

WESTERN UNIVERSITY
LONDON CANADA
Department of Psychology
Fall 2026

Psychology 2020A Section 650
Drugs and Behavior

1 CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

Survey of the major drugs of abuse, including alcohol, nicotine, caffeine, opiates, stimulants, inhalants, and sedative-hypnotics. Discussion will focus on historical and current patterns of use and abuse, behavioural and psychological effects of acute and chronic use, psychological processes involved in drug effects, neurochemical bases for action, and treatment issues.

Antirequisite: Not Applicable

Prerequisite: Not Applicable

3 lecture hours; Course Weight: 0.5

Unless otherwise stated, students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all prerequisites prior to enrolling. Where prerequisites have not been met, the instructor may require the student to withdraw from the course. In accordance with Western policy, this decision is not subject to appeal.

In the event of a discrepancy between this outline and Senate or University policies, the latter shall prevail. The instructor reserves the right to modify elements of this course outline for pedagogical or operational reasons. Any such changes will be communicated to students in a timely manner.

2 COURSE INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Riley Hinson

Office and Phone Number: 6334 SSC 519-661-2111 x84649

Office Hours: By appointment

Email: hinson@uwo.ca

Time and Location of Classes: The course is asynchronous. Lectures will be prerecorded and posted to the course Brightspace site.

Website: There is an Brightspace site for this course. Access to this site is via your id name and password (this is typically your last name and the code involving a combination of numbers

and upper and lower case letters). ***Important course information will be posted at the website, and this is the main method of communicating information to students. It is the student's responsibility to check the web site regularly for important course information. If you miss a course component (test, make up test, etc.) when the information for that course component has been posted on the web site, then you will receive a grade of zero (0) on that course component.***

For courses that include an online component, students must have a reliable internet connection and computer that are compatible with online learning system requirements.

3 COURSE MATERIALS

All material that will be tested will be presented in the recorded class lectures. If you would like to have a complete copy of most of the material that might be presented in class, you may purchase the entire set of my lectures from the Bookstore. You are not required to purchase this, as only the material presented in the recorded lectures will be tested. If you are considering purchasing the lectures from the Bookstore, make sure you get the correct book (you may contact me about this if you wish). The price of the Text Notes is set by the Bookstore. The price last year was \$77.

4 COURSE OBJECTIVES & LEARNING OUTCOMES

The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with the major drugs of use and abuse. These include alcohol, nicotine, caffeine, opiates, marijuana, sedatives, hallucinogens, stimulants, inhalants, steroids and other miscellaneous drugs. The history of use of the different drugs will be presented. The current use of drugs will be described. The behavioral effects will be presented. Behavioral and biopsychological research aimed at identifying factors involved in drug use will also be discussed.

By the end of this course, the successful student should be able to

- recognize and identify major drugs of abuse when they are discussed texts, news, public forums
- recognize and identify major concepts related to drug addiction
- recognize and identify major experimental procedures related to the study of drug addiction
- compare, classify, and interpret information about drugs and drug addiction as presented in texts, news, media or public forums

Learning Outcome	Learning Activity	Assessment
- Recognize and identify major drugs of abuse - Recognize and identify major concepts related to drug addiction - Recognize and identify major experimental procedures related to the study of drug addiction	Lectures	Quizzes and Final Exam involving MC questions
Compare, classify and interpret depictions of drugs and drug addiction as they may appear in text, news, media or public forums	- Lectures - Discussion of media stories about drugs taken from media websites	Quizzes and Final Exam involving MC questions

5 EVALUATION

The evaluation and testing formats for this course were created to assess the learning objectives as listed in section 4 and are necessary for meeting these learning objectives. All evaluations listed in this course outline are required components of the course and together account for 100% of the final grade. Weightings and assessment formats may be adjusted where required to support course learning objectives, with appropriate notice to students.

Quizzes: These will count 50 marks. There will be **quizzes as indicated in the schedule in 7.0. (Note: There will not be a quiz on some weeks.)** The quizzes will be “open book”, so you may have written or printed notes. **You cannot use electronic notes for the quizzes.** You must complete the quiz by yourself. You cannot have any outside help. The quizzes will take place via Brightspace Tests and Quizzes. When there is a quiz in a given week, the quiz will become available at 23:00 hours on Wednesday and will be available for 24 hours until 23:00 hours on Thursday **(Note: This will be different for the last quiz since classes end on a Tuesday. See the schedule in 7.0.)** The quizzes will be time-limited meaning that while you have a 24-hour period in which to begin the quiz, once you begin there will be a limited amount of time to finish. Most quizzes will be 20 minutes and will have 12 MC questions. Once you start a quiz the time clock starts and will end in 20 minutes. You cannot exit the quiz and come back. Once you start you have 20 minutes to finish. The coverage for each quiz will be posted to Brightspace. The quizzes will be MC. See 7.0 below for tentative quiz schedule.

