PSYC 3346: Drugs of Abuse and Behavior – Spring 2024
Meeting Times: 10:30-11:50am, Tues/Thurs mountain time; Physical Sciences Room 208

Professor: Katherine Serafine, Ph.D.  E-mail: kmserafine2@utep.edu
Office Hours: Email to schedule an appointment M-F
Social Media: @SerafineLab (X – formerly twitter); @Serafine_Laboratory (instagram)


Course Description:
This course provides a basic understanding of how drugs produce their behavioral effects. Emphasis will be placed on drugs of abuse and the principles by which these substances modify and regulate behavior in the brain. The course begins with an introduction of pharmacological and neural principles that regulate neural transmission in the brain. We also cover current theories of drug addiction and how these theories apply to different abused substances.

Prerequisites: Psych 1301, 3201 and 3101 and PSYC 2324 or BIOL 2340 with a “C” or better. Prerequisites must be completed prior to taking this class, and cannot be taken concurrently.

Learning Objectives:
The goal of the course is to provide an overview of the neuroscientific basis of drugs of abuse as well as drugs used for the treatment of clinical disorders. This course is taught with a heavy focus on the biological underpinnings of behavior. As such, special attention will be given to the pharmacodynamic principles of drugs. Economic, governmental, social and cultural perspectives will also be considered where appropriate. Students should leave the class with an understanding of how drugs impact the brain and behavior. Students will also be challenged to think critically about controversial topics regarding legalization and criminalization of drugs in the United States. Lastly, students will engage in a series of assignments to deepen critical thinking, scientific communication, problem solving and creative skills aligning with UTEP Edge Advantages outlined below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Thinking Skills</th>
<th>Students will analyze and evaluate issues in order to solve problems and develop informed opinions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>Students will learn how to engage in scientific communication through a variety of mediums to exchange information and ideas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem Solving Skills</td>
<td>Students will use peer-reviewed literature to find solutions to difficult or complex issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship Skills</td>
<td>Students will have a chance to develop, organize, and manage ideas turning them into new creative projects.</td>
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Accommodations and Support Services:
If you need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, by email to cass@utep.edu. Note that their office works with students who might have a disability, physical or psychological conditions that impact their ability to engage in class, participate in coursework or meet course deadlines. Beyond preexisting or chronic conditions, if you are
experiencing a personal medical or family emergency, you can contact their office as well to inquire about accommodations support. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. The instructor must be notified by CASS by the end of the first week of classes to facilitate accommodations support implementation. However, if an emergency happens after the semester begins, contact CASS ASAP. In the event of any emergency situation, you are also strongly encouraged to contact the Dean of Students through the Student Success Helpdesk at https://www.utep.edu/advising/student_resources/student-success-helpdesk.html (studentsuccess@utep.edu or call 915-747-8887.

Blackboard:
Everything you need for this class can be found on Blackboard. Please check Blackboard for announcements at least once per week. Blackboard is also where you will find online quizzes and other supplemental materials relevant to the course. Make sure you check your email regularly for updates via Blackboard. If you are not receiving emails from Blackboard, reach out to UTEP tech support.

Attendance:
To do well in this course, you should attend every lecture and stay on top of the course material. Lectures will typically be presented during class time on Tuesday and Thursday from 10:30-11:50am mountain time (though some lectures will be pre-recorded and shared on Blackboard), and you are strongly encouraged to attend class in person whenever possible. Additionally, recordings of lectures will typically be online by 9pm (mountain time) the same day of class, so you can watch later if you need to. You are strongly encouraged to watch the Tuesday lectures on Tuesday, and so on, so that you do not fall behind. Respondus Lockdown pop quizzes will occur randomly throughout the semester and will be based on the lecture material (and are worth extra credit, see below). Active learning during lectures is the key to success in this course, and historically – students that never miss the lectures end up performing better in the course than others.

Grades: up to 400 points total
Note that due to the heavy writing component for exams, quizzes and assignments in this course, it could take up to 2 weeks from the deadline of an assignment or the end of an exam window before grades are posted to Blackboard.

