



UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH  
COLLEGE OF GENERAL STUDIES

**SPRING 2018 DRUGS AND BEHAVIOR**

Neuroscience 0081-7510 (CRN 24643)



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**Contacting the Professor:** Questions will be answered as quickly as possible, usually within 24 hours. After 36 hours, please feel free to send a follow-up email.

**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.

The specific goals of this course are to:

1. Learn the basic concepts and principles of brain anatomy and physiology.
2. Understand how drugs modify the brain.
3. Describe how drugs can alter behaviors.
4. Explain how psychological disorders are caused by changes in the brain and how symptoms of these disorders can be affected by drugs.
5. Use the knowledge gained in this class to interpret and evaluate scientific claims.

At the end of this course, you will become acquainted with the major issues in the field of behavioral neuroscience and be better able to evaluate the various claims made about brain research and function, particularly those pertaining to drugs.

### Course Materials:

- A subscription to TopHat, an online teaching tool is **required by Jan 10<sup>th</sup>**.
  - A one-semester subscription, including class content costs \$26.
  - You will receive an invite at your Pitt email address, or you can join at <https://tophat.com>. The course Join code is **792359**.
  - TopHat has free (with subscription) mobile apps for web-enabled devices.
- All of the material and assignments for this course will be provided on a combination of TopHat and Courseweb/Blackboard, including text, diagrams, videos, and assignments.

### Class Format:

- This is an online-only course.
- There are weekly reading assignments- with quizzes, homework, and written assignments due throughout the semester.
- ❖ Details can be found on Courseweb/Blackboard and in the Course Schedule.

### How to Succeed:

- The best approach is to take time at least every other day on the course material.
- Written assignments have a PEER REVIEW component. You will need to be familiar enough with the material and the assignment to provide feedback to other students, using a rubric provided to you.
- Read the chapters early, so you can get answers to questions prior to the assignment deadlines.
- All assignments are open book; however, searching for all the answers will take too long and will lead to poorer scores.

### Assessment Descriptions:

Homework: Throughout the lectures on TopHat, questions are included within the text. You will receive a maximum of 30 points by answering every question on TopHat on time each week, regardless of your answer. 25 points will count as homework, with any additional points earned counting as extra credit.

- Homework/Participation Questions are due every Wednesday at midnight.
- It is in your best interest to make sure you understand the correct answers, since these questions test how well you comprehend the course material.

Individual Written Assignments: The written assignments reinforce important concepts, give you practice communicating these concepts, and will connect your growing scientific knowledge to current events.

- There are three (3) individual written assignments, worth 50 points each.
- All assignments have a peer-feedback component.
- See the Individual Written Assignment Handout on Courseweb for more information.

Group Project: The group assignment will allow students to develop a deeper understanding of a related topic of their choice. The Group Project has several smaller milestones with deadlines spaced throughout the semester.

- The overall Group Project is worth 150 points. 45 of these points will be assessed through individual effort and 105 points will be assessed based on group effort.
- The Group Project assignments have two separate peer-feedback components.
- See the Group Project Handout on Courseweb for more information.

Quizzes: The quizzes will identify important course concepts and prepare you for the Final Exam. Any materials assigned to you, including Discussion Board responses and Individual Assignment readings, can be assessed on quizzes.

#### Taking the Quizzes

- 6 quizzes are administered online and worth 20 points each.
- The lowest quiz grade will be dropped.
- Quizzes are due on Wednesdays at midnight.

Final Exam: The Final Exam can cover any of the material provided for the course, including readings for the Individual Written Assignments.

#### Taking the Final Exam

- One cumulative 75 point exam, administered on Courseweb online.
- If you are having technical difficulties, email the instructor immediately, and I will try to help you troubleshoot the problem.

**To prepare for the exam, it is recommended to organize your class notes. Choose a time to take the exam when you will not be interrupted and where you have a good, reliable internet connection.**

**Grading:** Your final grade will be calculated from your scores on the assessments as outlined above. Do not expect a final curve. If the class performs poorly on a particular assignment, extra credit may be assigned at the professors' discretion.

**Grade Breakdown:**

Category	Points	Points Applied to Final Average
Homework	30 total (<1 point per question)	25
Individual Assignments	3 @ 50 points each	150
Group Project	1@150 points	150
Quizzes	6 @20 points, drop 1	100
Exam	1 @75 points	75
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>500</b>

**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 Policy:**

I have a one-time, no-questions asked late policy for Quizzes and Individual Assignments. The first Quiz or Individual Assignment turned in late without an University-excused absence (see Courseweb in the Course Documents section) will not be penalized if turned in within 3 days of the original due date. Any additional unexcused late quizzes, discussion boards, and individual assignments will be given a 0 grade, no exceptions.

You may *only* make-up Homework, Group Project assignments, or the Final Exam if you have a University-excused absence. Students must provide documentation for excused absences.

## Course Schedule:

Week of	Lesson #	Topic	Assignment (due)	Quiz (due)
Jan 8-10			Sign up for TopHat (Jan 10)	
*Jan 11-17	Lesson 1	Introduction Cells of the Nervous System	Assignment 1: Secrets of How the Brain Works (Jan 17)	Syllabus Quiz (Jan 17)
Jan 18-24	Lesson 2	Neuroanatomy	Peer Feedback: Assignment 1 (Jan 24)	
Jan 25-31	Lesson 3	Neurophysiology	Choose Group Project and Group Name (Jan 31)	Quiz 2 (Jan 31)
Feb 1-7	Lesson 4	Neurotransmission Neurotransmitters	Assignment 2: Guess which Neurotransmitter? (Feb 7)	
Feb 8-14	Lesson 5	Pharmacodynamics Pharmacokinetics	Peer Feedback: Assignment 2 (Feb 14) Group Paper: Plan of Action Due (Feb 14)	Quiz 3 (Feb 14)
Feb 15-21	Lesson 6	Addiction	Assignment 3: Rethinking Dopamine (Feb 21)	
Feb 21-28	Lesson 7	Drug Laws Pain and Opiates	Peer Feedback: Assignment 3 (Feb 28) Group Paper: Reference List Due (Feb 28)	Quiz 4 (Feb 28)
Mar 1-2	Lesson 8	Caffeine		
*Mar 3-11			<b>Spring Break</b>	
Mar 12-14	Lesson 9	Nicotine	Group Paper: Article Summaries Due (Mar 14)	
Mar 15-21	Lesson 10	Cocaine Amphetamine		Quiz 5 (Mar 21)
Mar 22-28	Lesson 11	Alcohol Cannabis		
Mar 29-Apr 4	Lesson 12	Hallucinogens	Rough Draft of Group Paper Due (Apr 4)	
Apr 5-11	Lesson 13	Anxiety Disorders Anxiolytics	Feedback on Another Group's Paper Due (Apr 11)	Quiz 6 (Apr 11)
Apr 12-18	Lesson 14	Affective Disorders Antidepressants	Group Paper Due (Apr 18)	
Apr 19-25		<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>Peer Grading for Group Paper Due (Apr 21) Final Exam (Apr 25)</b>	

### \*Holidays

- January 15<sup>th</sup> (MLK Day)
- March 4-11 (Spring Break)