

**Argosy University**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS**

*PC 6250*

*Clinical Psychopharmacology*

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**Faculty Information**

**Faculty Name: Dr. Arinn Testa, Psy.D**

**Campus: San Francisco Bay Area**

**Contact Information: [dr.arinn@yahoo.com](mailto:dr.arinn@yahoo.com)**

**Office Hours: By Appointment**

**Short Faculty Bio:**

**Arinn Testa, PsyD**

The Wright Institute

*Adjunct Faculty, Counseling Psychology and Forensic Psychology*

For several years Dr. Testa worked as a Forensic Psychologist for the Marin County Sheriff's Department fulfilling a research grant awarded by the California Board of Corrections. Her extensive work with forensic populations, with its emphasis on rapid treatment results such as the excessive use of pharmaceuticals, inspired her exploration into the use of Holistic alternatives/complements in therapy. Consequently, Dr. Testa is a certified Doula emphasizing medicinal plant resources and has volunteered with midwives in Central America. To complement this practice she is working on certification as a Holistic Health Practitioner which includes healing through body work and movement. She is the co-founder of an organization that supports the Children's Crisis Center in Modesto, California where she provides pro-bono consultation with families and staff on Clinical and Assessment dimensions. She is among a group of professionals on the Crisis Intervention Team that teaches First Responders the intricate world of mental health. Other areas of specialty that Dr. Testa enjoys are Health Psychology and Trauma Therapy, Neuropsychology, Spirituality and Human Sexuality. She has a private practice in Marin County and is particularly influenced by Jungian, Gestalt and Existential Psychotherapies.

**Argosy Communication:**

If you choose to use an email address other than the assigned Argosy email, please be advised that you do so at your own risk. Any difficulty receiving Argosy emails will be your responsibility.

**Course description:**

An introduction is provided to psychopharmaceutical drugs, their neurochemical basis, their mode of action and their clinical application. Principles of use and current status of psychopharmacology are discussed.

**Course Pre-requisites:** None

**Final Date to Drop the Class:**

To receive a “W” grade a student must officially drop this class by the date listed below that corresponds to this course’s term and length. Students may not withdraw from this course after this date. If a student chooses to discontinue course work after the final drop date, the student may receive an “F” grade for the course.

Spring Session I (7.5 week courses): February 14, 2010

Spring Session II (7.5 week courses): April 7, 2010

Spring Full Term (15 week courses): March 20, 2010

**Required Textbook:**

Preston, J.D., O’Neal, J.H. & Talaga, M.C. (2005). Handbook of psychopharmacology for therapists . Oakland: New Harbinger. ISBN-10: 1572245352

**Technology:** Pentium III CPU/ Windows 98; 128MB RAM, printer; Microsoft Office Acrobat (full version), Microsoft Internet Explorer 5.5 (PC) 5.0 (MAC) or Netscape Navigator 4.08. Norton Antivirus.

**Course length:** 15 Weeks

**Contact Hours:** 45 Hours

**Credit Value:** 3.0

**Methods of Instruction:**

This course will be delivered on-line including lecture, discussion, web-media, and creative learning assignments.

**Program Outcomes: Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology:****Program Outcome One: Professional Practice****Competency 1: Assessment and Skills**

Formulate assessments of psychological functioning and apply therapeutic intervention strategies when working with individuals, couples, families, and groups, toward the development of optimal mental health.

**Competency 2: Theory**

Interpret and apply psychological and developmental theories to therapeutic intervention strategies.

**Competency 3: Writing**

Employ media and technology when presenting counseling information orally and in writing, so that the presentation is concise, organized, well supported, professional, and appropriate to the audience.

**Program Outcome Two: Research**

**Competency 1:** Analyze research, and translate research findings for improvement of counseling services using statistics and program evaluation methods.

**Program Outcome Three: Interpersonal Effectiveness and Professional Development**

**Competency 1:** Students will develop positive relationship skills that promote personal and professional development via effective communication, encouragement, empathy, respect for others, self-awareness, and other-awareness.

- a. Apply active listening communication skills in interpersonal scenarios to establish empathetic relationships.
- b. Analyze the importance of effective nonverbal communication skills in interpersonal relationships.
- c. Solicit and utilize feedback to build and maintain interpersonal relationships.

#### **Program Outcome Four: Ethics**

**Competency 1:** Using the American Counseling Association's Standards of Practice /or the American Psychological Association's Ethical Code, as well as, and local state law as it applies to the behavior of mental health professionals, identify ethical dilemmas and apply ethical decision-making strategies while engaging in professional activities.

#### **Program Outcome Five: Diversity**

##### **Competency 1: Multicultural Skills**

Provide assessment, counseling, and consultation services in work with clients by applying psychological and multicultural theories and research to diverse populations, and modifying interventions as needed to work effectively with diverse clients.

