UAB
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Drug Addictions

Code: 106130
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Nursing	OT	4

Contact

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Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the end of this document.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites, but it is recommended to have taken the subjects of: Psychosocial Sciences
Therapeutic Communication
Methodological Bases of Nursing
Scientific Methodology and Biostatistics

Objectives and Contextualisation

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To develop advanced clinical and theoretical competencies for autonomously identifying, assessing, and intervening in substance and behavioral addictions from a nursing perspective, integrating neurobiological knowledge, mental health care, prevention, and therapeutic approaches with a person-centered biopsychosocial model.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. Analyze the neurobiological foundations of addiction, including brain reward circuits, synaptic plasticity, and the mechanisms involving dopamine, glutamate, and other neurotransmitters involved in dependence.

2. Identify clinical characteristics and consumption patterns of major psychoactive substances (alcohol, opioids, stimulants, depressants, hallucinogens, and cannabinoids), as well as non-substance-related addictions (e.g., gambling disorder, problematic screen use).

3. Conduct comprehensive nursing assessments of individuals with addictions, based on a harm reduction and biopsychosocial model, using specific tools (NIC/NOC outcomes, validated scales, motivational interviewing, etc.).

4. Apply autonomous and specific nursing interventions focused on prevention, early detection, brief intervention, health education, and support during detoxification and social reintegration processes, in coordination with care networks.

5. Critically reflect on stigma, social determinants of health, and the impact of drug policies on individuals who use substances, with special attention to vulnerable populations.

6. Understand the models and healthcare resources for addressing addictions (Addiction Care Services, day centers, therapeutic communities, harm reduction teams, home interventions…), and the coordinating role of nurses within these contexts.

7. Develop advanced communication and therapeutic skills, including motivational interviewing, helping relationships, emotional regulation, and fostering patient autonomy as a core principle of nursing care.

Competences

- Act with ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties, diversity and democratic values.
- Apply the main foundations and theoretical and methodological principles of nursing.
- Base nursing interventions on scientific evidence and the available media.
- "Demonstrate an understanding of people without prejudice: consider physical, psychological and social aspects, as independent individuals; ensure that their opinions, values and beliefs are respected and guarantee their right to privacy, through trust and professional secrecy."
- Demonstrate that the interactive behaviour of the person is understood according to their gender, social group or community, within a social and multicultural context.
- Design systems for curing aimed at people, families or groups and evaluate their impact, making any necessary changes.
- Make changes to methods and processes in the area of knowledge in order to provide innovative responses to society's needs and demands.
- Plan and carry out nursing care aimed at people, families and groups orientated to health results and evaluate the impact of them using clinical and care practice guides describing the processes for the diagnosis, treatment or cure of a health problem.

Learning Outcomes

1. Acquire and use the necessary instruments for developing a critical and reflective attitude.
2. Analyse nursing interventions justifying them with scientific evidence and/or expert opinions that support them.
3. Apply the nursing process to offer and guarantee the wellbeing, quality and safety of the people receiving the care.
4. Describe the different theoretical models of nursing care.
5. Identify guides for clinical and care practice related to caring for the health demands of people during the whole life cycle and in changes which may occur.
6. Identify nursing care actions that respect the principles of ethical responsibility, fundamental rights and responsibilities, diversity and democratic values.
7. Identify the different stages of the nursing process and its specific application as a response to people with changing health.
8. Identify the factors that determine health and the problems related to surroundings to be able to offer care to people with different situations of health and illness as members of a community.
9. Identify the guides for clinical practice specific to each stage of the life cycle.
10. Identify the importance of cultural competence in nursing care.
11. Indicate measures to measures to ensure respect for opinions, beliefs and values without passing value judgements.
12. Propose measures to ensure respect for opinions, beliefs and values without passing value judgements.
13. Resolve nursing problems and collaboration problems using clinical histories, applying nursing methodology and current standardised languages.

Content

Module 1. Theoretical and neurobiological foundations of addictions

Topic 1. Introduction to addictions

- Classification of addictions: substance-related and non-substance-related
- Biopsychosocial model and social determinants of health
- Concept of stigma and social exclusion

Topic 2. Neurobiology of addictions

- Brain reward circuits: dopamine, glutamate, limbic system
- Synaptic plasticity and reinforcement mechanisms
- Neurobiological bases of tolerance, dependence, and craving

Module 2. Psychoactive substances and consumption patterns in Catalonia

Topic 3. Legal and illegal substances

- Alcohol, tobacco, benzodiazepines
- Cannabis, cocaine, heroin, amphetamines, psychedelics

Topic 4. Behavioral addictions

- Gambling disorder, problematic use of screens and social media
- Disorders related to eating behavior and compulsive shopping

Topic 5. Epidemiology and Catalan context

- Data from the Drug and Addictions Plan of Catalonia (General Subdirectorate of Drug Dependencies)
- User profiles and barriers to service access
- Cultural, social, and gender factors in consumption

Module 3. Nursing assessment and diagnostic approach in addiction care

Topic 6. Comprehensive nursing assessment in addictions

- Exploratory interview techniques and active listening
- Identifying motivational stages of change and readiness for treatment
- Assessment of emotional state, lifestyle, social environment, and support networks
- Observational tools: communication style, somatic signs, and behavioral patterns

