

# Seminar in Cognition: Addiction (PSY471H1F)

Fall 2024

Tuesdays, 10:10 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Robarts Library, Room 14190

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**Instructor:** Dr. Suzanne Wood

**Email:** [suzanne.wood@utoronto.ca](mailto:suzanne.wood@utoronto.ca)

**Office Hours:** by appointment – send me an email or talk to me during class break to set up a time

**Required Book:** *Unbroken Brain: A Revolutionary New Way of Understanding Addiction*, Szalavitz M (2017) Picador

*The rest of the course readings will be available through the U of T library and/or Quercus.*

**Prerequisites:** PSY202 (or equivalent), PSY260 / PSY270 / PSY290 / HMB200 / PSL300

## Course Description

What is addiction and how can we best help folks who are experiencing it? Is addiction learned, or are people born with addictive personalities? Is the opposite of addiction sobriety, or something else? How does the brain change throughout the course of addiction? How does the brain change with abstinence? And how come we still can't effectively treat addiction?

## Course Objectives

By the end of this course you will be able to:

- Describe major theories of addiction
- Relate the theories of addiction to brain changes
- Connect drug-related brain changes due to behaviour
- Explain the relationship between environmental factors and addiction
- Speak and present (more) confidently in a supportive, small class setting

## Grading Criteria

Participation	15%
Reading Integrations	10%
Discussion Leader	5%
Two-Page Documentary Argument	15%
Presentation	25%
Research Paper (30%, total)	
- Thesis and Annotated Bibliography	2%
- Final Paper	28%

## Participation

To make the most of this small group format, **every student is expected to talk during every class session**. In order to be successful speakers, we all need to be successful listeners, too. Participation grades will be based upon a combination of active speaking during class, as well as active listening (e.g., if a student's eyes are focused on a screen the entire class period, rather than their peers, participation will be 0 for that day).

## Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The only way everyone in this class will grow as confident, successful speakers is if we create a classroom in which everyone who is participating in a respectful manner is likewise listened to respectfully. We are engaging in a very controversial topic with lots of opinions – I encourage the class to consider them all!

In more official language: The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.

## Preparation

Do the reading. Every week. Even if it makes you mad (the readings can be controversial at times – this is on purpose!). I have included a writing assignment for each reading to provide a bit of structure and to allocate points for this. If students show up unprepared, the class will kinda stink.

## Reading Integrations

In order to bolster active discussion during our class time, a short written assignment about the weekly readings will be **due the morning (9am) of the class in which the readings will be discussed**. "Reading integrations" are designed to be particularly beneficial to those of you entering your fourth and/or last year at U of T.

1. **Integrate** what you read with previous coursework and/or things you have learned outside of your classes (news you have read, documentaries you have seen, volunteer positions, etc.). Be sure to specify a detail or two of **each** assigned reading for the week (book, journal article, documentary, etc.) when discussing how class material relates to things you already know.
2. Submit this assignment by posting a pdf, **no more than 2 pages, double-spaced** to Quercus before the deadline (9am in the morning of the class in which the readings will be discussed).

## Discussion Leader

To give students the opportunity to practice presentation and discussion skills, our conversations about the assigned readings will be led by students. A brief overview of the reading can be presented; however, the bulk of class time should be devoted to discussion. In that spirit, please do NOT prepare slides. More details will be discussed in class.

## Two-Page Documentary Argument

To practice formulating arguments around controversial topics, students will first view a documentary, then engage in a class discussion. Argument topics will be decided upon in class. Students will then compose and submit a brief argument about the topic. Further details regarding this assignment will be found on Quercus and discussed in class.

## Presentation

To give students the opportunity to share additional, related content outside of the class readings, class sessions at the end of the term will be comprised of group presentations. Further details regarding the presentation will be found on Quercus and discussed in class.

## Research Paper

Students will explore a topic related to the course in the research paper assignment. To give students the opportunity for early feedback, a thesis and annotated bibliography will be submitted; the instructor will provide feedback. Further details regarding the paper will be found on Quercus and discussed in class.