##### **Competency 2: Multicultural Awareness**

Examine personal values and biases, reflect on beliefs, and understand how they impact work with clients and interpersonal relationships with other students and faculty.

##### **Competency 3: Multicultural Knowledge**

Identify and assess the complexity and multidimensionality of cultural/diversity theories and issues in the field of counseling psychology while working with clients and interpersonal relationships with other students and faculty.

## **Course Objectives:**

*\*By the completion of this course students should be familiar with, if not proficient in the following:*

- 1) Psychopharmacokinetics including basic neurophysiology, neuroanatomy and neurochemistry.
- 2) Identifying major classifications of psychotropic drugs, mechanisms of action, and therapeutic/adverse effects.
- 3) Knowledge of historical, social, economic, political and cultural influences on the use of psychiatric medications.
- 4) Defining the therapists role in assessment, management, treatment and collaboration with other medical professionals, family members/friends or other involved parties.
- 5) Understanding ethical/legal issues.
- 6) Creating a framework for considering complementary/alternative interventions for symptoms commonly treated primary with psychotropic medications.

## **Course Outline:**

### **Module One:**

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Integrated Models

Appendix A

### **Module Two:**

Chapter 3: Neurobiology

Chapter 4: Pharmacology

### **Module Three:**

Chapter 5: Preliminary Diagnostic Criteria

Appendix E

### **Module Four:**

Chapter 6: Depressive Disorders

Chapter 15: Antidepressant Medications

**Module Five:**

Chapter 7: Bipolar Disorders

Chapter 16: Bipolar Medications

**Module Six:**

Chapter 8: Anxiety Disorders

Chapter 9: Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

Chapter 17: Anti-anxiety Medications

**Module Seven:**

Chapter 10: Psychotic Disorders

Chapter 18: Antipsychotic Medications

**Module Eight:**

Chapter 11: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Chapter 12: Borderline Personality Disorder

**Module Nine:**

Chapter 13: Substance Related Disorders

**Module Ten:**

Chapter 21: Child and Adolescent Psychopharmacology

**Module Eleven:**

Chapter 14: Other Miscellaneous Disorders

Appendix B

**Module Twelve:**

Chapter 19: Over the Counter Product

**Module Thirteen:**

Chapter 20: Red-Flags: When to Reevaluate  
Review

**Module Fourteen:**

Exam / Submit Final Paper to Turnitin.com

**Module Fifteen:**

Wrap-up

**Course Evaluation:**

*\*Your grade in this course will be based on the following requirements:*

- 1) **Attendance and Class Participation / Creative Learning Assignments** (135 points): Students are expected to engage in on-line discussions and assignments twice per week. Attendance and Participation means that you have read the assigned readings for that module and *if* you are assigned to view a website you have done so prior to engaging in on-line discussions/assignments. You will automatically be dropped from class if you miss more than three modules. If you have an emergency that prevents you from attending the course, please make arrangements with the program office to withdraw.
- 2) **Examination** (50 points): Exam questions will be taken directly from the readings assigned from the text. The questions will be multiple choice and short answer. I will post a study guide under “Doc Sharing” during Module Thirteen.
- 3) **Paper** (100 points): The paper, due Module Fourteen, must be 8-10 pages (not including the title page, abstract, and references), **written in APA format** and include a minimum of five references. All references must be within the last five years unless you clear them with me and must be peer -reviewed journals or a resource that has strong research to support its claims (not Wikipedia or web-blog for instance). It must include the following:
  1. *Historical background of a drug*: Introduce the selected drug and give a brief historical perspective.
  2. *Mechanism of Action*: Also sometimes referred to as Psychopharmacodynamics or Mode of Action in the literature. Discuss the pharmacodynamics of the drug. Include any specific Impacts of the drug at both the cellular and the systemic levels on the CNS.

3. *Psychopharmacokinetics*: Discuss the absorption, distribution, metabolism and elimination of the drug. Include specific events such as blood brain barrier, placental barrier and physiological and psychological reactions and side effects.
4. *Pharmacotherapy*: Indications and Contraindications for this drug. Discuss why and for whom this drug is prescribed. Include relevant psychopathology and psychodiagnostics.
5. *Other forms of therapy*: Provide a list of complementary therapies and alternatives to the drug you have chosen. Please think out of the box here, everything from biofeedback to rebirthing to chewing gum will be accepted (please have a resource to support your claim).