Topic 7. Interdisciplinary care planning and creative clinical reasoning

- Identifying priorities based on individual narratives
- Building therapeutic relationships and co-creating care pathways
- Use of reflective practice and case supervision to support professional decision-making
- Narrative approaches, lifeline exercises, and visual mapping of support systems

Module 4. Autonomous nursing interventions and therapeutic approach

Topic 8. Interventions in prevention and early detection

- Brief intervention and motivational interviewing

- Health education in schools, workplaces, and community settings

- Harm reduction strategies

Topic 9. Clinical nursing intervention in specialized care settings

- Care in Addiction Care and Follow-Up Centers (CAS)

- Role of the nurse in harm reduction and outpatient teams

- Coordination with mental health networks and social services

Topic 10. Therapeutic relationship and motivational interview

- Communicative and empathetic skills

- Promotion of autonomy and behavioral change

- Support in relapses and emotional accompaniment

Module 5. Rehabilitation, reintegration and resources of the Catalan network

Topic 11. Rehabilitation and social reintegration

- Phases of the therapeutic process: detoxification, withdrawal, maintenance

- Community reinforcement and socio-occupational support

- Reintegration projects led by nurses in residential and community settings

Topic 12. Network of addiction care resources in Catalonia

- Public network devices: CAS, CT, mental health services, therapeutic communities

- Intersectoral strategies: health, education, judicial and social sectors

- Nurse's role in coordination and comprehensive care

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Theoretical classes	49.5	1.98	1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 6, 9, 10, 7, 5, 11, 12, 13
Type: Autonomous			
PREPARATION OF WORK / PERSONAL STUDY / READING OF ARTICLES / REPORTS OF INTEREST	96	3.84	2, 3

This subject will be taught through theoretical classes, but also through the discussion of clinical cases related to

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Group work on the narrative of a situation	15%	1	0.04	2, 3, 9
Knowledge test	50%	1.5	0.06	1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 6, 9, 10, 7, 5, 11, 12, 13
Presentation of a theme	15%	1	0.04	1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 6, 9, 10, 7, 5, 11, 12
Team work	20%	1	0.04	1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 6, 9, 10, 7, 5, 11, 12, 13

This course does not contemplate the single evaluation system.

The evaluation will consist of 4 evaluative moments:
1. Knowledge exam that will account for 50% of the grade for the subject
2. Group work, will consist of the analysis of a clinical case related to the
3. Group work on the narrative of a situation: it will be indicated to watch
4. Presentation of a topic: it will consist of presenting in an original way a
Attendance is mandatory, failure in 2 of the activities will mean failing the
Disrespect to classmates, classmates or teachers / professors will not be
Any indication of plagiarism or dishonesty will mean failing the course.
Recovery: students who have not passed the subject by continuous evalu
-have attended at least 75% of the sessions
-That they have a positive evaluation in the group work and the work on t
-that they have completed all the evaluative tests
They may present themselves for a final recovery test
Ratings:
According to the agreement 4.4 of the Consell del Govern 17/1172010 of
Suspended: 0 to 4.9
Approved: 5 to 6.9
Notable: 7 to 8.9
Excellent: 9 to 10

The subject will be considered Not Evaluable when the student has not presented sufficient evaluation evidence:

1-Not having attended at least 75% of the sessions

2-That they have a negative assessment in group work and in the work of narrating the situation

3-they have not passed all the evaluative tests

An honors degree will only be assignedto those students who, being amon

The same "not assessable" criteria will be applied as for continuous assessment.
This course does not include a single evaluation system.

Use of AI
In this course, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is permitted as an integral part of the development of coursework, provided that the final result reflects a significant contribution from the student in terms of analysis and personal reflection. The student must clearly identify which parts were generated using such technology, specify the tools used, and include a critical reflection on how these tools influenced both the process and the final outcome of the activity. Lack of transparency regarding the use of AI will be considered a breach of academic integrity and may result in a penalty in the activity's grade or more serious sanctions in severe cases.

IMPORTANT

In accordance with Article 510 of the Spanish Criminal Code, which penalizes hate crimes, and consistent with the fundamental values enshrined in the Spanish Constitution (Articles 10 and 14) regarding human dignity and equality, no expressions, behaviors or discourses that are discriminatory towards individuals or groups based on race, gender, sexual orientation or identity, religion, nationality, disability, mental health status, or any other personal or social condition will be tolerated in this course.

In line with the provisions of Law 3/2007 on effective equality between women and men, Law 4/2023 on the real and effective equality of trans peopleand the guarantee of LGTBI rights, and the ethical codes of conduct of the university, any breach of these principles may result in a failing grade in the course and, if necessary, referral to the competent institutional authorities for disciplinary evaluation.

This framework is also grounded in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, particularly Articles 1 (Human dignity), 20 (Equality before the law), and 21 (Non-discrimination).

Bibliography

Considering that one of the general skills that the student is expected to acquire is to develop strategies for indep

Software

It is not necessary to have any computer program for this subject.

Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this link. To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(TE) Theory	301	Catalan	annual	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	501	Catalan/Spanish	annual	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	601	Catalan/Spanish	annual	morning-mixed