## Specific Medical Circumstances

If you become ill and it affects your ability to do your academic work, consult me right away. Normally, I will ask you for documentation in support of your specific medical circumstances. This documentation can be an Absence Declaration (via ACORN) or the University's Verification of Student Illness or Injury (VOI) form. The VOI indicates the impact and severity of the illness, while protecting your privacy about the details of the nature of the illness. If you cannot submit a VOI due to limits on terms of use, you can submit a different form (like a letter from a doctor), as long as it is an original document, and it contains the same information as the VOI (including dates, academic impact, practitioner's signature, phone and registration number).

For more information on the VOI, please see <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca>.

For information on Absence Declaration Tool for A&S students, please see <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/absence>. If you get a concussion, break your hand, or suffer some other acute injury, you should register with Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

## Missed Assignment Deadline or Assessment

For the [two-page documentary argument](#) and the [final paper](#), an 8% penalty will be applied for every 24-hour period or portion thereof the work is submitted late. [Thesis and annotated bibliographies](#) are scored out of 2 points; 0.5 points will be lost for every 24-hour period or portion thereof that one is late. As the [reading integrations](#) have been designed to facilitate class discussion, they will not be accepted after the class in which the reading is discussed begins. Assignments will not be accepted more than 4 days after the due date. [Leading discussions](#) and [presenting](#) are integral components of the course that affect the rest of the students enrolled – missing either will result in a grade of 0 for the respective piece of missed work.

## Questions About Marking

Any questions regarding a grade received for an item of work in this course should be brought to my attention **within two weeks** of receipt of the graded work. A legitimate request will result in a re-grade of the entire work, which may result in a higher, lower, or identical grade.

## Writing Help

Book an appointment online with the Writing Centres on St. George Campus:

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science>

Attend a free group workshop with Writing Plus:

<http://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-plus/>

English is not your first language? Take a look at these resources:

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/support/english-language-support>

<https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/english-language-learning>

## Email

Please reserve the use of email addressed to me for personal matters, only. To ask content-related questions, class is a great time! We are a small group. I'm also happy to chat before or after class (unless I'm already late for my next meeting). Please also feel free to post on the Discussion Board. Many students will likely have the same question, so it will benefit the whole class to see the question and answer (whether posted by fellow students or me). **I can only check emails sporadically during business hours (9am-5pm) and do NOT check after hours (5pm-9am). Please anticipate up to a 48-hour period before you receive a response to your email. Plan accordingly.** I encourage you to book an individual appointment with me to help clear up any questions.

## Academic Integrity

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters:

<https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>

If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, please reach out to me. Note that you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from me or from other institutional resources. For example, to learn more about how to cite and use source material appropriately and for other writing support, see the U of T writing support website at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca>. Consult the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters for a complete outline of the University's policy and expectations. For more information, please see [A&S Student Academic Integrity \(https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity\)](https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity) and the [University of Toronto Website on Academic Integrity \(https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca\)](https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca).

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using another writer's words or ideas without the proper acknowledgement. Know what plagiarism is so you can avoid it:

<http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

If you have any questions about whether what you are doing constitutes plagiarism, let me know.

## Plagiarism Detection

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

If you wish to opt out of submitting work to plagiarism detection, you must do the following:

1. Email the professor no later than two weeks before the due date indicating you wish to opt out
2. Submit a paragraph describing why this topic is of particular interest to you with your final essay
3. Submit handwritten notes used for the design of your essay with your final essay

## Generative Artificial Intelligence (e.g., ChatGPT)

Students may choose to use generative artificial intelligence tools as they work through the assignments in this course; this use must be documented in an appendix for each assignment. The documentation should include what tool(s) were used, how they were used, and how the results from the AI were incorporated into the submitted work. These tools can be most helpful in improving your writing and clear expression of your ideas (please do not use AI to generate complete content, which is unlikely to meet the standards of the assignments).

## Accommodation for Personal Reasons

There may be times when you are unable to complete course work on time due to non-medical reasons. If you have concerns, speak to me or to an advisor in your College Registrar's office; they can help you to decide if you want to request an extension or other forms of academic consideration. They may be able to email your instructors directly to provide a College Registrar's letter of support and connect you with other helpful resources on campus.