### Grading Criteria

#### *Grading Scale*

<b>A</b>	100 – 93
<b>A-</b>	92 – 90
<b>B+</b>	89 – 88
<b>B</b>	87 – 83
<b>B-</b>	82 – 80
<b>C+</b>	79 – 78
<b>C</b>	77 - 73
<b>C-</b>	72 – 70
<b>D+</b>	69 – 68
<b>D</b>	67 – 63
<b>D-</b>	62 – 60
<b>F</b>	59 and below

#### *Grading requirements*

<i>Attendance/participation</i>	<i>47%</i>
<i>Final paper</i>	<i>35%</i>
<i>Final Exam</i>	<i>18%</i>
<b><i>TOTAL</i></b>	<b><i>100%</i></b>

### Rubric for Grading Papers:

Grade	Requirements
A = 90+	Paper is <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• well thought out with proper grammar/writing skills</li></ul> AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• in appropriate APA format</li></ul> AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• provides <b>excellent</b> coverage of material</li></ul>
B = 80 – 89	Paper is <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• well thought out with proper grammar/writing skills</li></ul> BUT <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• is missing one component of APA format</li></ul> OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• coverage of material is <b>adequate</b></li></ul>
C = 70 – 79	Paper has <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>poor</b> grammar/writing skills present</li></ul> OR (one or more of the following) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• APA format is <b>inadequate</b></li><li>• Insufficient number of references provided</li><li>• <b>limited</b> coverage of material</li></ul>
F = <70	Paper is (one or more of the following) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• disorganized</li><li>• coverage is not adequate</li><li>• does not conform to APA format</li><li>• there is evidence of <b>plagiarism</b></li><li>• paper not submitted</li></ul>

## **Library**

*All resources in Argosy University's online collection are available through the Internet. The campus librarian will provide students with links, user IDs, and passwords.*

Library Resources: Argosy University's core online collection features nearly 21,000 full-text journals and 23,000 electronic books and other content covering all academic subject areas including Business & Economics, Career & General Education, Computers, Engineering & Applied Science, Humanities, Science, Medicine & Allied Health, and Social & Behavior Sciences. Many titles are directly accessible through the Online Public Access Catalog at <http://library.argosy.edu>. Detailed descriptions of online resources are located at <http://library.argosy.edu/misc/onlinedblist.html>.

In addition to online resources, Argosy University's onsite collections contain a wealth of subject-specific research materials searchable in the Online Public Access Catalog. Catalog searching is easily limited to individual campus collections. Alternatively, students can search combined collections of all Argosy University Libraries. Students are encouraged to seek research and reference assistance from campus librarians.

Information Literacy: Argosy University's Information Literacy Tutorial was developed to teach students fundamental and transferable research skills. The tutorial consists of five modules where students learn to select sources appropriate for academic-level research, search periodical indexes and search engines, and evaluate and cite information. In the tutorial, students study concepts and practice them through interactions. At the conclusion of each module, they can test their comprehension and receive immediate feedback. Each module takes less than 20 minutes to complete. Please view the tutorial at <http://library.argosy.edu/infolit/>

## **Academic Policies**

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism: In an effort to foster a spirit of honesty and integrity during the learning process, Argosy University requires that the submission of all course assignments represent the original work produced by that student. All sources must be documented through normal scholarly references/citations and all work must be submitted using the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition (2009)*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association (APA) format. Please refer to Appendix A in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition* for thesis and paper format. Students are encouraged to purchase this manual (required in some courses) and become familiar with its content as well as consult the Argosy University catalog for further information regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism.

Scholarly writing: The faculty at Argosy University is dedicated to providing a learning environment that supports scholarly and ethical writing, free from academic dishonesty and plagiarism. This includes the proper and appropriate referencing of all sources. You may be asked to submit your course assignments through “Turnitin,” ([www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)), an online resource established to help educators develop writing/research skills and detect potential cases of academic dishonesty. Turnitin compares submitted papers to billions of pages of content and provides a comparison report to your instructor. This comparison detects papers that share common information and duplicative language.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act Policy**

It is the policy of Argosy University to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If a student with disabilities needs accommodations, the student must notify the Director of Student Services. Procedures for documenting student disability and the development of reasonable accommodations will be provided to the student upon request.

Students will be notified by the Director of Student Services when each request for accommodation is approved or denied in writing via a designated form. To receive accommodation in class, it is the student’s responsibility to present the form (at his or her discretion) to the instructor. In an effort to protect student privacy, the Department of Student Services will not discuss the accommodation needs of any student with instructors. Faculty may not make accommodations for individuals who have not been approved in this manner.

### **The Argosy University Statement Regarding Diversity**

Argosy University prepares students to serve populations with diverse social, ethnic, economic, and educational experiences. Both the academic and training curricula are designed to provide an environment in which students can develop the skills and attitudes essential to working with people from a wide range of backgrounds.