full.**

Supplemental Reading (not required):

- Witkiewitz, K., & Maisto, S. A. (2022). Biopsychosocial process of change in alcohol use disorder recovery. In *Dynamic pathways to recovery from alcohol use disorder: Meaning and methods* (pp. 25-40). Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK. Available at [this link](#).

Submitted Assignment Due: Reflection Due Sunday

Week 2 Session (January 29): Science of Addiction

Objectives

- Introduce to the Disease Model of Addiction
- Using AI in science

Session Agenda

1. Lecture: Noel Vest
 1. Introduction to the Science of Addiction
 2. The disease model
3. Reading and Group Project Small-Group Breakouts

Required Reading Due (by the start of session)

- Use AI to summarize and understand each of these articles:
 - Olds, J., & Milner, P. (1954). Positive reinforcement produced by electrical stimulation of septal area and other regions of rat brain. *Journal of comparative and physiological psychology*, 47(6), 419.
 - Koob, G. F., & Le Moal, M. (2001). Drug addiction, dysregulation of reward, and allostasis. *Neuropsychopharmacology*, 24(2), 97-129.
 - Hyman, S. E., Malenka, R. C., & Nestler, E. J. (2006). Neural mechanisms of addiction: the role of reward-related learning and memory. *Annu. Rev. Neurosci.*, 29(1), 565-598.
- Read and understand this article in full:
 - Volkow, N. D., Koob, G. F., & McLellan, A. T. (2016). Neurobiologic advances from the brain disease model of addiction. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 374(4), 363-371.
 - Humphreys, Keith. *Addiction: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2023. **Read only Chapter 2 in full.**

Submitted Assignment Due: Reflection Due Sunday

Week 3 Session (February 5): Intersectionality and Syndemic Theory

Objectives

- Introduce Intersectionality
- Introduce Syndemic Theory

Session Agenda

1. Lecture Noel
2. Video from the Institute for Study of "Race" & Social Justice (Nancy Lopez)

Reading and Assignments Due (by the start of session unless otherwise noted)

- Use AI to summarize and understand each of these articles:
 - Crenshaw, K. W. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. In *Stanford Law Review*.
 - Singer, M. (1994). AIDS and the health crisis of the US urban poor; the perspective of critical medical anthropology. *Social science & medicine*, 39(7), 931-948.
 - Singer, M., & Clair, S. (2003). Syndemics and public health: Reconceptualizing disease in bio-social context. *Medical anthropology quarterly*, 17(4), 423-441.
- Read and understand this article in full:
 - Gopaldas, A. (2013). Intersectionality 101. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 32(1_suppl), 90-94.
 - Singer, M., Bulled, N., Ostrach, B., & Mendenhall, E. (2017). Syndemics and the biosocial conception of health. *The lancet*, 389(10072), 941-950.

Supplemental Material:

- Podcast: Intersectionality Matters with Kimberle Crenshaw. Black Women's Health Through the Twin Pandemics. May 14, 2021. <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/37-black-womens-health-through-the-twin-pandemics/id1441348908?i=1000521738146>

Submitted Assignment Due: Reflection Due Sunday

Week 4 Session (February 12): What is Harm Reduction?

TEST TODAY!!!

Objectives

- Introduce Harm Reduction Principles

Session Agenda

1. Instructor: Ally Cogan, MPH
2. Small-Group Reading Discussion
3. Meet with your Final Presentation Groups

Required Reading/Viewing Due (by the start of session)

- Vakharia, Sheila P. *The Harm Reduction Gap: Helping Individuals Left Behind by Conventional Drug Prevention and Abstinence-only Addiction Treatment*. Taylor & Francis, 2024. **Chapters 3 and 4 only**
- TBD

Supplemental Reading: SAMHSA Harm Reduction Framework

Submitted Assignment Due: Reflection Due Sunday

Week 5 Session (February 19): Harm Reduction in the Black Community

Objectives

- Describe Harm Reduction Principles
- Describe different perspectives related to harm reduction among Black people
- Introduce Socio-Ecological Models (for Final Group Project)

Session Agenda

1. Guest Speaker (6-7 PM): Kenny Washington, Assistant Director, A-Hope Needle Exchange Program
2. Discussion (Question and Answer) of Harm Reduction with Speakers
3. Meet with Final Presentation Groups (if time allows)

Required Reading Due (by the start of session)

- Use AI to summarize and understand each of these articles:
 - Bringing Harm Reduction to the Black Community, <https://projectsafephilly.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/imani-woods.pdf>
 - Friedman, Joseph, and Helena Hansen. "Far From a "White Problem": Responding to the overdose crisis as a racial justice issue." *American Journal of Public Health* 112.S1 (2022): S30-S32.
- Read and understand in full:
 - Vakharia, Sheila P. *The Harm Reduction Gap: Helping Individuals Left Behind by Conventional Drug Prevention and Abstinence-only Addiction Treatment*. Taylor & Francis, 2024. **Chapter 1 only.**