## Religious Accommodations

As a student at the University of Toronto, you are part of a diverse community that welcomes and includes students and faculty from a wide range of cultural and religious traditions. For my part, I will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations, or other compulsory activities on religious holy days not captured by statutory holidays. Further to University Policy, if you anticipate being absent from class or missing a major course activity (such as leading a discussion or giving a presentation) due to a religious observance, please let me know as early in the course as possible, and with sufficient notice (at least two to three weeks), so that we can work together to make alternate arrangements.

## Accessibility

Students with diverse learning needs are welcome in this course (U of T also recommends I include that student have diverse learning styles, but as 4<sup>th</sup> year Psychology students, you know by now that learning styles don't exist). If you have an acute or ongoing disability issue or accommodation need, you should register with Accessibility Services (AS) at the beginning of the academic year by visiting:

<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/accessibility-services/>

Without registration, you will not be able to verify your situation with your instructors, and instructors will not be advised about your accommodation needs. AS will assess your situation, develop an accommodation plan with you, and support you in requesting accommodation for your course work. Remember that the process of accommodation is private: AS will not share details of your needs or condition with any instructor, and your instructors will not reveal that you are registered with AS.

## That Other Kind of Psychology

These years can be challenging, both in and out of the classroom. As a University of Toronto student, you can access free mental health and wellbeing services at Health & Wellness (<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/health-wellness/>) such as same day counselling, brief counselling, medical care, skill-building workshops, and drop-in peer support. You can also meet with a Wellness Navigation Advisor who can connect you with other campus and community services and support. Call the mental health clinic at 416-978-8030 ext. 5 to book an appointment or visit <https://uoft.me/mentalhealthcare> to learn about the services available to you.

You can also visit your College Registrar to learn about the resources and supports available: <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/college-registrars-offices>

If you're in distress, you can access immediate support: <https://uoft.me/feelingdistressed>

## Departmental Guidance for Undergraduate Students in Psychology

The Department of Psychology recognizes that, as a student, you may experience disruptions to your learning that are out of your control, and that there may be circumstances when you need extra support. Accordingly, [the department has provided a helpful guide](#) to clarify your and your instructor's responsibilities when navigating these situations. This guide consolidates Arts & Science Policies for undergraduate students in one place for your convenience. As an instructor in the department, I will frequently consult with these recommendations when providing you with support, and I recommend that you also consult it to learn more about your rights and responsibilities before reaching out to me.

**SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS**  
(topics subject to change, due dates are fixed)

Week	Date	Topic	Reading
1	September 3	Welcome & Introduction Review of Key Concepts	None-welcome!
2	September 10	What is Addiction? Social Interaction & Addiction in Rats	Szalavitz: Intro-Chp 2 Volkow et al. (2016)
3	September 17	How Addiction Starts Childhood Trauma & Drug Use	Szalavitz: Chp 3-5 Dube et al. (2003)
4	September 24	Labels and Teenagers Adolescent vs Adult Brain Drug Response	Szalavitz: Chp 6-8 Corongiu et al. (2019)
5	October 1	Dopamine and Learning Addiction in the Media	Szalavitz: Chp 9-10 Documentary
6	October 8	Love and Addiction Hallucinogens for Treating Addiction	Szalavitz: Chp 11-13 Johnson, Garcia-Romeu & Griffiths (2017)
	October 11	<b><i>Two-Page Documentary Argument (15%)—due by 11:59pm</i></b>	
7	October 15	Rock Bottom and Personality Disorders Heroin to Treat Heroin Addiction?	Szalavitz: Chp 14-15 Strang et al. (2015)
8	October 22	Evidence: 12 Steps vs Harm Reduction Preventing Opioid Misuse	Szalavitz: Chp 16-17 Volkow et al. (2019)
	October 25	<b><i>Paper thesis and annotated bib (2%)--due by 11:59pm</i></b>	
9	October 29	FALL BREAK / READING WEEK	
10	November 5	Models of Recovery Brain Changes with Addiction & Abstinence Presentation Preparation	Szalavitz: Chp 18-20 Moeller & Paulus (2018)
11	November 12	Student Presentations	
12	November 19	Student Presentations	
13	November 26	Student Presentations	
	December 3	<b><i>Final Paper (28%)--due by 11:59pm</i></b>	