

PSY 507.01W: Pharmaco-therapy
COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2025

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Leah Phillips, Ph.D., LSSP
Office Location: Virtual
Office Hours: By Appointment
University Email Address: leah.phillips@etamu.edu
Preferred Form of Communication: Email
Communication Response Time: Within 48 hours (excluding weekends). If you have not heard back from me after 48 hours, feel free to send another email.

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Class References:

Text: Psychopharmacology by Jerry Meyer

Meyer: Psychopharmacology 4e – e-book – ISBN: 9781605359892

You are encouraged to purchase the eBook as it includes access to digital resources that the printed book does not.

Another helpful text to have access to will be the DSM-5-TR

Course Description

Pharmaco-therapy. This course provides an examination of psychoactive medications and their use in the treatment of mental and behavioral disorders. The efficacy and safety of medications will be discussed. The course presents basic principles of pharmaco-therapy that are the rationales behind the pharmacological treatment of psychological disorders. Applied components will relate to the aspects of the course

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material to mental health service delivery. The class also examines the historical psychopharmacological perspective, basic pharmacology underlying the use of medication, and recent research in the field. Prerequisite: Admission to a Psychology Graduate program.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Identify examples of psychotropic medications that are used in the clinical treatment of commonly diagnosed psychological conditions of clients and describe impact on symptoms
2. Understand the basic structure and function of the nervous system as it pertains to psychotropic medications
3. Understand the ethical parameters of what non-medical mental health professionals can and cannot discuss with clients and advocate.
4. Understand hypothesized therapeutic and side effects of psychotropic medications.
5. Understand the role of counselors in working with psychiatric consultation to help manage symptoms.
6. Understand the role of counselors in talking with clients who have questions about psychotropic medications.
7. Be able to articulate the current about the appropriateness of psychotropic medications for children
8. Be able to articulate the relationship between the pharmaceutical companies, the FDA, managed care, and the consumer.
9. Be able to articulate the counselor's role as advocate and its relation to social justice issues about who gets medicated and who has access to the more expensive medications.
10. Describe the means by which drugs are taken into and distributed throughout the body, how they are metabolized, and eliminated
11. Be able to articulate basic findings of ethnopharmacotherapy and pharmacoconomics
12. Understand the concepts of tolerance and dependence.
13. Identify principle classes of psychoactive drugs and the typical sites and mechanisms of action
14. Increase awareness of drug interactions and the possible impact of recreational drugs on client functioning
15. Gain knowledge in Services to Promote Safe and Supportive Schools: Understand principles and research related to social-emotional well-being, resilience and risk factors in learning, mental and behavioral health, services in schools and communities to support multitiered prevention and health promotion, and evidence-based strategies for creating safe and supportive schools.

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Students will need the ability to use word processing programs to complete course successfully.

Instructional Methods

This is an online-only course, and it is highly dependent on your diligence in completing your work. You will work with classmates on group projects and individually on quizzes and research papers.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

- Read the text carefully and take notes
- Review all materials for the week's module
- Prepare for quizzes
- Complete assignments thoroughly and on time
- Read instructions carefully. Failure to follow basic instructions will result in loss of points. Following the instructions carefully will be the best route to obtain your highest score.

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Assignment	# of Assignments	Total Points for Category
Quizzes	5	500
Discussion Post	5	120
Research Paper	1	100
Presentation	1	100
TOTAL		820

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Assessments

Your grade will be based on the following: (this could change. Please make sure to have the most current syllabus from the course page)

Quizzes 1–5 = 100 points each

There are five (5) quizzes. Each quiz consists of 25 questions, worth 4 points each (100 points per quiz). The quizzes will have true/false and multiple-choice questions. You will have 45 minutes to complete each quiz.

Discussion Post = 24 points each

There will be 5 discussion posts, worth 24 points each. Discussion posts will be submitted under “Discussions” in D2L. This means you will be able to read and comment on other students’ essays. You are required to comment on at least two peer responses.

Posts must demonstrate that the student has reviewed, understood, and contemplated the material from the chapter and other assigned readings. You may include information from other chapters and outside knowledge, but it must be cited appropriately. If the discussion post contains multiple parts, be sure to address each. **All Discussion posts are due at 11:59 pm CT on the Sunday of the week it is due (see schedule).**

Research Paper = 100 points

You will complete one (1) research paper about a psychiatric drug. Details are at the end of the syllabus.

Presentation = 100 points

- 10–15 minute oral presentation recorded and uploaded.
- Use slides or visual aids to summarize research paper
- Each group student must watch 2 of their classmates’ videos and respond with questions and comments in the section detailed by the instructor. Please watch a different topic from what your paper was on.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

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<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a East Texas A&M campus open computer lab, etc.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED

ALL ASSIGNMENTS DUE SUNDAY (THE WEEK OF ASSIGNMENT) BY 11:59 PM

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ALL PAPERS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO TURN IT IN, PRIOR TO SUBMISSION

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <https://www.tamuc.edu/student-code-of-conduct/>.

If you believe someone has engaged in behaviors that do not align with the Code of Student Conduct or you have other concerns, please visit the File a Report page at <https://www.tamuc.edu/office-of-student-rights-and-responsibilities/concerns-incident-reporting/>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

Undergraduate student academic dishonesty policy
[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

Undergraduate student academic dishonesty policy
[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

Graduate student academic dishonesty policy:
<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesproceduresstandardsstatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10.pdf>

Graduate student academic dishonesty form:
<https://inside.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateSchool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

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East Texas A&M Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage.

Artificial Intelligence

East Texas A&M acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, Chatbots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Services
Velma K. Waters Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5930

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Website: <http://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/campusServices/StudentDisabilityServices/default.aspx>

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.

