



PSYCHOL 2021A (570)
Addictive Behaviours
Fall/Winter 2026 - 2027

Instructor: Dr. Laura Rosen
Email: laura.rosen@uwo.ca

Course Information

Mode of Instruction: in-person

Calendar Description: Overview of addictive behaviors and issues concerning addiction. Addictive aspects of drug use, gambling, eating, exercise, sex, playing video games, and Internet use will be considered as well as psychological research, explanations for, and treatment of addictive behaviours.

Prerequisite(s): None

Antirequisite(s): None

Extra Information: 3 lecture hours.

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: Category A

Subject Code: PSYCHOL

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

King's University College
Psych 2021A – Addictive Behaviours
Fall 2026

Course information:

Addictive Behaviours, Psych 2021A (570)

Instructor(s): Dr. Laura Rosen

Contact Information: laura.rosen@uwo.ca

Office hours: See Brightspace

Course description:

Overview of addictive behaviors and issues concerning addiction. Addictive aspects of drug use, gambling, eating, exercise, sex, playing video games, and Internet use will be considered as well as psychological research, explanations for, and treatment of addictive behaviours.

Course learning outcomes:

This course provides a general overview of substance use disorders, behavioural addictions, and an introduction to theories underlying these topics. The course will also discuss some historical context and current discourse that shapes our understanding of addictive behaviours. By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Describe commonly abused substances, their effects, and risks
- Compare and contrast the risk factors, emergence, presentation, diagnosis and treatment of substance use disorders and behavioural addictions
- Understand the complexities of diagnosing, treating, and preventing the occurrence of addictive behaviours
- Understand the intersection of addiction, mental health disorders, poverty and homelessness
- Critically evaluate commonly held beliefs about addiction and addictive behaviours
- Challenge dogma that does not adequately account for the complexity and intersectionality of addiction and addictive behaviours

To gain the most from this course, students are expected to engage with all course content and activity. Students are responsible for monitoring their email and the OWL Brightspace page for updates, announcements, due dates and assignment instructions.

This class will include lectures, exercises and discussions. Students are highly encouraged to complete assigned readings before class so they may participate meaningfully in discussions and ask questions about course material.

Students are responsible for learning material in lectures and readings. Lectures will include information not covered in the readings, so students are encouraged to attend all classes.

Mode of Instruction: In-person

Course textbooks/materials:

Course reading information will be listed on Brightspace. There is no textbook to purchase for this course.

A phone, laptop, or tablet with internet access is required to take part in the iClicker questions. A computer with internet access is required for accessing the course Brightspace page and for completing and submitting assignments.

Students will be required to install the iClicker software on their phone, laptop, or tablet for answering questions and polls in-class. This software is free of charge and can be used on a mobile device or in a web browser. Students who wish to purchase a clicker device may do so at an extra cost. More information can be found at:

https://presswestern.uwo.ca/students_and_audience/index.html

When registering for iClicker, make sure to use your name as it appears *on your student card* and your UWO email address only.

Methods of evaluation:

Grades in the course will be based on the items listed below. Grades will **not** be adjusted on the basis of need. **There is no option to re-write tests or exams, or to re-submit assignments to earn a higher grade.** There are no extra credit assignments available to raise final grades. Students are responsible for knowing the dates, times, and locations of assignment deadlines and exams. Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day late.

iClicker Participation and Mini-Quizzes (8%; total of 1% per class excluding Oct 27 & Nov 17)

- Participation for each class is worth 0.5% to a maximum of 4% (i.e., each student has one “free” class they can miss with no penalty to their overall participation grade)
- Participation includes answering polls
- An additional 0.5% *per class* is allocated to 5 question mini-quizzes
- Each iClicker question will clearly state whether it is being graded for participation only, or for marks
- There will be no participation grades for the week of the guest lecture, the midterm, or the case study

In-Class Case Studies – 20%

- Students will be presented with “case studies” and will be responsible for answering a set of guided questions individually
- This assessment will be closed-book
- Further instructions about the case studies will be discussed in class and posted to the course Brightspace site

Guest Lecture Reflection – 5%

Students will write a 500-750 word reflection about the guest lecture and **submit it to Brightspace on October 30th by 11:59 pm**. More information about the reflection will be discussed in class and posted to Brightspace.