Exams: 300 pts
- There will be 3 exams, each worth 100 points during the course of the semester (dates below).
- Combinations of multiple choice, short answer and/or essay, matching and labeling or fill in the blank questions will be included. Exams are not cumulative, but concepts in this course build off each other as the semester progresses.
- 80-90% of the questions on each exam will be focused on lecture material, but 10-20% will be from the book (and most of the book questions will be very similar to the Blackboard textbook quizzes). Extra credit will also appear on each exam (see extra credit below for details).
- **Exams will take only 90 minutes and are timed.** If you require any additional time or accommodation you must provide appropriate documentation at least one week prior to the first exam.
- All exams will be available on Blackboard for a full 48-hour window during which you can take the exam at your convenience; however, be advised that if you run into technical issues in the middle of the night, tech support won’t be able to assist you until the next day.
- **No make-up exams will be administered under any circumstances, no matter how compelling.** However, if you are experiencing a medical emergency before an exam, you should notify CASS and your instructors.
• You must take the exam during the allotted exam window and the dates are not flexible.
• Exams for this course will be electronic. To be able to take your exam online, you are required to use Respondus Lockdown, a program that will “lock” you out of being able to use other websites or items to take the exam. No notes, books, power points, electronic devices, devices that transmit audio or other materials are allowed during the exams. You are also prohibited from discussing the exam with each other during the exam window. However, you are strongly encouraged to study together before the exam window begins.
• You should download Respondus Lockdown and install it on your computer ASAP: https://www.utep.edu/technologysupport/_Files/docs/MM_Respondus-Student.pdf
• Before each exam you will have access to a comprehensive review sheet (created by the instructor to help guide you as you study on your own at home) and there will also be an instructor-hosted review session prior to each exam (see course schedule below for dates). Study strategies are also provided at the top of each review sheet.

Assignments: 100 pts (4 assignments worth 25 pts each). Details, directions and grading rubrics for each assignment are outlined in a document on blackboard titled: Guidelines for Assignments. This document is long, but it contains a lot of very critical information, so read it thoroughly and refer to it as you work on these assignments. Note that each assignment has a small component that is due early, and the full project due later. Assignments must be turned in on time (by 11:59pm on dates outlined below and in the calendar on Blackboard) to be eligible to receive credit and late work will receive an automatic zero. If you are experiencing an emergency that impacts your ability to turn in your assignments, reach out to CASS immediately with appropriate documentation and ask them to advocate to your instructors about late work consideration.

1. Assignment 1: Build a Synapse – this assignment involves using materials of your choice to build a synapse that matches the information we learned about in class. You will turn in photos of your synapse model, labeled with correct parts (see instructions and grading rubric on Blackboard).
   a. Part 1 (2pts): Identify what neurotransmitter system/type of synapse you plan to create by February 2nd, at 11:59pm.
   b. Part 2 (23pts): Your assignment (photos and a video description of your model) will be due via blackboard on February 9th, at 11:59pm.

2. Assignment 2. Pharmacodynamics Video – this assignment involves creating a video presentation about the pharmacodynamic mechanism of action of any recreational substance. The assignment involves selecting a substance, reading in the textbook about the substance, and getting creative about ways to explain how the substance works at the level of the synapse (see instructions and grading rubric on Blackboard).
   a. Part 1 (2pts): Identify a substance of interest and turn in via blackboard by March 8th, at 11:59pm.
   b. Part 2 (23pts): Your completed slides and video presentation will be due via blackboard on March 22nd, at 11:59pm.