There will be a total of 6 quizzes. The best 5 of these 6 quizzes will be used to calculate your quiz grades. For example, if each quiz has 12 questions worth 1 mark each, and there are 5 countable quizzes, there would be 60 possible marks, and if you make 50 marks, you have 83.33% on the quizzes, so 83.33% of the 50=41.67 quiz marks. Note since only 5 of the 6 quizzes will be used this is considered a flexible arrangement. **As such the Undocumented Absence option of being excused from a quiz without having to provide documentation to Academic Counselling does not apply.** If you miss a quiz and wish to be considered as being excused, you must provide Academic Counselling with documentation. They will determine if

you are excused and will post to the official site. If you are not excused by Academic Counselling the grade of such missed quizzes will be 0.

Per Western Technology guidelines—When taking quizzes you must not have the course site open in more than one window/browser at a time. If you have the course site open in more than one browser/window it may not accept answers to the test, it may shut down, it may do many undesirable things---and you will not be allowed any consideration in terms of the answers not being submitted, test timing out, etc. **DO NOT HAVE THE COURSE SITE OPEN IN MORE THAN ONE WINDOW/BROWSER AT A TIME.**

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they have appropriate and stable internet connections. If there are documentable system wide internet problems or problems with Brightspace itself (which Western Technology can check) then you would be excused from missing a quiz. However, issues with connectivity or settings originating at the student connection end are not considered adequate for missing or failing to complete a quiz.

You are not permitted to print screen or copy screen any of the questions on any of the quizzes. All questions on quizzes and tests are protected intellectual material and may not be copied without permission. If you copy questions on quizzes or tests this is considered an academic offense, so you should not be doing this. If you copy questions and in any manner distribute those questions, that is both an academic offense that may result in academic penalties and it is also a violation of copyright law.

December Final Exam: This will count as 50 marks. This test will be cumulative over the entire course. It will be MC. Psychology 2020A is a 650 course (online), and the December Exam will therefore be online. During the final exam you will be allowed to use written or printed notes, including the Text Notes. **Electronic notes are not allowed for either the quizzes or the Final Exam.** For the Final Exam students will access a designated Zoom portal on Brightspace. **Your camera must be on for the entire duration of the Final Exam.** Proctors will be monitoring the camera view throughout the Final Exam. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they have a working camera for taking the Final Exam via Zoom. Failure to be on camera during the Final Exam will result in a grade of zero (0) on the Final Exam.

Completion of this course will require you to have a reliable internet connection and a device that meets the system and technical requirements for Zoom. WTS logs any problems with Brightspace or Zoom. If you have a problem with Brightspace or Zoom that is not logged as originating from Western's resources, you will not be allowed any make up tests or consideration of grades. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have a reliable internet connection. Information about the system and technical requirements are available at the following links:

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us>

There will be NO MAKE UPS OF MISSED QUIZZES.

POLICY ON MISSING COURSEWORK

If you do not take a quiz and are not excused via Academic Counselling you will receive a zero (0) for the missed quiz, and that will become one of the quiz grades used to calculate your quiz average.

Students who encounter extenuating circumstances affecting their academic responsibilities may submit a request for academic consideration in accordance with Western University's Academic Consideration policies. Requests must be submitted through the [Student Absence Portal](#) and may require supporting documentation.

If you are excused by Academic Counselling from a quiz, the points assigned to that quiz will be added to the Final Exam. Since quizzes are worth 50 marks and there are 5 counted quizzes, each quiz is worth 10 marks. Any excused quiz will result in 10 marks being added to the value of the Final Exam.

Course grades within the Psychology Department are expected to be distributed around the following averages:

70%	1000-level to 2099-level courses
72%	2100-2999-level courses
75%	3000-level courses
80%	4000-level courses

In the event that course grades are significantly higher or lower than these averages, instructors may be required to make adjustments to course grades. Such adjustment might include the normalization of one or more course components and/or the re-weighting of various course components.

Policy on Grade Rounding

Course grades are rounded to the nearest whole number. No additional assignments will be offered to enhance a final grade. Requests to change a grade because it is needed for a future program will not be considered.