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East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

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Department or Accrediting Agency Required Content

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week	Topic	Read	Assignment
Week 1 (8/25 -8/31)	Principles of Pharmacology	Chapter 1	Introduction Post
Week 2 (9/1/-9/7)	Structure and Function of the Nervous System	Chapter 2	Discussion Post 1
Week 3 (9/8 – 9/14)	Chemical Signaling by Neurotransmitters and Hormones	Chapter 3	Quiz 1: Chapter 1- 3
Week 4 (9/15- 9/21)	Catecholamines	Chapter 5	

Week 5 (9/22/- 9/28)	Serotonin	Chapter 6	Discussion Post 2
Week 6 (9/29 -10/5)	Acetylcholine	Chapter 7	Quiz 2: Ch 5-7
Week 7 (10/6- 10/12)	Glutamate and GABA	Chapter 8	
Week 8 (10/13 – 10/19)	Disorders of Anxiety and Impulsivity and the Drugs Used to Treat Them	Chapter 17	Discussion Post 3

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Week 9 (10/20 – 10/26)	Affective Disorders: Antidepressants and Mood Stabilizers	Chapter 18	Quiz 3: Ch. 8, 17, 18
Week 10 (10/27 – 11/2)	Schizophrenia: Antipsychotic Drugs	Chapter 19	
Week 11 (11/3 – 11/9)	Drug Misuse and Addiction	Chapter 9	Discussion Post 4
Week 12 (11/10- 11/16)	Alcohol	Chapter 10	Quiz 4. Ch. 19,9,10
Week 13 (11/ 17 – 11/ 23)	The Opioids	Chapter 11	
Week 14 (11/24 – 11/ 30)	Psychomotor Stimulants: Cocaine, Amphetamine, and Related Drugs	Chapter 12	Discussion Post 5
Week 15 (12/1 – 12/5)	Neurodegenerative Diseases	Chapter 20	Research Paper Due and Presentations
Week 16 (12/6 – 12/12)	Finals Week and Wrap up		Quiz 5 Ch. 11,12,20 Peer Review of presentations due

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Assignment Details

Students are required to submit a 4–6-page research paper (not including title and reference pages) about a psychiatric drug (e.g., Adderall, Zoloft, Prozac, Ativan, Wellbutrin, etc.). This paper must be submitted according to APA 7th edition style and formatting and will have a minimum of four (4) references in addition to any textbooks that you use for your paper.

Here is a suggested outline for a thorough paper covering your chosen topic:

Title Page (Name, Course Information, University)

Introduction to the Drug

History of the Drug

Clinical Use of the Drug

Diagnosis

Dosage

Administration

Physical/Behavioral Effects of the Drug

Pharmacokinetics and/or Pharmacodynamics

Tolerance, Dependence, Addiction Risks, and Withdrawal Aspects Critiques and

Concerns with the Medication

Benefits of the Medication

Importance of the Medication to Psychological/Counseling Professionals Any other information you think is critical to provide/address

Conclusion

References

Research Project Paper Rubric

Component	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Poor (1)	Max Point
Introduction & History	Clear intro and well-researched history	Mostly clear; minor details missing	Basic overview; lacks depth	Weak intro or history	Missing or unclear	10
Clinical Use & Diagnosis	Strong summary of indications & diagnosis	Minor gaps in detail	General info provided	Minimal or unclear info	Inaccurate or missing	15
Dosage & Administration	Accurate and detailed dosing/admin info	Mostly complete	Some inaccuracies or missing details	Limited detail	Incorrect or not addressed	15
Effects & Pharmacology	Clear explanation of effects	Mostly clear; minor issues	Some gaps in pharmacology or effects	Minimal explanation	Lacks clarity or incorrect info	15
Dependence & Withdrawal	Well-developed and evidence-based discussion	Some areas underdeveloped	General overview with gaps	Incomplete or unclear	Not addressed or inaccurate	15
Benefits & Critiques	Balanced view of pros and cons	Mostly balanced; some areas vague	One-sided or limited	Weak analysis	Missing	10
Professional Relevance	Clear importance to psychology field	Mostly clear; some generalities	Some relevance shown	Minimal or unclear relevance	Not addressed	10
APA Format & References	APA 7 style followed; 4+ scholarly sources	Few APA/style errors; all sources present	APA or source errors	Poor formatting or <4 sources	Missing APA style or few/no sources	5
Writing Quality	Clear, organized, error-free writing	Minor grammar/organization issues	Some clarity/grammar problems	Many errors; hard to follow	Disorganized or unclear	5

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Research Project Presentation Rubric

Component	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Poor (1)	Max Points
Content Summary	Covers all major paper points clearly	Minor info gaps	Key points covered, but shallow	Limited or unclear summary	Incomplete or confusing	20
Mechanism & Indications	Accurately explains mechanism & use	Mostly accurate	Basic or general explanation	Unclear or lacks depth	Incorrect or missing	20
Dosing & Safety	Accurate dosing & safety info	Some minor omissions	General info with gaps	Weak detail or clarity	Missing or inaccurate	20
Visual Aids	Well-designed slides aid understanding	Mostly clear; helpful	Basic slides; limited enhancement	Cluttered or unhelpful visuals	Missing or ineffective	15
Presentation Delivery	Confident, well-paced, engaging	Mostly confident; minor delivery issues	Adequate; may lack polish	Rushed, hesitant, or flat	Difficult to follow	20
Peer Review Participation	Thoughtful comments/questions on 2 peers' work	Participated with minor detail	Watched but gave basic feedback	Minimal engagement	Did not participate	5

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