3. Assignment 3. Prescription Drug Insert Literacy - this assignment involves identifying a medication that is available via prescription and answering a series of guided critical thinking questions based on the information available to patients (see instructions and grading rubric on Blackboard).
   a. Part 1 (5pts): Identify up to 2 medications you’d like to review and google the packaging insert information. Turn in the PDF of this information for Dr. Serafine to approve by April 5th, at 11:59pm.
   b. Part 2 (20pts): Your completed assignment is due on blackboard by April 19th.
4. **Assignment 4. Science Communication Infographic** – this assignment involves reviewing peer-reviewed source material to create a short creative product (a social media infographic) about one of several topics, with peer-reviewed references.
   a. Part 1 (10pts): Select a topic from a list of options or email Dr. Serafine about a topic of your choosing. Turn in your topic selection along with 4 peer-reviewed articles for Dr. Serafine to approve by April 12th, at 11:59pm.
   b. Part 2 (15pts): Turn in your written product via blackboard by May 10th, at 11:59pm

**Extra Credit:**
- **Asynchronous Blackboard Textbook Quizzes (5pts)**
  - A total of approximately 14 quizzes will be available on Blackboard throughout the semester. These will consist of multiple choice and true false questions. Quiz questions will come from the reading assignments NOT from the lecture. These quizzes are based on the 3\textsuperscript{rd} edition of the text, not the 2\textsuperscript{nd}.
  - Quizzes will only be available during the week corresponding to that reading assignment (so if you are supposed to read chapter 2 by the end of the first week, the chapter 2 quiz will expire on Friday of the first week of classes, etc.). The quizzes will expire at 11:59pm each week on Friday.
  - Quizzes are not timed, but they do expire – so if you don’t want to be rushed, do not wait to start it until close to the expiration time.
  - There will also be a syllabus quiz, which will expire on census day (January 31\textsuperscript{st}). The syllabus quiz will replace your lowest quiz grade at the end of the semester.
  - Quiz bonus points will be calculated as follows: (points earned divided by points possible) multiplied by 5. Since there will be 14 quizzes at 10 points each, that means the equation is (total quiz points earned divided by 140) then multiply the answer by 5. The quiz total will be added to your total grade once the other 400 points have been completed (e.g., if you get all 400 and still earn 5 quiz points, your final grade will be 405/400.
  - Note that all textbook quiz expiration dates should be visible in the Blackboard calendar for this course, and typically any quizzes that you do not yet see available will open 1-2 weeks before the deadline.
- **Documentary Video Questions (10 pts)**
  - After the first exam you’ll get the link to watch an HBO documentary on your own time. After the second exam, there will be a second “homework” video from National Geographic. You will be able to earn up to 5 points extra credit from questions that will show up on the exam that falls after each video link is provided. These points will be added as extra credit to the exam on which the questions appear. There will be a maximum of 5 points extra credit corresponding to each video, for 10 extra credit points total.
- **Optional Final Presentation Script Rough Draft (5pts)**
  - You can turn in a rough draft of your script for your optional final presentation by April 26\textsuperscript{th} for Dr. Serafine to review. In return, you will get some feedback/ advice on how to polish presentation and earn up to 5 points extra credit towards your Assignment 4 grade.
- **Optional Final Presentation (10pts)**
  - For a final boost to your grade at the end of the semester, you can turn in an oral presentation of the content from Assignment 4 by 12:45pm on May 9th. There are two ways you can turn in a presentation to provide maximum flexibility (and different ways to communicate). You can only select one of the options below for up to 10 points (see rubric in the Guideline for Assignments document):
- Present during our final exam time (Dr. Serafine and any other presenting students will be your audience).
- Provide a TikTok-style video of you presenting that you upload by the end of our final exam period (you won’t have a physical audience, but Dr. Serafine will view your video asynchronously).

- **Exam Extra Credit (??)**
  - There are typically also 1-2 extra credit questions on each exam. These are extra, and if you get them wrong you will not be penalized but answering them correctly will get you full or partial extra credit points. They are typically more difficult than the rest of the exam questions, which is why they are worth *extra* points. There will be between 2.5-5pts extra credit on each exam.

