

Drugs and the U.S. Health Care System

Fall 2020 Syllabus

3 credits



PHAR 4204 W/5204

Drugs and the U.S. Healthcare System

Course Team

Course Director

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Office Hours

By appointment – please email the course account, phar4204@umn.edu, and we would be happy to set up a time for you to meet with the course director.

Textbook

None

Course Purpose

Phar 4204/5204 prepares you to be an informed and active leader in ethics driven debates regarding medications within the US health care system. In this course, you will study controversial issues surrounding medications and the US health care 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 health care 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 health care. 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 health

care 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 drugs, 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 their 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 healthcare choices
- Create personal learning objectives that will benefit you 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](#). 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 instructors will provide writing instruction feedback on reflection assignments using grading rubrics found in the Canvas course site. Writing assignments should improve in the persuasiveness of arguments as knowledge is learned and familiarity with writing format is gained; The writing assignments and expectations are outlined more explicitly in the Canvas course site. In the first module, you are required to view three presentations on basic writing fundamentals and citation guidelines for the course.

Further, in Canvas, 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 4204 students are different from that of 5204 students. Make certain that you are following the correct guidelines.

Course Requirements

Prerequisites

Phar 4204: None

Phar 5204: Graduate or professional student or instructor consent

Equipment

You must use a computer, tablet or mobile device with reliable internet access to successfully complete this course. A microphone is also required. If your computer does not have a microphone, you can purchase one at the bookstore or another retailer for as little as \$5.00. Please review the Technology Expectations portion of the syllabus for more information about this requirement.

Assignments and Assessments

- Complete the online orientation located on the Canvas course site before beginning the course. This includes completing the orientation quiz and passing with a score of 100%. **Note: Students will not be awarded points for assignments until the orientation quiz is complete and points cannot be made up.**
- Complete an introduction to group members using Flipgrid
- Write two to three personalized learning objectives for the course
- Complete a critical thinking and APA citation quiz
- Complete a healthcare systems quiz
- 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 in a Google Site
- Complete three to four peer reviews of classmates' grant proposals

Course Topics

Module 1

- Week 1: Orientation, Introduction and Health Literacy

Module 2

- Week 2: Writing Instruction

Module 3: Drug Basics

- Week 3: Drug Information
- Week 4: Drug Advertising
- Week 5: Drug Regulation, Development, and Safety

Module 4: Healthcare Systems

- Week 6: The U.S. Healthcare System
- Week 7: Global Health Care Systems
- Week 8: Health Care Reform

Module 5: Medication Issues

- Week 9: Medication Errors

- Week 10: Opioid Use, Misuse, and Abuse
- Week 11: COVID and Drug Regulation
- Week 12: Drug Pricing

Module 6: Grant Proposal

- Week 13: Grant Proposal
- Week 14: Peer Reviews
- Week 15: Final Thoughts

Assignment Schedule

Assignment	Due Date (all due by midnight, or 11:59pm, unless noted)	Point Value
Orientation	Friday, September 11	Required
Flipgrid Introduction	Friday, September 18	Required
Personal Learning Objectives	Friday, September 18	5 points
Critical Assessment of Sources Quiz	Friday, September 18	5 points
Weekly Online Discussion Posts in Canvas	Weeks 3-12 Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays by midnight (11:59pm)	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)
Weekly Group Summaries	Weeks 4-13 <u>Mondays at 4:00 pm</u>	
Section Reflections	Reflection I: Wednesday, October 14 Reflection II: Wednesday, November 4 Reflection III: Wednesday, December 16	60 points each (180 points total)
Proposal Overview	Wednesday, October 21	30 points
Annotated Bibliography	Wednesday, November 11	60 points
Grant Proposal	Wednesday, December 2	130 points (average of peer review scores)
Writing Center Extra Credit (Optional)	Wednesday, December 2	Extra credit: 7 points added to final grade
Peer Review of Assigned Grant Proposals	Wednesday, December 9	Required

Optional Revision of Grant Proposal for Regrading by Course Director	Wednesday, December 16	130 points (replaces average of peer review scores)
		Course Total: 660 points

Online Discussions and Group Summaries and the Role of the Group Leader

Weekly Discussion Participation Expectations

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). All students must include at least one outside source (meaning, a source not listed in the assigned readings) with an APA citation in one of their three posts for the week.

Group Summary Participation Expectations

Groups must then collaboratively write a summary of their discussion for that week highlighting the main arguments being made using evidence and sources that were cited. Weekly summaries are written in Google docs. Each group member should include at least 3-4 sentences of content in the weekly summary. All group members receive the same grade initially for the weekly discussion summary, but individual students not participating will be penalized by receiving zero credit. Full directions for weekly discussions and summaries are posted in the Canvas course site.

Group Leader Participation Expectations

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 addition to the three required posts of 200+ words on Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays before midnight and including an outside source, the group leader must post an additional three times, although there is no word requirement for these posts. Thus, in total, a group leader should post six times. 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. Group leaders must include the minimum requirement of 3-4 sentences of content in the summary as well.

