Drugs and the U.S. Healthcare System
Spring 2017 Course Syllabus
3 credits

Course Director
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Course Instructors
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Office Hours: By appointment – call or email the course account to set up a meeting
Course Email: phar4200@umn.edu
Course Site: https://moodle.umn.edu

Textbook: None

Course Purpose
Phar 4200/5200 prepares you to be an informed and active leader in ethics driven debates regarding medications within the US healthcare system. In this course, you will study controversial issues surrounding medications and the US healthcare system and practice creating evidence-based arguments to communicate ideas, engage others, articulate viewpoints, and develop a plan of action related to the content. Specifically, the course examines the critical role of medications and the structure of the many facets of medication use in the US healthcare system. In addition, the course will draw comparisons between medication use systems around the world and look at other controversies related to access, choice, and quality of healthcare. You will learn the impact that human choices, ethics, and behavior have upon the societal decisions surrounding and availability of medications in the United States, and about their rights and responsibilities to be a part of national and worldwide healthcare and medication debates. (Note: Should any course participants pursue pharmacy school in the future, this course will not waive any pharmacy curriculum requirements.)

Course Objectives
Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Clearly and concisely communicate your viewpoints and ideas for potential solutions, in written format, concerning medication controversies in the US healthcare system
- Describe the impact of drugs on society
- Explain the differences between prescription, non-prescription drugs, and dietary supplements
- Explain the role of the FDA and other government agencies of regulation
- Describe how drug regulation effects drug use and availability and the ethical implications of regulatory decisions
- Describe the role and influence of the pharmaceutical industry and discuss the controversies surrounding DTC advertising
- Describe the types of drug information and literature available and its role
- Define and describe insurance structures and options
- Describe and discuss various government healthcare systems available worldwide
- Describe the role of members of the healthcare team
- Define healthcare literacy and research analyzing its impact on human experiences and behavior
- Summarize rights and responsibilities of patients
- Outline the complexities of the US healthcare system and discuss debates regarding the ethical implications, societal solutions, and priorities
- Discuss medication and other controversies related to access, choice, and quality of healthcare
- Explain how moral viewpoints and ethics impact research and medical care choices
- Create personal learning objectives that will benefit the student during the course and beyond

**Role of Writing**

Twin Cities undergraduate students are required to complete four Writing-Intensive (WI) courses in addition to completing the first-year writing requirement (more information available at [http://fyw.umn.edu](http://fyw.umn.edu)). All WI courses integrate writing into course content, include formal writing assignments, and provide instruction relevant to the writing assignments. Formal writing assignments are in addition to any informal, exploratory writing or in-class exams assigned in the course. At least one formal writing assignment will require students to revise and resubmit a draft after receiving comments from the instructor. Grades assigned in WI courses are substantially influenced by the writing assignments and quality of the writing produced. **This is a writing intensive course, requiring a minimum of 11 pages of polished, finished writing. The writing assignments contribute to 100% of the final grade for all students.**

The Course Director will provide writing instruction feedback on reflection assignments using grading rubrics found in the Moodle course site. Writing assignments should improve in persuasiveness of argument as more content knowledge is learned and familiarity with writing format is gained; the writing assignments and expectations are outlined more explicitly in the Moodle course site. In the first module, students are required to view three presentations on basic writing fundamentals and citation guidelines for the course.

Further, in Moodle, detailed instructions regarding the purpose and format of the various writing assignments are provided, as well as rubrics outlining assessment. Please note that the expectations for 4200 students are different from that of 5200 students. Make certain that you are following the correct guidelines!