- **Respondus Lockdown Lecture Pop Quizzes (??)**
  - Occasionally there will be spontaneous pop quizzes, and you will have the opportunity to earn extra credit based on performance on these quizzes. These will typically only be open for 24-48 hours each. There will be 2.5-5pts possible via in class pop quizzes between each exam, and points will be added to the exam that follows the quiz. For example, a quiz occurring after Exam 1 will mean that any points earned get added to the Exam 2 grade.
  - The goal of these is to familiarize you with the Respondus program and allow you to check for any technical issues with your WIFI/internet service.
  - You are not permitted to use other devices, the internet or your book/notes during these pop quizzes. These quizzes are designed to help you prepare for the test environment.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions. To learn more, please visit [HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline](#).

**Course Policies on the Use of Artificial Intelligence:** The use of generative AI tools such as Chat GPT is permitted in this course for the following activities, which must be noted or cited, and a printout of the generated content must also be uploaded along with the assignment.

- To draft and proofread emails when you have questions for the instructor
- To ask for help in understanding how to read peer-reviewed articles:
  - Example questions are below:
    - How do I find the hypothesis, methods, dependent/independent variables, rationale and results in a peer-reviewed article?
    - What is the difference between an empirical and a literature review article?
    - What is the difference between a systematic review and a meta-analysis?
    - How do I use PubMed to find articles?
- To generate an outline for the final presentation to help with creating your organizational structure
You can use DALL-E to generate images for use in Assignment 2, but you must design the layout/placement of the images. You should not use DALL-E for Assignment 4, but you can use free software like Canva which contains images/clip art.

You can use AI to proofread or revise grammar for any assignment with writing; however, if you use it, you must print out the correspondence with Grammarly and include it with your assignment. You cannot use it to generate answers for you.

To proofread/revise grammar for your own course notes

*If you use AI in any of these approved ways, please print a screen shot of the transcript and upload along with your assignment.

However, you may not use AI tools to complete the following activities:

- To generate content or answers
- To generate new content or text for the assignments (you can only use AI to review your own words and provide guidance on editing for grammar/sentence structure – but not to create new sentences or phrases).
- To find articles for your assignments
- On the exams or quizzes (textbook or pop quizzes)
- To answer questions on the review sheet
- All writing for the course should be your own, influenced by your own critical thinking after reading the articles.
- You are not allowed to submit any AI-generated work in this course as your own. If you use any information or materials created by AI technology, you are required to cite it like you would any other source (include the link, transcript and date you accessed AI).

Students must cite any borrowed content sources to comply with all applicable citation guidelines, copyright law, and avoid plagiarism. Instances that violate these guidelines will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. If you wish to use generative AI for anything else related to this course that is not listed above, please ask the instructor at least one week prior to the deadline or due date for the item you are interested using it for.

**Important Contact Information**

- University Counseling Center: 202 Union West 747-5302
- Center for Accommodations and Support Services: 106 Union East 747-5148
- University Career Center: 103 Union West 747-5640
- Department of Psychology: 112 Psychology 747-5551
- Student Success Helpdesk: 747-8887, studentsuccess@utep.edu

**Final Grade Calculation:** Final grades will be calculated as follows (points earned + extra credit/400) x 100.

**Grading scale:**

- A = 90.0-100.0%
- B = 80.0-89.9%
- C = 70.0-79.9%
- D = 60.0-69.9%
- F < 60.0%

Please note that grades will not be “rounded up”. Therefore a 79.5% will be entered as a “C”. The point of the extra credit opportunities (outlined above) is to increase the probability for students to earn a
better grade. Therefore, while “rounding up” will not occur in this class, **the best thing students can do to boost their grade is to plan to complete all extra credit opportunities.**

If you have any questions or disputes regarding grades, you must raise these in writing within ten days of the grade being released. Grades will only be changed in cases of administrative error. Dr. Serafine does not hand back exams, if you wish to see your exam after it has been graded, you must schedule an appointment to virtually meet with the instructor. You should not contact the TA directly (Dr. Serafine will loop the TA in only if needed). If you want to file a formal complaint about grading, please contact the UTEP Psychology Department Chair.

