

**FIRST YEAR SEMINAR FYS 039**  
**A SMALL DOSE OF TOXICOLOGY**  
**SYLLABUS & COURSE POLICIES**  
**FALL 2018**

**Course Faculty:** James Sacco, B.Pharm. (Hons.), M.Phil., Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences  
Office: Fitch Hall, Room 107  
Telephone: 271-2848  
E-mail: [james.sacco@drake.edu](mailto:james.sacco@drake.edu)  
Office hours: by appointment

**Course Description:** Rapid advances in science and technology have produced enormous benefits but have also created undesirable dangers that impact human health and the environment. How do we deal with products that make our lives better but that also harbor a potential for harm? Why are we still confronted, on a daily basis, by toxins in our food, air and water? Through selected readings and movies, class discussions, presentations, and simulation games, students will study and research the controversial impact of poisons on our society.

**Credit hours:** 3 total credit hours

**General Objectives of the FYS** The objectives of the First Year Seminar, as defined by Drake University, are as follows:

- Helps integrates 1<sup>st</sup>-year students into academic culture
- Sharpens students' writing, critical thinking, verbal communication and information literacy
- Focuses on a topic, approach or theme
- Encourages active participation by students in class
- Focuses on ways of knowing as well as content
- Invites connections among several areas of study and discipline
- Aims to establish a sense of community among members

More information at:- <https://www.drake.edu/dc/firstyearseminarfys/>

**Specific Objectives** Through the correct knowledge and use of information literacy, critical thinking, and knowledge ability, a student will be able to:

- Define and explain the fundamental principles of toxicology
- Use toxicological scientific principles to understand current and historic toxic exposure events and their impact on man and the environment
- Demonstrate an understanding of the complexity of interactions between the science of toxicology and societal needs

**Textbooks, slides, readings, and communication:**

**(1) Required Textbooks:**

*A Small Dose of Toxicology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Steven Gilbert. Healthy World Press. 2012. ISBN: 978-0-9833378-3-6. Ebook, available for download at <https://www.asmalldoseoftoxicology.org/free-ebook/>  
*The Poisoner's Handbook*. Deborah Blum. 2010. Penguin Books. ISBN-13: 978-0-14-311882-4.

**(2) Optional Textbooks**

*A Brief History of Poisons*. Peter Macinnis. 2011. Arcade Publishing. ISBN 978-1-62153-257-6

**(3) Lecture resources** such as slides and select readings will be available for download from Blackboard throughout the semester. The slides and textbooks are meant to complement each other; neither will be sufficient by itself. Grades, announcements and other information for this course will be provided via Blackboard - it is your responsibility to regularly check the site. All electronic communications will be sent to your Drake email address only.

**(4) Computer/IPad etc:** A significant part of this course involves retrieving information of toxicological interest from the internet. Therefore online access technology is highly recommended for this course.

**Schedule**

The entire class is scheduled to meet 12:30-1:45 PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays in HI-04. The first few weeks of the course are taught primarily in lecture format. The rest of the semester will involve a variety of classroom activities, including discussions, case studies, watching movies, simulation games and other fun methods of learning. Attendance at all class periods is expected.

**Assessments**

Three student skills will be assessed: critical thinking, writing, and information literacy. While most of the critical thinking and information literacy capabilities of students will be assessed by in-class activities, writing fluency and persuasiveness will be evaluated by several assignments. Some activities will include group work. While students within a group will get the grade awarded to each member of the group, the final grade will depend on student peer review. Therefore all students within a group should actively listen to, and help, one another. **This course involves a considerable amount of writing, both as homework assignments but also as part of in-class activities. Some assignments are short (few sentences to one page), while others will be longer (6-8 pages). In order to improve and deal with any writing problems, you will need to make at least two appointments for a one-on-one tutoring session for the Writing Workshop. The Writing Workshop is located in Howard 227. Appointments are available during both daytime and evening hours. Evening appointments meet in Cowles Library. Questions about the Writing Workshop can be**

answered by calling 271-2729. More information at:  
<https://www.drake.edu/english/studentresources/writingworkshop/>

**GRADES (subject to change)**

In-class activities: 40%  
Homework assignments: 30%  
Papers: 30%  
Extra credit for class participation: Up to 5%

All assignments are due on time. I do realize that illness and other circumstances may prevent you from completing an assignment on time, and therefore I will accept late work twice during the course without assessing a penalty. Each additional late assignment can result in your grade being lowered by one-third of a letter grade.