**Course Requirements**

**Prerequisites**
- 4200: None
- 5200: graduate or professional student or instructor consent

Microphone required for computer (if your computer doesn’t already have a microphone built in, the bookstore has some--can be purchased for as little as $5 in some stores)

**Course Requirements—You must:**
- Complete the online orientation located on the Moodle site before beginning the course. This includes completing the orientation quiz and passing with a zero of 100%. **Note: Students will not be awarded points for assignments until the Orientation is complete and points cannot be made up.**
- Complete introduction to group members using Flipgrid.
- Write 2-3 personalized learning objectives for the course
- Review the online materials
- Contribute to discussions on a weekly basis, with thoughtful, finished writing
- Complete three reflection papers
- Complete a proposal introduction, annotated bibliography, and final grant proposal
Complete peer reviews of classmates’ grant proposals

**Weekly Discussion Topics**

**Section I: Drug Information, Advertising, and Regulation**
- **Weeks 1 and 2:** Introduction, Writing Instruction, and Health Literacy
- **Week 3:** Drug Information
- **Week 4:** Drug Advertising
- **Week 5:** Drug Regulation, Development and Safety

**Section II: Medication Issues**
- **Week 6:** Medication Errors
- **Week 7:** Prescription Drug Abuse

**Section III: The Healthcare System**
- **Week 8:** Private Health Insurance and Government Healthcare Systems
- **Week 9:** Global Healthcare Systems
- **Week 10:** Healthcare Reform
- **Week 11:** Drug Pricing
- **Week 12:** End of Life Issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date (all due by midnight, or 11:59pm, unless noted)</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Friday, January 20th</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flipgrid Introduction</td>
<td>Friday, January 27th</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Learning Objectives</td>
<td>Friday, January 27th</td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Online Discussion Posts in Moodle</td>
<td>Weeks 3-12&lt;br&gt;<strong>Mondays at 4:00 pm</strong>&lt;br&gt;Weeks 3-12&lt;br&gt;Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays by midnight (11:59pm)</td>
<td>5 points for each post, 5 points for incorporating and correctly citing an outside source, 5 points for contributing to the weekly summary (25 points per week, 250 points total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Group Summaries in the course wiki hosted in PB Works</td>
<td>Weeks 4-13&lt;br&gt;<strong>Mondays at 4:00 pm</strong>&lt;br&gt;Weeks 4-13&lt;br&gt;Mondays at 4:00 pm</td>
<td>5 points for each post, 5 points for incorporating and correctly citing an outside source, 5 points for contributing to the weekly summary (25 points per week, 250 points total)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Section Reflections</td>
<td>Reflection I: February 22nd&lt;br&gt;Reflection II: March 22nd&lt;br&gt;Reflection III: May 3rd</td>
<td>60 points each&lt;br&gt;(180 points total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Overview</td>
<td>Wednesday, March 1st</td>
<td>30 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>Wednesday, March 29th</td>
<td>60 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Proposal</td>
<td>Wednesday, April 19th</td>
<td>130 points&lt;br&gt;(average of peer review scores)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Center Extra Credit</td>
<td>Wednesday, April 19th</td>
<td>Extra credit: 7 points added to final grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Review of Assigned Grant Proposals</td>
<td>Wednesday, April 26th</td>
<td>Required</td>
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Online Discussions and Group Summaries
Each week, in small, online groups (6-10 students), you will discuss assigned readings and guiding questions from the instructor. Posts of 200+ words are due on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays before midnight (11:59pm). Groups must then collaboratively write a summary of their discussion for that week highlighting the main arguments being made and evidence and sources that were cited. Weekly summaries are written in the course wiki site, PBworks. All group members receive the same grade initially for the weekly discussion summary, but individual students not participating will be penalized. Please see the Moodle site for specific directions on discussions and summaries.

Each group will have a group leader assigned for each week. The role of the group leader is to help facilitate weekly discussions and finalize the weekly summary in the wiki. In addition to the three required posts of 200+ words on Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays before midnight, the group leader must post an additional three times, although there is no word requirement for these posts. Group leaders do not need to include an outside source for the week, and instead are encouraged to explore the sources cited by their group mates. While they are not responsible for writing the entire weekly summary, group leaders are responsible for finalizing the document and ultimately crafting the summary in a manner that reads as one, cohesive point-of-view. Students will receive 5 extra credit points each week they are the group leader if they successfully complete all of the aforementioned requirements on time. The group leader schedule is found in the course wiki in PB works and will be determined at the end of the second week of the course. After group leader assignments are made, students may have the opportunity to sign up to serve as group leader for any remaining unassigned weeks to earn extra credit.