Note that there is already information about an extensive amount of extra credit written above. **No additional extra credit opportunities beyond what is provided on the syllabus or in class to the entire group will be provided.**

**Course Recordings:**
The use of recordings will enable you to have access to class lectures and review sessions in the event you miss a synchronous or in-person class meeting due to illness or other extenuating circumstance. Our use of such technology is governed by the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and UTEP’s acceptable-use policy. A recording of class sessions will be kept and stored by UTEP, in accordance with FERPA and UTEP policies. Your instructor will not share the recordings of your class activities outside of course participants, which include your fellow students, teaching assistants, or graduate assistants, and any guest faculty or community-based learning partners with whom we may engage during a class session. **You may not share recordings outside of this course.** Doing so may result in disciplinary action.

**Copyright for Course Materials:**
All materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course materials are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further disseminated.

**Class Schedule:**

**Lecture title bold, reading (to be completed prior to class time italicized), BLUE indicates important deadlines. Yellow highlight indicates Exams.**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>01/16</td>
<td>The neuron, brain &amp; nervous system</td>
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<td><em>Chapter 2: Structure and Function of the Nervous System</em></td>
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<td>TH</td>
<td>01/18</td>
<td>The neuron (continued)</td>
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<td><em>Introduction to Pharmacology: Pharmacokinetics and Pharmacodynamics</em></td>
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<td><em>Chapter 1: Principles of Pharmacology</em></td>
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<td>T</td>
<td>01/23</td>
<td>Pharmacology (continued)</td>
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<td><em>Chapter 1: Principles of Pharmacology</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>TH</td>
<td>01/25</td>
<td>The action potential</td>
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<td><em>Neurochemistry: level of the synapse</em></td>
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<td><em>Chapter 1: Principles of Pharmacology</em></td>
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<td><em>Chapter 3: Chemical Signaling by Neurotransmitters and Hormones</em></td>
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T 01/30  Neurochemistry (continued)  
*Chapter 3: Chemical Signaling by Neurotransmitters and Hormones*

W 01/31  Census day – Syllabus Quiz Expires at 11:59pm

TH 02/01  Neurotransmitter classification: Acetylcholine  
*Major excitatory and inhibitory neurotransmitters: Glutamate*  
*Chapter 3: Chemical Signaling by Neurotransmitters and Hormones*

F 02/02  Assignment 1: Part 1 Due on Blackboard by 11:59pm

T 02/06  Glutamate (continued)  
*Major excitatory and inhibitory neurotransmitters: GABA*  
*Chapter 7: Acetylcholine*

TH 02/08  Monoamines: Catecholamines & Indolamines  
*Chapter 5: Catecholamines*  
*Chapter 6: Serotonin*

F 02/09  Assignment 1: Part 2 Due via blackboard by 11:59pm

T 02/13  Exam Review (see Blackboard for details)

TH 02/15  Exam 1 Window: opens at 5pm Wednesday 02/14 & closes at 5pm Friday 02/16

T 02/20  Methods of research  
*Chapter 4: Methods of Research in Psychopharmacology*

TH 02/22  Addiction & the biology of reward  
*Chapter 9: Drug Abuse & Addiction*

T 02/27  Addiction & the biology of reward  
*Chapter 9: Drug Abuse & Addiction*

TH 02/29  The stimulants: cocaine & amphetamine  
*Chapter 12: Psychomotor stimulants: Cocaine, Amphetamines & Related Drugs*

T 03/05  The narcotics: opioids and pain  
*Chapter 11: The Opioids*

TH 03/07  The narcotics: opioids and pain & The legal drugs: alcohol  
*Chapter 10: Alcohol*

