

## NVCC COLLEGE-WIDE COURSE CONTENT SUMMARY

### HMS 145 - EFFECTS OF PSYCHOACTIVE DRUGS (3 CR.)

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Provides information on the biochemical, physiological, and behavioral aspects of substance addiction and reviews the symptoms of addiction. Emphasizes areas of chemical dependency, medical epidemiology, physiological threats of addiction, and methods of identifying multiple drug abusers. Lecture 3 hours per week.

#### GENERAL COURSE PURPOSE

To provide the student with a solid background in the physiology of the human brain, and the specifics as to how the brain is affected by the various families of psychoactive drugs. In addition students will become familiar with dangers of drug use, symptoms of use and overdose, and symptoms of withdrawal from the drugs. Students will be introduced to numerous terms used commonly in professional journals and in treatment settings, but with which most students are unfamiliar.

#### ENTRY LEVEL COMPETENCIES

- A. HMS 251, while not a prerequisite, is recommended. Familiarity with the basic concepts of addiction will be helpful.

#### COURSE OBJECTIVES

- A. The student will come to be familiar with the ways the several families of psychoactive drugs are involved in drug abuse/addiction.
- B. How psychoactive drugs are absorbed into the body, distributed, metabolized, and excreted; and how they affect physiology and behavior.
- C. The physiological and psychological basis of tolerance, dependence, and withdrawal will be explored for the major types of abused substances.

#### MAJOR TOPICS TO BE INCLUDED

- A. Absorption, distribution, metabolism and excretion of drugs
- B. The central and peripheral nervous systems
- C. Homeostasis as the basis of CNS Actions Re: Drugs
- D. The five basic ways psychoactive drugs act
- E. The five families of psychoactive drugs
- F. Glossary of new terms

#### EXTRA TOPICS (optional)

- A. Birth control drugs and fertility
- B. Drugs and sports
- C. Methods of drug testing
- D. Scientific basis of drug research