Reading List for Discussion Postings
A few things you should know about the readings for this course:
- You are expected to access readings electronically, either through the library website or using the links provided
- If you access readings from computers other than from a campus site, you must sign into the library website with your x.500 first in order to have full journal access to The New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM) (required readings for most weeks), Journal of the American Medicine Association (JAMA) (required readings for most weeks), Annals of Internal Medicine, and The Lancet.
- You can also link to course readings through the "Library Courses Page" (found in Moodle).
- You must register on Medscape® - registration information under Orientation.

Reflections
You will be asked to write a reflection at the completion of each section in the course. Assignment directions are available on the Moodle course site and will ask you to thoughtfully consider your progress with your personalized learning objectives and response to course content.

Grant Proposal
You are asked to identify a course related topic you deem in urgent need of fixing. Your goal is to create a (fictitious) grant proposal for experiment.com that is approved by the peer review board and inspires people
to make donations. You need to create a plan to fix the problem you identified and establish a persuasive argument identifying why and how the problem must be fixed. Grant proposals should be created in Google Sites (directions and a template available on the Moodle course site). You will begin by submitting the proposal overview to your grant proposal and receive feedback from the course instructors. In researching your topic, you must also write and submit for grading an annotated bibliography outlining your most pertinent research. Finally, the entire grant proposal will be due.

Grading Policy
The final grade will be determined using the scale below. All final grades will be rounded up to the nearest percentage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>606-655</td>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>501-520</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>586-605</td>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>475-500</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>567-585</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>455-474</td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>541-566</td>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>390-454</td>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>521-540</td>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>389 or below</td>
<td>0-59</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Extra Credit
This course offers a number of extra credit options:

- Fulfilling all of the weekly group leader responsibilities (5 points added to discussion points)
- Arguing for the overall "winning side" of role-play debates (3 points added to discussion points)
- Meeting with a tutor in the Writing Center for assistance on the grant proposal (up to 7 points added to final grade)
- Receiving a “yes” vote from peer reviewers for funding of final project (1 point per yes added to grant proposal score)

Missing and Late Work
We want every student to succeed in this course. If you encounter difficulties completing the course as outlined, you should email the course account (phar4200@umn.edu) immediately. If a course deadline passes and a requirement goes unfulfilled, acceptable circumstances must be met and documentation must be provided to receive full credit for the assignment. Circumstances and documentation for make-ups and incompletes are outlined in "Extensions and Incompletes”.

If acceptable circumstance or adequate documentation is not provided, penalties on assignments and/or final grade are at the discretion of the Course Coordinator/Director. However, the following guidelines are generally followed:

- Missing discussion posts, not citing an outside source at all or correctly, and/or not making a substantial contribution to the weekly summary will result in a penalty to weekly summary discussion scores, depending on the number of missed requirements for that week.
- For all reflections, the proposal overview and annotated bibliography, assignments submitted late will be penalized 10% per day.
- Late grant proposals will be penalized 50%. Grant proposals are graded by peer review so it’s imperative that these are completed on time.
- For the peer reviews of grant proposals, you will receive a 30% deduction on your grant proposal grade if any peer reviews are submitted late.
Regrade Requests
If, after reviewing an assignment and the returned grading rubric and feedback, you wish your grade to be reconsidered, email the course account, phar4200@umn.edu, requesting a regrade. The request will be reviewed by the Course Director and a response will be provided via email.