F 03/08  Assignment 2: Part 1 due via Blackboard by 11:59pm

T 03/12  Spring Break

TH 03/14  Spring Break

T 03/19  The legal drugs: alcohol (continued), nicotine and caffeine  
*Chapter 10: Alcohol*  
*Chapter 13: Nicotine and Caffeine*
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| TH 03/21 | **The cannabinoids and the hallucinogens**  
*Chapter 14: Marijuana and the Cannabinoids*  
*Chapter 15: Psychedelic & Hallucinogenic Drugs, PCP & Ketamine* |
| F 03/22 | Assignment 2: Part 2 due on Blackboard by 11:59pm |
| T 03/26 | Flex (any remaining lecture slides for Exam 2) |
| TH 03/28 | Exam Review (see Blackboard for details)  
*Last day to drop Spring 2023 courses* |
| T 04/02 | Exam 2 Window: Exam opens 5pm Monday 04/01 & closes 5pm Wednesday 04/03 |
| TH 04/04 | **Introduction to pharmacotherapeutics**  
*Schizophrenia*  
*Chapter 19: Schizophrenia: Antipsychotic Drugs* |
| F 04/05 | Assignment 3 Part 1 due on Blackboard by 11:59pm |
| T 04/09 | **Schizophrenia (continued)**  
*Chapter 19: Schizophrenia: Antipsychotic Drugs* |
| TH 04/11 | **Affective disorders**  
*Chapter 18: Affective Disorders: Antidepressants and Mood Stabilizers* |
| F 04/12 | Assignment 4 Part 1 due by 11:59pm on Blackboard. |
| T 04/16 | **Affective disorders (continued)**  
*Chapter 18: Affective Disorders: Antidepressants and Mood Stabilizers* |
| TH 04/18 | **Anxiety disorders**  
*Chapter 17: Disorders of Anxiety & Impulsivity & the Drugs Used to Treat Them* |
| F 04/19 | Assignment 3: Part 2 due by 11:59pm on Blackboard. |
| T 04/23 | **Sleep disorders and treatments**  
*Chapter 17: Disorders of Anxiety & Impulsivity & the Drugs Used to Treat Them* |
| TH 04/25 | Flex (any remaining lecture slides for Exam 3) |
| F 04/26 | Optional Final Presentation: Rough Draft Script due for extra credit. |
| T 04/30 | Exam Review Session (see Blackboard for details) |
| TH 05/02 | Exam 3 Window: opens at 5pm Wednesday 05/01 & closes at 5pm Friday 05/03 |
| Th 05/09 | **OPTIONAL FINAL PRESENTATIONS due by 12:45pm.** Details will be provided on Blackboard and the Guidelines for Assignments document. You can either present in person during the final exam window, or upload a video that is due at the end of our final exam period: [https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/registrar/scheduling/final-exam-schedule-spring-2024.pdf](https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/registrar/scheduling/final-exam-schedule-spring-2024.pdf) |
| F 05/10 | Final Project (Assignment 4) Part 2 due by 11:59pm on Blackboard. |

**Please note: The syllabus is subject to change during the semester. Please make sure I have your best email contact information, to insure you always have the most up to date version of the syllabus. I will also always post the most recent version to Blackboard.**
Classroom Courtesy

Please adhere to the following in person and online:

1. Be mindful of your behavior and language in class and online. Remember that members of the class and the instructor will be reading any posts on Blackboard.
2. Respect and courtesy must be provided to classmates and to instructor at all times. No harassment or inappropriate postings or in class behavior will be tolerated.
3. When reacting to someone else’s discussion board post or in class questions, address the ideas, not the person. Post online only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.
4. Blackboard is not a public internet venue; all postings to it should be considered private and confidential. Whatever is posted on in these online spaces is intended for classmates and professor only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space. If students wish to do so, they have the ethical obligation to first request the permission of the writer(s).
5. No solicitations. This includes “note takers for hire” and similar paid for tutoring services.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: What technology do I need to take this course?
A: Course content will be delivered through in person lectures in the classroom; however, recordings of past semesters or current semester lectures will also be shared after class, on Blackboard. The main requirements are a device (tablet or computer) that can connect to the internet and that has a webcam (for Respondus Lockdown exams). Most of the course material (except exams) can also be viewed on smartphones. Google chrome is the most supported computer browser for Blackboard; however, on Apple smartphone (e.g., iPhone) blackboard might work better with Safari. You will also need Microsoft Office (for MS Word) to complete assignments. OneDrive links are not acceptable for turning in assignments. You can contact the UTEP Help Desk if you have any issues with technology. Note that technical difficulties are not a valid excuse for late work, as deadlines are posted in advance. It is up to you to avoid waiting until the last minute to submit an assignment, to avoid technology-related errors or delays in upload speeds. Note that as UTEP changes its software offerings, it is possible we might also use other video streaming tools for this course. Any changes will be announced via Blackboard.