The dates and topics to be covered in the course are listed in the lecture schedule (p. 4). The schedule is however, flexible and subject to revision.

**Absence from Class**

Students should make every attempt to attend class. In order for an absence to be considered excused (illness, University-approved activity, etc.), the student must immediately notify Dr. Sacco and then submit a written explanation along with supporting evidence (such as a note from a physician) to him as soon as possible. An unexcused absence and/or failure to notify Dr. Sacco of an absence in a timely manner will result in a score of zero for any graded in-class activity occurring on said day.

**Grade Review**

Students will have 7 days after posting of the final grade results to report any errors in grading. No adjustments in scoring will be made after this time period.

**Grading Scale**

I do not assign grades – students earn them. The final grade for the lecture portion of the class for each student will be determined by the percentage of total points earned in the course during the semester. Final grades for the course will be assigned as shown below. Please note that this scale is firm:

A+	97.0-100.0
A	93.0-96.9
A-	90.0-92.9
B+	87.0-89.9
B	83.0-86.9
B-	80.0-82.9
C+	77.0-79.9
C	73.0-76.9
C-	70.0-72.9
D+	67.0-69.9
D	63.0-66.9
D-	60.0-62.9
F (Fail)	≤59.9

## **Academic Assistance**

Students are strongly encouraged to keep up in the reading/studying for this class and to make appointments with the instructor to clarify any material. In addition, students are encouraged to contact the Office of Academic Assistance (271-3752) to seek help with study skills, time management, finding tutorial help, etc.

## **Academic Honesty/Professional Behavior**

All University policies regarding student conduct and academic integrity apply to this class. If you are found to have committed an act of academic dishonesty in relation to this course, you may be assigned an “F” on the assignment or the course. *The expectation in this course is that everyone will treat each other with respect and act in a professional manner in all written, electronic and verbal communications.*

## **Electronic Devices**

Use of laptop computers and other electronic devices is permitted in class *during specified times* to assist learning. The use of any device (including but not limited to phones and mp3 players) that leads to distraction from the learning for other students will not be tolerated, however. Repercussions for inappropriate use are at the discretion of the course instructor.

## **Disability Statement**

It is a policy at Drake University to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal law and state law. Any student with a documented disability who needs accommodation, for example in arrangements for seating, examinations, note taking, should contact Student Disability Services at 271-1835. Once the appropriate documentation is received from the Student Disability Services Office, please provide it to the instructor as soon as possible.

**FIRST YEAR SEMINAR 039**  
**A SMALL DOSE OF TOXICOLOGY**  
**FALL 2018**

**Lecture: T, R 12:30 – 1:45 pm HI-4**

Class date	Topic	Readings	
		SDT	TPH
28-Aug	Course introduction	8-16	
30-Aug	The king of poisons	41-45	
04-Sep	Library Instruction		
06-Sep	The dose makes the poison	21-31, 154-58	
11-Sep	The dose makes the poison	21-31	
13-Sep	What chemicals do to us and we to them	31-36	
18-Sep	What chemicals do to us and we to them		
20-Sep	A risky business	28-29, 36-40	
25-Sep	Bitter almonds		1-26
27-Sep	The enemy within	245-256	50-74
02-Oct	Our favorite poison	46-56	128-151
04-Oct	Occupational hazards	95-106	196-224
09-Oct	Radiation alert	154-166	120-124
11-Oct	Monster makers		176-195
16-Oct	Fall Break		
18-Oct	No class		
23-Oct	Natural Born Killers	186-203	
25-Oct	Environmental toxicology/STS tool		
30-Oct	Blood, Sweat, and Tears	78-94	
01-Nov	Blood, Sweat, and Tears	78-94	
06-Nov	To the Ends of the Earth	167-185	
08-Nov	Hormone Havoc	167-185	
13-Nov	Our Stolen Future	129-153	
15-Nov	Cancer clusters	145-153	
20-Nov	First the cats died/Tuna for lunch	108-120	
22-Nov	Thanksgiving Break		
27-Nov	From poisons to cures		
29-Nov	Food additives/ sodium nitrite		
04-Dec	Simulation game		
06-Dec	Simulation game		

Note: The schedule is subject to change