Midterm Exam – 32%

The midterm exam will be held during class time in the regular classroom. Questions will cover material from the lectures, text, and any additional videos shown in class. The format will be multiple-choice. You will be given 2 hours. The makeup date for this assessment will be Friday, October 30th. Please note, Friday Make-Up Exams may only be written with the instructor's consent.

Final Exam – 35%

The final exam will be held during the December exam period (date, time, and location to be scheduled by the Registrar's Office). The final exam will cover lecture material and readings from the whole course but will focus much more heavily on the material that was covered after the midterm (i.e., from November 3rd onwards, and not including the guest lecture). The format will be multiple-choice. You will be given 3 hours.

Exams will not be returned to students but may be reviewed by appointment or in office hours. Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams will be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Academic Considerations:

All students are expected to attend class and complete course work on time. Meeting deadlines will help to ensure you stay on track in the course and is a skill that is important within and beyond your formal schooling. There, of course, may be unexpected situations that prohibit students from attending class or submitting work on time.

Academic consideration requests with documentation are required for the midterm exam.

iClicker participation is a best 8 of 9 marks (0.5% for participation and a max of 0.5% on mini quizzes per class, to a maximum of 8 classes). iClicker participation marks are not based on the number of questions you answer correctly (many of the questions are opinion-based!). As long as you attend class and answer all the questions, you will receive your full participation grade. Mini quizzes will be graded. Because only the best 8 participation and mini-quiz grades will be used in the final grade, **there are no makeups for iClicker participation grades or mini quizzes**. You are welcome to use your academic consideration with no documentation for participation and quiz grades, but students are **highly** encouraged to use this request (if needed) for higher-stakes assignments that are worth more towards their final grade.

Extenuating circumstances (i.e., extended illness or leave) should **always** be brought to the attention of your instructor to ensure that timely accommodations can be made. When in doubt, **reach out to your instructor as soon as possible**.

Academic Integrity:

- Scholastic discipline follows Western policies. Please review them [here](#)
- **Note:** All written assignments will be subject to screening through Turnitin
- Generative AI and translation tools are **not permitted** in this course, in line with the Department of Psychology policy on AI tools (see below).
- Computer-marked multiple-choice exams will be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Schedule of Classes, Readings, Assessments:

Date	Topic	Reading
Sep 15, 2026	Why people use drugs and alcohol	Reading 1
Sep 22, 2026	Putting drugs in perspective	Reading 2
Sep 29, 2026	Assessment of drug abuse, dependence, & addictions	Reading 3
Oct 6, 2026	Drug-specific information	Reading 4
Oct 13, 2026	Fall Reading Week	
Oct 20, 2026	Midterm Exam	
Oct 27, 2026	Guest lecture	Optional (see Brightspace)
Nov 3, 2026	Gambling and exercise addictions	Reading 6
Nov 10, 2026	Food, sex, internet & other behavioural addictions	Reading 7
Nov 17, 2026	In-class case studies	
Nov 24, 2026	Motivation and change, intervention	Reading 8
Dec 1, 2026	Treatment and recovery	Reading 9
Dec 8, 2026	Relapse and prevention	Reading 10
TBD	Final Exam	

Note: Changes to the above schedule will be announced on Brightspace. Students are responsible for being aware of announcements made online.

Last date to drop a first-term half course without academic penalty: **Nov 30, 2026**

Department of Psychology Policies Related to AI Tools

1. Policy on the Use of Generative AI Tools

The Department of Psychology expects that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial).

The use of generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT) is not permitted for any submitted coursework unless express permission has been granted by your instructor.