6 ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION SCHEDULE

Quizzes	50%
Final Exam	50%

7 CLASS SCHEDULE Tentative and subject to change

The schedule below shows weeks in which a quiz will be given (see above under evaluation for details). The actual coverage in terms of which recorded lectures will be tested on a weekly quiz will be posted to Brightspace before the quiz. For those that have the Text Notes, the actual lines covered for each quiz will be posted to Brightspace.

For the first 5 quizzes, quiz availability starts at 23:00 hours, London, Ontario time on Wednesdays, and the quiz availability ends at 23:00 hours, London, Ontario time on the next day, i.e., Thursday. The final quiz will become available at 22:00 hours, Monday, December 7 and will close at 22:00 hours, Tuesday, December 8

Week of September 7	No Quiz this Week
Week of September 14	No Quiz this Week
Week of September 21	Quiz 1
Week of September 28	No Quiz this Week
Week of October 5	Quiz 2
Week of October 12	No Quiz this Week
Week of October 19	No Quiz this Week
Week of October 26	Quiz 3
Week of November 2	No Quiz this Week
Week of November 9	Quiz 4
Week of November 16	No Quiz this Week
Week of November 23	Quiz 5
Week of November 30	No Quiz this Week
Week of December 7	Quiz 6 —Note: This quiz will occur from 22:00 hours, Dec. 7 to 22:00 hours, Dec 8

Shown below is the order in which the topics will be covered. There will be several recorded lectures for each topic. The actual recorded lectures that will be covered for each quiz will be posted to Brightspace.

1. Introductory Material
2. Alcohol
3. Cannabis
4. Tobacco
5. Caffeine
6. Stimulants
7. Hallucinogens
8. Sedative Hypnotics
9. Steroids
10. Opiates
11. Behavioral Addictions

8 Academic Integrity

Scholastic offences are treated seriously at Western University. Students are expected to understand and comply with the University's standards of academic integrity. Scholastic offences may result in penalties up to and including expulsion from the University. Please read [Western's Scholastic Offences](#) policy for definitions and examples of Scholastic offences.

Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Electronic notes **CANNOT BE USED** for any of the quizzes or the Final Exam.

Use of AI

This course is designed to develop your own critical thinking, writing, and analytical skills. Accordingly, the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude, Copilot) to generate course content is **not permitted**. All use of artificial intelligence tools must comply with Western University's academic integrity standards.

Students may not use AI tools to:

- Generate written text, arguments, analyses, or interpretations
- Draft or rewrite assignment responses
- Paraphrase substantial portions of source material
- Create references or cite sources not independently verified
- Find answers to MC questions

Unauthorized or undisclosed use of AI constitutes a potential scholastic offence and will be handled in accordance with Western University's policies on academic integrity. Students are responsible for ensuring that all work complies with Western's scholastic integrity standards.

Multiple Choice Exams

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams will be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

9 Academic Accommodations and Accessible Education

Western University is committed to providing an accessible learning environment. Students with disabilities or medical conditions requiring accommodation are encouraged to contact Accessible Education as early as possible. Accommodations will be implemented in accordance with University policy. Please review [Western's policy on academic accommodations](#) for student with disabilities. Accessible Education provides supports and services to students with disabilities at Western. If you think you may qualify for ongoing accommodation that will be recognized in all your courses, visit [Accessible Education](#) for more information. Email: aeu@uwo.ca Phone: 519 661-2147

10 Absence & Academic Consideration

Please review Western's policy on [Academic Considerations](#):

11 Other Information

Helpful Websites

- Western's academic policies are available at the [Office of the Registrar](#).
- Departmental policies are available at the [Psychology Department website](#).
- Learning supports available at [Learning Development & Success](#).

Well-being

Western University provides a range of supports to promote student well-being. Students are encouraged to seek assistance when needed. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to [Health and Wellness at Western](#) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you.

Grade Appeals

If you wish to appeal a grade, please read the [policy documentation](#) on requests for relief. Please first contact the course instructor. If your issue is not resolved, you may make your appeal in writing to the Undergraduate Chair in Psychology (psyugrd@uwo.ca).

Copyright Statement

Lectures and course materials, including power point presentations, outlines, videos and similar materials, are protected by copyright. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own educational use. You may not record lectures, reproduce (or allow others to reproduce), post or distribute any course materials publicly and/or for commercial purposes without the instructor's written consent.

Policy on the Recording of Synchronous Sessions

Some or all the learning sessions for this course may be recorded. The data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers. The recordings will be used for educational purposes related to this course, including evaluations. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals participating in the course for their private or group study purposes. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings. Participants in this course are not permitted to privately record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation, or the student has the prior written permission of the instructor. Students who require recordings as an accommodation should ensure this need is documented with Accessible Education.