Submitted Assignment Due: Reflection Due Sunday

Week 6 Session (February 28): Recovery

Objectives

- Introduce the concept of addiction recovery and related research
- How to talk about an expanded conception of recovery while still respecting and celebrating the benefits of traditional 12-step recovery
- Introduction to the socio-ecological models and addiction example

Session Agenda

1. Lecture by Noel Vest: What is Recovery?
2. Framework Presentation on the Socio-Ecological Model
3. Recovery Guest Panel: Peter Trietler, Assistant Professor, BU School of Social Work
Johnny Smith, PhD Student, Harvard University
Speaker TBD
4. Small-Group Reading Discussion
5. Small-Group Workshop: Deciding on population and issue for Final SEM Project

Required Reading and Assignments Due (by the start of session unless otherwise noted)

- Witkiewitz, K., Montes, K. S., Schwebel, F. J., & Tucker, J. A. (2020). What is recovery? *Alcohol Research: Current Reviews*, 40(3).
- Witkiewitz, K., & Tucker, J. A. (2024). Whole person recovery from substance use disorder: a call for research examining a dynamic behavioral ecological model of contexts supportive of recovery. *Addiction Research & Theory*, 1-12.

Supplemental Material

- What is Recovery? Podcast by Dr. Katie Witkiewitz on the Flourishing after Addiction Podcast. Available at the following [link](#). And more research on recovery [here](#).

Submitted Assignment Due: Reflection Due Sunday

Week 7 Session (March 5): What exactly is the “overdose crisis”?

TEST TODAY!!

Objectives

- Define the overdose crisis as distinct from the addiction
- Analyze the factors contributing to the overdose crisis
- Outline on-going work to address this “crisis” through BU/BMC: reviewing studies lead by Dr. Sarah Bagley, Dr. Alex Walley, and Mr. Stephen Murray

Session Agenda

1. Guest Speaker: Ally Cogan
2. Lecture (Noel/Ally): How is the overdose crisis different from the addiction crisis?

Required Reading/Viewing Due (by the start of session)

- Episode of This American Life <https://www.thisamericanlife.org/809/the-call>
- Bagley, Sarah M., Samantha F. Schoenberger, Katherine M. Waye, and Alexander Y. Walley. “A Scoping Review of Post Opioid-Overdose Interventions.” *Preventive Medicine* 128 (November 2019): 105813. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ypmed.2019.105813>.
- Review the PRONTO website and the studies housed within: <https://prontopostoverdose.org/toolkit/>
- Calihan, Jessica B., Brittany L. Carney, Deb M. Schmill, and Sarah M. Bagley. “The Call for a School-Based Approach to Opioid Overdose Prevention.” *American Journal of Public Health*, November 6, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2024.307849>.

Submitted Assignment Due by start of class: Reflection Due Sunday

Week 8 Session (March 12): Spring Break

- No class or assignments due

Week 9 Session (March 19): Pregnancy, Motherhood & Criminalization of Substance Use

Objectives

- Discuss complexities of providing SUD treatment for women who are pregnant
- Describe how policies may directly and indirectly impact harm reduction, marginalized groups, and public health

Session Agenda

1. Guest Speaker (6-7 PM ET): Project Respect's Dr. Kelley Saia, Director Dept. of Obstetrics & Gynecology
 - a. Title: "Substance Use Disorder in Pregnancy: The Intersection of Obstetric Care and the Legal System"
2. Small-Group Reading Discussion

Required Reading/Viewing Due (by the start of session)

- Saia, et al. Caring for pregnant women with opioid use disorder in the USA: expanding and improving treatment. *Curr Obstet Gynecol Rep*, 2016.
- Schiff, Davida M., et al. "Assessment of racial and ethnic disparities in the use of medication to treat opioid use disorder among pregnant women in Massachusetts." *JAMA Network Open* 3.5 (2020): e205734-e205734.
- [War on Motherhood](#), (6 min video)

Supplemental Reading: Wachman et al. Quality improvement initiative to improve inpatient outcomes for Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome. *J Perinatology*. 2018; doi:10.1038/s41372-018-0109-8.

Submitted Assignment Due: Final SEM Project Topic Summary is due Friday 9 PM, Reflection Due Sunday

Week 10 Session (March 26): The War on Drugs and Substance Use in Native Populations

Objectives

- Understand harmful use of racial discrimination in drug policy in the US
- Understand racial impact of the War on Drugs
- Understand substance use in Native Populations

Session Agenda

1. Guest Speaker Benjamin Brockie, University of Washington
2. Lecture Noel:
 - a. The Drug War and Related Topics
3. Small-Group Reading Discussion

Required Reading and Assignments Due (by the start of session unless otherwise noted)

- Vakharia, Sheila P. *The Harm Reduction Gap: Helping Individuals Left Behind by Conventional Drug Prevention and Abstinence-only Addiction Treatment*. Taylor & Francis, 2024. **Chapter 3 only.**
- Edinoff, A. N., Maudrie, T. L., Chiwiwi, C., Kjerland, T. M., Contreras, L., & Gone, J. P. (2024). A complex psychosocial portrait of substance use disorders among Indigenous people in the United States: A scoping review. *The American Journal on Addictions*.