Q: What happens if a personal medical emergency or family emergency occurs during the semester?
A: If your personal or family circumstance limits your ability to perform in one or more courses, you should first take care of the emergency situation by contacting the proper medical officials. Upon discharge, please obtain documentation from your doctor that you had an emergency with dates of the event. If you will be out for longer than a day or two you should contact the CASS office, and your academic advisor to determine options. For example, if the emergency impacts all of your classes, you can apply for a complete medical withdrawal through the registrar’s office. If this occurs to you, please contact CASS first (cass@utep.edu) to determine how to proceed with medical paperwork. It is the policy of the Department of Psychology not to permit selective withdrawals due to medical/family emergencies. In other words, if you want to withdraw from only Dr. Serafine’s course, and not your other courses, due to a medical circumstance or family emergency, the request will likely be denied without clear justification. In extremely rare cases, students might also be eligible for an incomplete. If you believe you are experiencing one of those rare circumstances, please contact CASS first, and then your academic advisor before approaching the instructor about an incomplete. Note that if the issue is
related to COVID-19 you should notify covidaction@utep.edu. If you notify Dr. Serafine about a positive COVID-19 diagnosis she will also report this information to covidaction@utep.edu so the University can provide you with support.

Q: What happens if I think someone in the course is engaging in academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.)?
A: UTEP takes academic dishonesty very seriously. If you notice suspicious behavior during an exam or suspect academic dishonesty is occurring, please notify Dr. Serafine. Dr. Serafine might file a formal report to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR). If she does, you are welcome to remain anonymous in reporting the suspected offense. To remain anonymous, simply let Dr. Serafine know that you wish to remain anonymous when you report the behavior to her via email or in person.

Q: The review sheets are really long. Is there any way to get a shorter version?
A: The review sheet is designed as a tool to help you focus your study efforts on the most important information. They need to be long in order to cover all possible information that might appear on an exam. These are resources, and not required – so if you do not have time to do the review sheet there is no point penalty. However, completing the review sheet, and taking it like a practice test is the best way to study for the exams in this course. As a reminder, students are not permitted to use generative AI to complete the review sheets.

Q: What should I expect for the exam review sessions?
A: Exam review sessions are Dr. Serafine’s way of helping you narrow down the breadth of information into specific areas you should focus on the night/nights before the test. To get the most out of the review session, come with your review sheet already filled out. If you don’t study before the review session, it will be too late to master all of the information for the exam – so fill out the review sheet each day after class so that by the review session, you have a complete/nearly complete document. The best thing to do during the review is to write down the questions, not the answers. If you have the questions, you can spend the evening finding the answers on your own – and that will prepare you VERY well for the exam.

Q: I have lots of other exams during our exam window. Is there any way to take the exam early?
A: No. Exam dates are “set in stone” and must be taken during the posted exam window. If you do not take the exam within the window, it will be an automatic zero. However, if a medical or family emergency occurs, do reach out ASAP to Dr. Serafine (and follow guidance about emergencies described above).

Q: Above you said you don’t round up, but what if my grade is at a threshold between one letter and another? Can I get a boost?
A: If you do all the extra credit described above it is not likely you will need a boost. The hard part about the extra credit is that you must attempt the extra credit opportunities before they expire – and many students do not do this, assuming they won’t need it at the end of the semester. Most of the students who earn A’s in this course attempt every single opportunity for extra credit, no matter what. The best thing you can do to improve your grade is to plan to do all the extra credit (treat it as if it is not “extra” but “required”).
Q: I know Dr. Serafine provides the slides as a PDF, but I want the PowerPoint version so I can take notes in PowerPoint. Can I get a PowerPoint file?
A: No. Dr. Serafine only provides a PDF to encourage you to take notes directly on the review sheet or on blank paper/word documents. This strategy is much more effective for learning and retaining information, as the cues are more like what you will see on the exam.