Students **should not have AI tools write any part of their assignments or papers, either by copying and pasting or by paraphrasing the output.** Unauthorized use of AI constitutes an academic offence and will be subject to academic discipline.

Additional information: Students can use AI tools to clarify questions they have about course content (e.g., you can ask ChatGPT about a course concept to help with your understanding), but students should be aware that the response may be inaccurate or inconsistent with the course content. Asking your instructor is a more effective strategy. Students should note that information provided by AI tools such as ChatGPT can include mistakes, inaccuracies, biases, and outdated information. Whenever these tools are used, students should cross-verify the information provided to them. This means verifying that the sources used by AI exist and have been accurately summarized, consulting multiple original and reputable up-to-date sources to verify information, and being cautious of bias that could be present in the information provided.

2. Policy on Use of Translation Tools*

The Department of Psychology views the unapproved use of translation or language applications as an academic offence.

Any usage of translation applications or language generation by students to complete specific assigned work for this course **must be approved** by the instructor **prior** to submitting the work **and noted by the student in the submitted work** itself.

Writing text and then feeding it into a computer application to improve or translate your own words, changing a few words, and then submitting this text as if it was your own **constitutes plagiarism.** You must compose text, choose words, construct logic flow, structure sentences and paragraphs to organize, synthesize, interpret information with your own mind. When you borrow language or ideas from another person or from a machine this must be acknowledged with quotation marks and/or citations.

Why do we have this policy?

- Translation is intellectual work and produces intellectual property, thus any text which is translated must cite the translator.
- Psychology endeavors to advance students' linguistic, analytic, and reasoning competencies – this can not happen outside of specific language competencies.
- Earning a university degree signals that an individual has advanced literacy and communicative skill in the language of instruction at the university; this is English at King's University College at Western University. If translation machines are used by students without regulation, we will have no way of certifying whether these competencies exist and fewer mechanism for encouraging students to do the hard work to develop them.

** Based on the policy developed by the Department of Child and Youth Studies*

**KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2026-27**

1. Academic Accommodations (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found at [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

2. Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students must be approved to write a makeup exam or for an extension of the assignment deadline. If you need to miss an exam or the deadline for the assignment, please follow these instructions.

There are two ways to seek academic consideration:

(i) Academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate grounds), they should contact the Academic Advising Office. As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration.

For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation. The SMC is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

- King's students: The Academic Advising Office website is located in DLH 104. The Academic Advising website is <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>.
- If your home faculty is Huron or at Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- Requests must be made as soon as possible, and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

You may submit requests for academic consideration through the **Student Absence Portal**, linked on this website: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>.

(ii) Academic consideration through an undocumented absence

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per half-course (0.5) weight.

- Note that instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline to confirm this which assessment has been designated as requiring documentation for consideration (that is, exempt from undocumented absences).
- Undocumented absences can not be used as the basis for academic consideration for December or April exams.

If an instructor has built flexibility into their assessments (e.g., “complete 8 of 10 quizzes”), this flexibility will already address consideration needs and thus academic consideration may be denied.

For further information on the academic consideration policy, please see https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

c) Absences from Final Exams

If you miss the Final Exam, **contact your Academic Advising Office** as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the “Special Examination” (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a multiple exam situation (i.e., you are scheduled to write more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

d) Religious Accommodations

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and their Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

3. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:
<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/accessibility-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College:
<https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

Good2talk is an online and phone resource for students, available 24/7, with services in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options on how to obtain help:

<https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/academics/academic-supports/>

4. Statement on Gender-Based Sexual Violence

King's and Western are committed to reducing incidents of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [Mental Health and Wellness at King's](#).

You can reach supports at King's by emailing care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a Social Worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email (health@uwo.ca) or by calling 519-661-3568. Additional support services can be found <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/support/index.html>

5. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see https://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings_Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

6. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. **Check with you instructor to check which tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in each course.** Note that although some courses may permit the use of such tools, it does not mean use of such tools is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

7. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

8. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

9. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.