Supplemental (not required):

- Gameon, J. A., & Skewes, M. C. (2021). Historical trauma and substance use among American Indian people with current substance use problems. *Psychology of addictive behaviors*, 35(3), 295.

Submitted Assignment Due (**by start of session**): (optional) Outline for Final SEM Project for Instructor Feedback, Reflection Due Sunday

Week 11 Session (April 2): Adolescent Substance Use - Identifying and Addressing Co-morbidity

Objectives

- Understand common mental illnesses co-occurring with substance misuse or substance use disorders
- Understand the importance of screening and comprehensive assessments for adolescents
- Be aware of the different treatments for adolescents

Session Agenda

1. Guest Speaker: Dr. Amy Yule, BMC
 - a. Presentation on Co-occurring SUD and Mental Health Issues and their Treatments
2. Small-Group Reading Discussion

Required Reading and Assignments Due (by the start of session unless otherwise noted)

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): Treatment Considerations for Youth and Young Adults with Serious Emotional Disturbances/Serious Mental Illnesses and Co-occurring Substance Use. **Read in in Full Chapter 1** and the rest of the Chapters are optional

Submitted Assignment Due: Reflection Due Sunday

Week 12 Session (April 9): Sexual Minority, Transgender, and Gender Diverse Adult Substance Use

Objectives

- Understand the historical context and methodological limitations in research on alcohol use among sexual minority women
- Identify the risk and protective factors associated with hazardous drinking among sexual minority women
- Understand how transgender and gender diverse individuals experience communication about substance use with healthcare providers, and identify strategies for improving care

Session Agenda

1. Guest Speaker: Dr. Gabe Murchison
2. Invited Guest: Tabor Hoatson, MPH, PhD student at the Harvard Medical School Department of Population Medicine
3. Small-Group Reading Discussion
4. Workshop: Group Project Preparation and Instructor Feedback

Required Reading Due (by the start of session)

- Hughto J Hughes T. Alcohol Use and Alcohol-Related Problems Among Sexual Minority Women. *Alcohol Treat Q.* 2011;29(4):403-435. doi:[10.1080/07347324.2011.608336](https://doi.org/10.1080/07347324.2011.608336)
- Wolfe HL, Drainoni ML, Hughto JMW, Siegel J, Segovia C, Fix GM. "I think providers see trans people as unstable patients": Exploring substance use communication experiences of transgender and gender diverse adults during primary care encounters. *Psychol Sex Orientat Gen Divers*. Published online December 7, 2023. doi:[10.1037/sqd0000692](https://doi.org/10.1037/sqd0000692)
- Supplemental readings TBD

Submitted Assignment Due: Reflection Due Sunday

Week 13 Session (April 16): Substance Use and Recovery among college students in the US

Objectives

- Substance Use in College – Influences and Social Norms
- Describe important factors to consider when engaging college students
- Understanding the recovery phase of the continuum of care
- Apply Socio-ecological Model to collegiate recovery

Session Agenda

1. Lecture: Noel Vest
 - a. Title: *Collegiate Recovery: What we know and what we need to know?*
2. Guest Speakers from local Collegiate Recovery Programs
3. Group presentation planning

Required Reading/Viewing Due (by the start of session)

- Vest, N., Reinstra, M., Timko, C., Kelly, J., & Humphreys, K. (2021). College programming for students in addiction recovery: A PRISMA-guided scoping review. *Addictive Behaviors*, 121, 106992.
- Reifsnider, E., Gallagher, M., & Forgione, B. (2005). Using ecological models in research on health disparities. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, 21(4), 216-222.
- Vest, N., Hennessy, E., Castedo de Martell, S., & Smith, R. (2023). A Socio-Ecological model for collegiate recovery programs. *Addiction Research & Theory*, 31(2), 92-99.

Submitted Assignment Due: Reflection Due Sunday

Week 14 Session (April 23): Addiction in Real Life

Session Agenda

- Surprise guest Speaker from BUSPH Community Health Sciences
- Question and Answer

Supplemental Reading

- Stull, S. W., Smith, K. E., Vest, N. A., Effinger, D. P., & Epstein, D. H. (2022). Potential value of the insights and lived experiences of addiction researchers with addiction. *Journal of addiction medicine*, 16(2), 135-137.

During this class session, we will have time to work on and plan for Group Presentations and get feedback from instructors.

Submitted Assignment Due: Reflection Due Sunday

Week 15 Session (April 30): Community Engagement Presentations and Prep for Final Group Presentations

Objectives

- Each student will present Community Engagement Presentation

Session Agenda

- Each student will present to the rest of the class
- If time permits, groups can finalize final project preparations

Required Reading/Viewing Due (by the start of session)

- No additional reading for Week 14 session

Submitted Assignment Due: Submit Presentation on Blackboard

Week 16 Session (May 7): Final Group Presentations

Objectives

- Work effectively as a small group to prepare and deliver a presentation to the rest of the class

Session Agenda

- Each student group will present to the rest of the class and address questions

Required Reading/Viewing Due (by the start of session)

- No additional reading for Week 15 session

Submitted Assignment Due: Submit Presentation on Blackboard