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 your group's Google docs 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 Posts

A few things you should know about the readings for this course:

- You are expected to access readings electronically, either through the Library Course Page 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 x500 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 Canvas).
- You must register on Medscape® - registration information can be found in the Orientation module.

Personal Learning Objectives and Reflections

You will be asked to create personal learning objectives at the beginning of the semester. You will turn these in for instructor review and feedback. As the semester progresses, you will be asked to write three reflections where you will be asked to thoughtfully consider your progress with your personalized learning objectives and respond to course content. Assignment directions are available on the Canvas course site.

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 are available on the Canvas 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.

Points	Percentage	Letter Grade	Points	Percentage	Letter Grade
611-660	93-100	A	505-524	77-79	C+
591-610	90-92	A-	479-504	73-76	C
571-590	87-89	B+	459-478	70-72	C-
545-570	83-86	B	393-458	60-69	D
525-544	80-82	B-	392 or below	0-59	F

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)
- Complete a health insurance billing quiz (up to five points)
- Meeting with a tutor in the Center for Writing for assistance on the grant proposal (up to 7 points added to final grade)
- Receiving a "yes" vote from peer reviewers for funding of the 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 (phar4204@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 an 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 (3 total), not citing an outside source at all or with an incorrect APA citation, and/or not making a substantial contribution (3-4 sentence minimum) to the weekly summary each result in a 5-point penalty (25 points total) to weekly 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 50% 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, phar4204@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 (e.g. discussions) or incompletes for the course will be granted for the following conditions (For more information, see [Administrative Policy: Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences](#)):

- 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 and/or Course Director. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, extensions are generally not 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 the Course Director and Course Coordinator (contact 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".

Disability Accommodations

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, contact the DRC office on your campus 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, 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, contact your access consultant/disability specialist. Additional information is available on the DRC website for each campus:

- [Crookston](#) or email: umcdrc@umn.edu
- [Duluth](#) or email: umddr@d.umn.edu
- [Morris](#) or email: oas@morris.umn.edu
- [Rochester](#) or email: disability@r.umn.edu
- [Twin Cities](#) or e-mail: drc@umn.edu

Mental Health and Stress Management

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 and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the [Student Mental Health website](#).

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; especially in the University setting. For additional information, consult the [Board of Regents Policy on Sexual Harassment](#).

As the course team wishes to create and maintain an open, welcoming, and safe learning environment, we invite you to communicate with us if you feel you are a victim of sexual harassment and you wish to acquire help. We care about your well-being, and we will provide you with the necessary resources to begin the healing process. Although we will do our best to keep the information you share with us private, please be advised that it is mandatory for us to report any disclosures of sexual misconduct to the University. Such reporting is necessary in order for the University to remain in compliance with the Title IX Education Amendments Act.

Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action

The University provided equal access to 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, consult the [Board of Regents Policy on Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action](#).

Student Academic Integrity and Scholastic Dishonesty

You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. 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, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. ([Student Conduct Code](#)) If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. For additional information, review the [Teaching and Learning: Student Responsibilities Administrative Policy](#).

The Office for Community Standards has compiled a useful list of [Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to scholastic dishonesty](#). If you have additional questions, clarify with your instructor for the course. Your instructor will respond to your specific questions regarding what would constitute scholastic dishonesty in the context of a particular class (e.g., whether collaboration on assignments is permitted, requirements and methods for citing sources, if electronic aids are permitted or prohibited during an exam).

Student Writing Support

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.

SWS consultants are teachers of writing: graduate and undergraduate teaching assistants and professional staff. Some consultants specialize in working with non-native speakers, and others have experience with writing in specific disciplines. Find your campus's SWS office information below:

- [Crookston](#)
- [Duluth](#)
- [Morris](#)
- [Rochester](#)
- [Twin Cities](#)

In addition, SWS in the Twin Cities offers a number of [web-based resources](#) on topics such as documenting sources, planning and completing a writing project, and addressing punctuation and grammar questions

Students are encouraged to print off the [U of M student writing guide](#) and use the SWS support services for additional writing help.

Appropriate Student Use of Course Materials

Taking notes is a means of recording information but more importantly of personally absorbing and integrating the educational experience. However, 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. For additional information, review the [Teaching and Learning: Student Responsibilities Administrative Policy](#).

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 your instructor, the Department Chair, your adviser, the associate dean of the college, or the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost.

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 enrolled 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 you have concerns about the visibility of Internet IDs, please contact our office.

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:

1. Computer equipment (including hardware and software)
2. Specific programs (including, but not limited to, Microsoft Word or other word processing software, Microsoft Excel, and Adobe PDF)
3. Reliable internet access
4. 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, Wi-Fi access, etc.
- Contact technology support (this may include one or all the following):
 - [University of Minnesota Technology Help Service Desk](#) is available via phone and email 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and via chat during certain hours.
 - Canvas support: Consult the [Canvas Student Guide website](#), and/or call or chat with a Canvas representation at any time by selecting the Help icon found on the global navigation toolbar found at left-hand side of the screen when you log into the Canvas course site.
 - Local campus support
 - [Crookston](#)
 - [Duluth](#)
 - [Morris](#)
 - [Rochester](#)
 - [Twin Cities](#)

Technology 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 and/or Course Coordinator's discretion.