Course Policies and Resources

Extensions and Incompletes
If you have a personal concern that may hinder your progress or if you experience difficulties with the course, it is critical that you contact the Course Coordinator immediately. Difficulties arise when a student fails to remain in contact with us. Extensions on course requirements (i.e. writing assignments) or incompletes for the course will be granted for the following conditions (as outlined in the University’s policy on make-up work):

- illness of student or dependent, verified by a note from a health care provider;
- a family emergency, verified by a note from the professional person in attendance;
- military duty or leave, verified by a superior officer;
- a University-sponsored event, verified by a note from the leader of the sponsoring organization.

Additional circumstances may be considered at the discretion of the Course Coordinator/Director. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, extensions are generally not granted more than one week after the original due date. Documentation must be received by the Course Coordinator no later than one week after the extension request was submitted.

Incompletes will be granted to students making reasonable progress in the course at the time of the request and only after meeting with a Course Director (contact the Course Coordinator via phone or email to make an appointment). At this meeting, you must submit a written request including: (1) the date, (2) your name and ID number, and (3) your reason for requesting an incomplete. If it is determined that an incomplete can be granted, a contract for completion will be written and signed. If this contract is not completed as specified, the "I" will be changed to an "F".

Student Writing Support at the Center for Writing
Student Writing Support (SWS) provides free writing instruction for all University of Minnesota students—graduate and undergraduate—at all stages of the writing process. In face-to-face and online collaborative consultations, SWS consultants help students develop productive writing habits and revision strategies. For information about writing support on your campus, please review their website below:

Crookston: https://www.crk.umn.edu/units/writing-center
Duluth: http://www.d.umn.edu/tutoring/
Morris: http://www.morris.umn.edu/writingcenter/
Rochester: http://r.umn.edu/academics-research/cli/just-ask/writing/
Twin Cities: http://writing.umn.edu/sws/

Disability Accommodation
The University of Minnesota views disability as an important aspect of diversity, and is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.
If you have, or think you have, a disability in any area such as, mental health, attention, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical, please contact the DRC office on your campus (UM Twin Cities - 612.626.1333) to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

Students with short-term disabilities, such as a broken arm, can often work with instructors to minimize classroom barriers. In situations where additional assistance is needed, students should contact the DRC as noted above.

If you are registered with the DRC and have a disability accommodation letter dated for this semester or this year, please contact your instructor early in the semester to review how the accommodations will be applied in the course.

If you are registered with the DRC and have questions or concerns about your accommodations please contact your (access consultant/disability specialist).

Additional information is available on the DRC website: (UM Crookston - https://www.crk.umn.edu/units/disability-resource-center, UM Duluth - http://www.d.umn.edu/disability-resources, UM Morris - http://www.morris.umn.edu/academicsuccess/disability/, UM Rochester - http://r.umn.edu/student-life/student-services/disability-resources, UM Twin Cities - https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/) or e-mail (UM Crookston - myers062@crk.umn.edu, UM Duluth - access@d.umn.edu, UM Morris - hoekstra@morris.umn.edu, UM Rochester - sdzavada@r.umn.edu, UM Twin Cities - drc@umn.edu) with questions.

Student Academic Integrity and Scholastic Dishonesty

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else’s work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forgery, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

All sources, whether directly quoted or paraphrased, must be appropriately referenced, providing detailed information enabling the reader to locate the exact document. Further clarification can be obtained at: http://writing.umn.edu/.

If you are suspected of an indiscretion, you are required to meet with the Course Director. If the allegation is more likely than not to have occurred, the Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity (http://www.oscai.umn.edu/) will be notified. Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes and Course Materials

The University of Minnesota created a policy in April 2009 regarding the appropriate use of class notes and course materials. We in the College of Pharmacy will take action of any violations of this policy. The organization, preparation, and presentation of materials in a class or other instructional setting represent the intellectual effort of the instructor. Instructors have an interest in protecting this intellectual effort and in assuring the accuracy of any public representations of their course lectures and presentations. The classroom should also be a place where instructors feel free to share with students the full range of information
available in their subject areas, including results of new research as it is produced, without concern that such new knowledge will be shared prematurely outside the University learning community. Broadly disseminating class notes beyond the classroom community or accepting compensation for taking and distributing classroom notes undermines instructor interests in their intellectual work product while not substantially furthering instructor and student interests in effective learning. Such actions violate shared norms and standards of the academic community.

