

**UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL**  
**Department of Psychology**  
**Fall 2013**

**I. COURSE INFORMATION**

Course Number	47.477.201
Course Title	Seminar in Contemporary Trends: Addictions
Course Meetings	TR 11:00-12:15
Prerequisites	47.269, Research I: Basics, or its equivalent
Description	The focus of this seminar is on the psychology of addictions. Drawing upon the most recent developments in theory and research, we will look carefully at the nature and causes of the problem behaviors associated with alcohol and drug use. We will also consider whether problems in such areas shopping, eating, gambling, sex, video games, and the Internet can legitimately be understood as forms of addictions. In addition, we will examine the implications of whether or not such addictions should be viewed as diseases, and we will evaluate the relative importance of biological, psychological and socio-cultural factors. 3 credits.

**II. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Name	Richard A. Siegel, Ph.D.
Campus Office and Mail	HSSB 315, South Campus (113 Wilder St., Lowell MA 01854)
Office Hours	MTR 9:30-11:00 A.M., or by appointment
Telephone with Voice Mail and Fax	(978) 934-3961; (978) 934-3074
E-mail	<a href="mailto:Richard_siegel@uml.edu">mailto:Richard_siegel@uml.edu</a>
Webpage	<a href="http://faculty.uml.edu/rsiegel/ContemporaryTrends.htm">http://faculty.uml.edu/rsiegel/ContemporaryTrends.htm</a>

**III. COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this semester, students should be better able to:

- Identify the essential characteristics of addictive behaviors
- Describe the key contributions to our understanding of addiction from multiple perspectives: biomedical, psychiatric, person-centered, behavioral, cognitive, developmental, social, and socio-cultural
- List and explain both the strengths and the weaknesses of all these perspectives
- Summarize and critically evaluate significant findings from scientific research that advance our understanding of addiction
- Describe and assess various methods for treat addictive behavior
- Identify the similarities and differences between addictions to alcohol and other drugs and other behaviors sometimes referred to as addictions (e.g., gambling, shopping, eating, etc.)
- Use their learning to think critically and creatively about a number of contemporary issues and controversies that relate to the study and treatment of addictions

**TEXTBOOK INFORMATION**

- Thombs, *Introduction to Addictive Behaviors, 4th ed* (Guilford, 2013)
- Peele, *The Meaning of Addiction* (Jossey-Bass, 1998)
- Heather and Robinson, *Problem Drinking, 3rd ed* (Oxford, 1997)

These books can be purchased at the UMass Lowell South Campus bookstore, bundled together at a discounted price.

#### IV. COURSE CALENDAR

The readings listed below are mostly from the books available for purchase. There are a few short reprinted articles as well that will be made available on our course website. And I have also posted a series of online lectures for each topic.

<b>DATES</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>READINGS</b> (T=Thombs, P=Peele, H&R= Heather & Robertson)	<b>REQUIRED WORK (due on 1<sup>st</sup> date listed)</b>
Sep 5	Introduction		
Sep 10-12	1. The Nature of Addiction	T, Ch 1; P, Ch 1; H&R, Ch 1-2; Topic 1 Lectures	Homework #1
Sep 17-24	2. Disease Models of Addiction	T, Ch 2, pp 18-23 and 42-end; P, Ch 2, pp 27-32; H&R, Ch 3; Yasilove article; Topic 2 Lectures	Homework #2
Sep 26-Oct 1	3. Behavioral Genetics and Psychobiology	T, Ch 2, pp 23-42; P, Ch 3, pp 47-62; H&R, Ch 4-5; Topic 3 Lectures	Homework #3; Presentation preferences
Oct 3-8	4. Person-Centered Theories	T, Ch 4-5; Mulder article; Topic 4 Lectures	Homework #4; Term Paper proposal
Oct 10-15	5. Behavioral Models	T, Ch 6; P, Ch 2, pp 32-42 and Ch 3, pp 62-68; H&R, Ch 6-7; Topic 5 Lectures	Homework #5
Oct 17-22	6. Social Learning and Cognitive Theories	T, Ch 7; P, Ch 3 pp 68-end and Ch 4; H&R, Ch 8; Marlatt article; Topic 6 Lectures	Homework #6
Oct 24-29	7. Developmental and Family Systems Perspectives	T, Ch 8; P, Ch 5, pp 104-113 and Ch 6, pp 133-140; Haaken article; Topic 7 Lectures	Homework #7; Draft of Presentation (optional)
Oct 31-Nov 5	8. Socio-Cultural Perspectives	T, Ch 3, 9; P, Ch 5, pp 97-104 and 113-132; Topic 8 Lectures	Homework #8
Nov 7-14	9. Modifying Addictive Behaviors	T, Ch 10; P, Ch 2, pp 43-end and Ch 6, pp 140-end; H&R, Ch 9; Topic 9 Lectures	Homework #9
Nov 19	10. Non-Chemical Addictions	Topic 10 Lectures	Homework #10; Draft of Term Paper
Nov 21-Dec 5	10. Non-Chemical Addictions	Student Presentations	
Dec 10	Wrap-up	Student Presentations	Term Paper