Q: I have a disability or medical condition that requires accommodation support. What options does Dr. Serafine provide for these circumstances?
A: Dr. Serafine will work with CASS to determine appropriate accommodations for your specific needs. If you wish to get accommodations, you must enroll at CASS and have CASS notify Dr. Serafine at least 1 week before the first exam. Dr. Serafine will reply within 5 business days (to you and CASS) with a list of accommodations that can be offered based on your specific needs and the course. If a medical emergency occurs during the semester, contact Dr. Serafine via email ASAP, and work to obtain a doctor’s note with specific dates in case it is needed for UTEP. If you are not sure if you qualify for accommodations based on your own confidential health information (or that of someone you are the primary caregiver for another individual such as a parent, child, partner, etc.), it is worth checking in with CASS to inquire about their services just in case. Students who qualify for accommodations to not have to use these accommodations unless they determine they need or want to, but talking to CASS allows you the option to use them – so don’t hesitate to contact them. Note that mental health situations are also health situations, and mental health related circumstances, preexisting or new, might qualify a student for CASS accommodations support. If you need mental health care services, reach out to the Counseling and Psychological Services Center on Campus (phone number above).

Q: Should I wait until after the lecture on the material to take the textbook quiz related to that material?
A: No. Textbook quizzes are based on the reading, not the lecture and since you should read before the lecture on that corresponding topic, you do not need to wait for Dr. Serafine to cover something in class before taking a quiz on that subject. You are encouraged to take the textbook quizzes early, to avoid missing their availability window.

Q: I am not happy with my grade, and think I should drop. How can I do this?
A: To drop this class, please contact the Registrar’s Office to initiate the drop process. If you cannot complete this course for whatever reason, please contact Dr. Serafine. Often students might be incorrectly estimating their performance in the class, and Dr. Serafine is happy to discuss your grade via email, video chat or secure communication if you have questions. Another great option is to reach out to the student success helpdesk for guidance and support if you are struggling in one or more classes at any point during the semester (contact information above).

Other Resources (blue text is clickable as a link)

- **UTEP Library**: Access a wide range of resources including online full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian assistance for enrolled students.
- **Help Desk**: Students experiencing technological challenges (email, Blackboard, software, etc.) can submit a ticket to the UTEP Helpdesk for assistance. Contact the Helpdesk via phone, email, chat, website, or in person if on campus.
- **University Writing Center (UWC)**: Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help and explore other writing resources.
• **Math Tutoring Center (MaRCS):** Ask a tutor for help and explore other available math resources.
• **History Tutoring Center (HTC):** Receive assistance with writing history papers, get help from a tutor and explore other history resources.
• **Military Student Success Center:** UTEP welcomes military-affiliated students to its degree programs, and the Military Student Success Center and its dedicated staff (many of whom are veterans and students themselves) are here to help personnel in any branch of service to reach their educational goals.

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**COVID-19 Information**

Please stay home if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please contact CASS and let your instructors know as soon as possible, so that we can work on appropriate accommodations. If you have tested positive for COVID-19, you are encouraged to report your results to covidaction@utep.edu, so that the Dean of Students Office can provide you with support and help with communication with your professors. The [Student Health Center](#) is equipped to provide COVID-19 testing.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that people in areas of substantial or high COVID-19 transmission wear face masks when indoors in groups of people. The best way that Miners can take care of Miners is to get vaccinated. **If you still need a COVID-19 vaccine, it is widely available in the El Paso area.** New annual boosters are scheduled to be released before October. For more information about the current rates, testing, and vaccinations, please visit [epstrong.org](http://epstrong.org).