- Students may not distribute, via the Internet or other means, instructor-provided lecture notes or other instructor-provided materials, except to other members of the same class or with the express consent of the instructor.
- Instructors have the right to impose additional restrictions on course materials in accordance with copyright and intellectual property law and policy. (See Board of Regents Policy: Copyright, Board of Regents Policy: Commercialization of Intellectual Property Rights and Administrative Policy: Copyright Ownership.)
- While students hold the copyright to their own notes from a course, students may not engage in the widespread distribution or sale of transcript-like notes or notes that are close to verbatim records of a lecture or class presentation. Students may share such notes with other students in the same class.
- The provisions of this policy are enforceable as University rules under Board of Regents Policy: Student Conduct Code.
- If the faculty of a department or collegiate unit, as a group, or individual faculty in a particular course, have assented to or authorized the distribution of lecture notes or instructor-provided materials, such action does not violate this policy.

**Sexual Harassment Policy**

"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. For additional information, please consult Board of Regents Policy: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/SexHarassment.pdf

**Mental Health Services**

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu/.

**FERPA**

In this class, our use of technology will sometimes make students’ names and U of M Internet IDs visible within the course website, but only to other students in the same class. Since we are using a secure, password-protected course website, this should not increase the risk of identity theft or spamming for anyone in the class. If students have concerns about the visibility of Internet IDs, please contact our office.

**Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action**

The University will provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please
consult Board of Regents Policy:
http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.pdf

Academic Freedom and Responsibility
Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Reports of concerns about academic freedom are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help. Contact the instructor, your adviser, or the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost.

Technology Expectations*
Online classes offer students great flexibility in the pursuit of knowledge. To fully take advantage of this flexibility and to have a successful experience in an online course, students must understand and take action to meet certain requirements prior to registering for an online course. Such requirements include access to:

- Computer equipment (including hardware and software)
- Specific programs (including, but not limited to, Microsoft Word or other word processing software, Microsoft Excel, and Adobe PDF)
- Reliable internet access
- Functional internet browsers (such as Mozilla Firefox, Safari, and/or Google Chrome), with Flash, Shockwave, Java plugins, and allowable pop-ups.

Along with these requirements, the course team expects students will:

- Allow sufficient time to complete course assignments, discussions, exams, and other course related activities.
- Contact the course team using the course account listed in the syllabus if technical difficulties should arise.
- Attempt to make reasonable adjustments to solve problems (varies based on the circumstances, but may include actions like: turning off and re-starting the computer, using a different internet browser, clearing cache and cookies, checking internet access, etc).
- Utilize other resources available on your campus (see links below) for computer equipment (hardware and software), programs necessary to complete a course requirement, wifi access, etc.
- Contact technology support (this may include one or all the following):
  - University of Minnesota 1-HELP (Technology Help Service Desk) is available via phone and email 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and via chat during certain hours.
  - Moodle support (for a Moodle-related issue or to report an outage)
  - Local campus support
    - Crookston
    - Duluth
    - Morris
    - Rochester
    - Twin Cities
Technological issues are not an acceptable reason for failing to complete course requirements by the deadline. In rare circumstances, exceptions may be made when a system-wide outage has been reported and verified by the Office of Information Technology. Other issues will be considered on a case by case basis, and documentation may be required. Penalties may be applied at the course director's discretion.

* Content from this section was taken and adapted from: (2016). Technology requirements and specifications. Retrieved from: https://www.crk.umn.edu/units/online-programs/technology-requirements-and-specifications