## V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Grading in this course involves a point system, with each of the various course requirements worth a designated number of points (see Table below).

### Attendance and Participation

Regular class attendance is expected; I make no provision for excused absences other than those due to conflicts with university obligations. Each missed class after the second will involve the loss of 5 points; a late arrival to class of more than 15 minutes beyond our start time is treated as an absence.

You need keep up with all required readings as shown in the Course Calendar above. Discussion questions will be made available in advance of every Topic, and I will look for and grade your constructive participation in seminar discussions, with grading heavily dependent on your ability to draw from the assigned readings and my online lectures. I expect everyone to participate and will call on you as needed.

When in class, please observe the following rules of classroom etiquette: turn off cell phones and pagers; listen respectfully to the instructor or other students who are talking, and do not engage in side conversations; do not consume food or drink during class; use a laptop computer/tablet/smartphone only with permission from the instructor; arrive on time and do not leave early; take any rubbish with you, and if you move your chair, please return it to its proper position at the end of class.

### Assignments

To promote further *reflection and analysis* of the readings, you will be asked to work on two types of assignments for each Topic throughout the semester:

1. Student Teaching: These assignments will consist of a series of questions about each topic, focused on specific portions of the Topic's assigned readings, and students will be organized into groups of 3 or 4, on a rotating basis, throughout the semester, with each group assigned one of the questions for the topic. Before class, groups will work (together as much as possible) to review the readings and organize their thoughts; groups will also have 20 minutes of the first class of a Topic to work together. The remainder of class time for that Topic will allow each group to share their thoughts with the class about the question and to elicit class discussion. While each group might rely to an extent on one spokesperson, all members of the group must participate.

2. Student Contributions: Our readings do a good job of highlighting many important issues and findings related to addictions, but there is a wealth of additional material. Throughout the semester, students are encouraged to look for such material, and to share brief summaries with the class. These contributions may focus on articles and stories, in print or posted on the Internet, from popular media or from professional and scientific journals. The first 5-10 minutes of each class will be devoted to such contributions (relevant to the particular Topic being examined as much as possible), and each student is expected to offer at least 3 such contributions during the semester; at least 1 of these contributions must be focused on findings from scientific research. Up to 2 additional contributions will be allowed for extra credit. Contributions may include any material the student is gathering in the preparation of the Presentation or Term Paper.

### Presentation

To promote active *discovery and research* as well as *critical thinking*, and to expand our understanding of addiction into various areas, I will be organizing all of you into small groups of 3 to 4 students each, based on your choice of topics from a list of possible "non-chemical addictions" (such as gambling, shopping,

Internet use, etc.) that I will circulate early in the semester. Students within each group will work together to prepare a 30-40 minute Powerpoint-slide class presentation of approximately 15-20 slides that will summarize and critically evaluate available information that helps us to decide whether such non-chemical behaviors can properly be thought of as addictions. Each group should also be prepared to lead a class discussion of their presentation, and using that additional feedback, groups may rework their presentation. The slideshow, revised as needed, must then be submitted in Powerpoint outline format by the next class. More detailed guidelines for this requirement will be posted to our course website. Groups will have at least one meeting with me in the days leading up to their presentation to assist with its development.

## **Term Paper**

To promote *critical thinking*, each student will submit a 3,000-3,500 word paper (roughly 15 typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins pages, exclusive of Title Page, Abstract, and References pages) that investigates in depth a specific issue relevant to the study of addictions.

