

## **Opiates –Practice, Policy, Science HCOL 185F-Draft Aug 17**

University Heights North 016 Tuesdays and Thursdays 1005 to 1120

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Hours by appointment- email is best way to reach me

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**Course Description:** We have an opiate epidemic in Vermont. We cannot open a national or local newspaper without seeing stories of deaths, crimes, arrests and celebrity rehabs. Yet we see little about the background - the science, the economics, the policy and politics behind the problem. This full semester seminar series examines and explores the growing problem of opiate use in Vermont by presenting UVM and regional researchers and experts to frame the issues and elucidate the science.

**Learning Objectives:** By the end of the semester students will :

Understand the scope of the opiate problem in Vermont

Be able to read and interpret scientific literature in the field of addiction

Be familiar with the concepts of addiction, recovery, and treatment as well as the public health, economic and policy implications of addiction.

Be familiar with our UVM and Vermont efforts in understanding and managing addiction.

**Readings** will be posted weekly on Blackboard. If you come across anything of interest to the class, please send to me and I'll post it.

**Format:** Two seventy five minute sessions a week. A student-led discussion will comprise a thirty minute segment most sessions.

### **Assignments:**

**1.Relections on Blackboard.** We expect ten of these from each student over the semester. These should be at least one paragraph about something you learned, questioned or surprised you. These will be the part of the basis for the next class discussion, so please try to post five on Monday and five on Wednesday to even out the comments. Use the Discussion Board function. I want these to be public, that is, for each student to see what you wrote. I will do my best to give you feedback on your posts.

**2.A mid-semester essay** about a visit to a treatment facility or a state agency which deals with addiction- you can use this agency or visit as basis of final project. If you like, choose a colleague and work as a pair. Be creative in your format! You may write a traditional paper (7-10 pages, double-spaced, 12 point font) describing the scope and impact of the program, a video of an interview etc. but please come to me to develop the assignment and a work plan. We will have a class session to prepare for this assignment.

**3.A final 7-10 page research paper** on a topic of interest in addiction which may be based on your agency's work. The work should include an introduction, methods, results and conclusions. It must be double-spaced 12 point font with citations. Again, please clear your topic and plan with me. We will have a class session to help you prepare for your research.

4.You will each, individually, or working in pairs, be responsible for a segment of one class session. Sign up for your session will be near the beginning of the semester

**What is Research?** Research is a systematic exploration to produce new knowledge. It should be Feasible, Interesting, Novel, Ethical and Relevant to be worth doing. Your research paper may be a review of what is known in order to answer another question, a proposal for ways of answering a question based on what is known, or interviews and analysis of work in your agency.

**Methods of Evaluation:**

Class Participation - 10%

Weekly reflections - 20%

Midterm visit report 30% - due last class before Thanksgiving break.

Final Paper 40% - due last day of class