

FIRST YEAR SEMINAR FYS 039
A SMALL DOSE OF TOXICOLOGY
SYLLABUS & COURSE POLICIES
FALL 2020

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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 1st-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, 2nd 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 one 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.

COVID-19 Policies 2020

- **Masks and Social Distancing:** When we do meet in person, we will all wear masks and maintain social distance to minimize the likelihood of the spread of the novel coronavirus. Doing so is not only a requirement in my class, but is also a campus-wide policy. I will ask those who choose not to wear a mask to leave the classroom and, following guidance from the Provost's office, I will alert the dean of students' office. As a last resort, if a student without a mask refuses to leave class, I will contact Drake Public Safety.
 - **Please note:** Faculty have authority to insist that students adhere to masking and social-distancing requirements in accordance with University policy. Remember that if students do not do so, there is a risk of your whole class being required to move to a virtual modality for two weeks or more should someone in the room test positive. (Being in the presence of a someone who tests positive *if at distance and everyone is masked* does not constitute "exposure" for the purposes of requiring quarantine.)
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- **Camera Use for Virtual Attendees:** A substantial part of your learning in this course will depend on your active and attentive engagement in class discussions and other collaborative learning opportunities. I strongly encourage you to turn on your camera during collaborative exchanges to help sustain a sense of community and co-presence as we learn together. However, doing so is not required; if you have reservations about doing so, please let me know in advance so I can plan accordingly.
- **Instructions for Students who Test Positive:** If you test positive for Covid-19 or have been exposed and need to isolate yourself, please send an email to dos@drake.edu from your Drake email account and include your full name and student ID along with information about your situation. College and schools' deans' offices will then contact your professors, who will work with you to provide fully virtual learning opportunities during your quarantine and/or recovery. If possible, however, please also alert me directly that you will begin attending virtually, and I will work with you to help you make the transition to that modality. You do not need to tell me why you need to move to a virtual experience.
- **Instructions for Students about Self-Monitoring and Experiencing symptoms.** Please carefully monitor your own health and wellbeing throughout the semester, including frequently taking your own temperature. If you experience [Covid-19 symptoms](#) or a fever, even if you do not test positive, *please do not come to an in-person class meeting*. In addition to alerting the dean of students' office at dos@drake.edu, please alert me that you will begin attending virtually, and I will work with you to help you make the transition. You do not need to tell me why you need to move to a virtual experience.

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Lecture: T, R 12:30 – 1:45 pm HI-4

Class date	Week	Topic	Readings	Readings
			SDT	TPH
25-Aug	1	Course introduction (remote)	8-16	
27-Aug		Course introduction (remote)	8-16	
01-Sep	2	The king of poisons	41-45	
03-Sep		The king of poisons	41-45	
08-Sep	3	The dose makes the poison	21-31, 154-58	
10-Sep		The dose makes the poison	21-31	
15-Sep	4	<i>Library Instruction (Zoom session)</i>		
17-Sep		What chemicals do to us and we to them	31-36	
22-Sep	5	What chemicals do to us and we to them	31-36	
24-Sep		A risky business	28-29, 36-40	
29-Sep	6	A risky business	28-29, 36-40	
01-Oct		The Poison Game		1-25
06-Oct	7	Bitter almonds – Cyanide		50-74
08-Oct		The enemy within – Arsenic		75-102
13-Oct	8	Fatal drinking - Methanol		196-224
15-Oct		Food contaminants		
20-Oct	9	Food contaminants		
22-Oct		Food additives		
27-Oct	10	Food additives		
29-Oct		Toxic metals – lead, mercury		120-124
03-Nov	11	Toxic metals – chromium, radium		176-195
05-Nov		Household poisons – CO		128-151
10-Nov	12	Household poisons – radon		
12-Nov		To the ends of the Earth -pesticides		
17-Nov	13	To the ends of the Earth -pesticides		
19-Nov		Pizza party?		
24-Nov	14	Thanksgiving Break		
26-Nov		Thanksgiving Break		
01-Dec	15	Hormone havoc – EDCs (remote)		
03-Dec		Hormone havoc – EDCs (remote)		

Note: The schedule is subject to change