Whenever you begin to think about possible term paper topics, you should share your ideas with me to make sure that you are selecting an appropriate topic. I will be asking you to submit a preliminary proposal to me by October 3 in which you will tell me more about what you plan to do and describe at least some of the reference materials you plan to use. Note that your term paper topic may not overlap with your Presentation focus.

The paper itself should consist of three parts. First, you should present the issues you intend to examine in the paper and lay the foundations by providing appropriate background information, definitions, statistics, summaries of different points of view, etc. Second, you should summarize and critically evaluate relevant reference materials. Finally, you should offer a well-reasoned conclusion, based on all the information you have presented, in which you present what you regard as the strongest and most well-substantiated summary of what is currently known and what still needs further study.

As part of your term paper, I expect you to include as much emphasis as possible on current research. Among the various references that you locate, I am requiring at least two (and ideally, more than two) references to be published research studies, which you will discuss in some detail in your paper. You have access to PsycInfo to locate high quality sources. The citing and listing of references in your paper must follow proper APA style.

I have included on our course website some "handouts" offering you more information about this requirement and about writing good papers, locating good reference materials, and how to read and understand a research article.

For this term paper I allow you the opportunity to revise and resubmit. I am asking for an initial submission of a draft of your term paper by November 19. I will grade and return it within a few days, and you then will have the opportunity to use my feedback and to discuss your work with me to enable you to make appropriate revisions and to resubmit them. The term paper is due for final grading by the last day of the course, December 10. Your paper should reflect attention to good writing. Refer to the Supplementary Materials section to locate my *Guide to Common Writing Errors*.

Between class time and work outside of class, be prepared to devote roughly 9 hours a week to succeed in this course.

## FINAL GRADE

<i>Requirement</i>	<i>Points</i>
Participation (up to 2/class for 25 classes)	50
Student Teaching: 5 points each	50
Student Contributions (20 each)	60 (plus up to 40)
Presentation	70
Term Paper Proposal	20
Term Paper	150
TOTAL	400
Attendance penalty	-5 points per missed class>2

A total of 360 points or better (90%) will earn an A, 348-359 an A-, 332-347 a B+, 320-331 a B, 308-319 a B-, 292-307 a C+, 280-291 a C, 268-279 a C-, 252-267 a D+, and 240-251 a D; a total below 240 will result in a failing grade of F.

As required by university policy, I will consider requests for Incompletes only from students who have kept up with all course requirements but who have encountered a documented emergency situation that interferes with their completion of the Term Paper. At my discretion, however, I may allow you to delay the submission of your Term Paper until the midpoint of the Final Exam period (December 17).

## VI. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

### Accommodations and Support

Students with disabilities need to work through the UML Office for Disability Services (and if you require an accommodation, I must have notice from ODS well in advance). There are also many resources available through the UML Centers for Learning, including peer tutors. Other supports are available through the Student Counseling Center.

### Academic Honesty

You must work independently on all requirements. Any exam or paper or assignment that shows evidence that you have collaborated with one another, or have copied from or used someone else's work, or have used a paper submitted in another course, will receive a 0 and you will be referred for disciplinary action, in accordance with university policies as set forth at [http://www.uml.edu/catalog/undergraduate/policies/academic\\_dishonesty.htm](http://www.uml.edu/catalog/undergraduate/policies/academic_dishonesty.htm). Students are permitted to use material from the instructor and from published or electronic sources, provided that the source is cited in proper APA style; direct quotations (which should be used only when truly essential) *must be in quotation marks and the source also clearly cited*.

### Student Complaints

UMass Lowell is committed to the fair treatment of all its students by faculty, staff, and other students. If you feel you have been unfairly treated, your rights are described at [http://www.uml.edu/catalog/undergraduate/policies/student\\_complaints.htm](http://www.uml.edu/catalog/undergraduate/policies/student_complaints.htm). Note that the academic judgment of faculty in grading your work is not covered under this complaint policy.

### Safety

UMass Lowell strives to provide a safe and secure environment for all its students and employees. In any emergency, UMass Lowell police can be reached by dialing x2911 or e-mail to [police@uml.edu](mailto:police@uml.edu).