What Is Psychology of Substance Abuse?
The Department of Psychology offers Psychology of Substance Abuse courses for students interested in studying and working with addiction. Psychology of Substance Abuse courses are open to Psychology majors as well as other majors. A strength of the Psychology of Substance Abuse program is unifying themes, skills, and research in substance abuse with other areas within the Department of Psychology (i.e., clinical and social psychology, forensics, and neuroscience). Psychology of Substance Abuse is an overarching program of training and research in behavioral health interventions. This sequence of courses provides students with well-rounded training in psychology, clinical skills, assessment, and research of substance abuse and is ideal for holistic approaches to addiction, including empirically based treatments, the influence of context on addictive tendencies, and the complexities of addiction such as co-occurring medical or psychological disorders.

What Is the Purpose of Studying Psychology of Substance Abuse?
Interested students can pursue academic coursework and fieldwork in preparation for possible employment and/or a career in the field of addictions. Psychology of Substance Abuse courses, when taken as a sequence, are intended to prepare students to test for individual certification and employment in alcohol and drug counseling jobs. Please explore the certification process through the IAODAPCA website (iaodapca.org) for further information.

Students who do not wish to obtain employment as substance abuse counselors can also benefit from studying Psychology of Substance Abuse as documented training and experience in addiction will be very applicable to the pursuit of graduate training in clinical or counseling psychology or related fields, or to enter other areas of employment such as in the pharmaceutical industry.

Facilities
The Psychology of Substance Abuse sequence is housed within the Department of Psychology in Waggoner Hall, which provides access to teaching, clinical training, and research facilities. Waggoner Hall has observation rooms, group meeting or conference rooms, and psychology training clinic facilities. There are several student lounges, and three computer labs are available. The Psychology department also has a resource library of books, videos, and other tools for students in this program to utilize.

After Graduating
Students specializing in substance abuse may be employed in a variety of fields and settings. Individuals with Psychology of Substance Abuse training can be employed in outpatient and inpatient treatment facilities, healthcare agencies and organizations, corrections facilities, and government agencies. Substance abuse-related employment is expected to grow much faster than average compared to other careers in the next 10 years. Job prospects are considered good for students with a college degree and substance abuse training who can document education and field experience in working with addiction.

Research
Opportunities to conduct research on drug use and prevention are available to students. Recent faculty research topics have included drug use patterns, smoking, alcohol use, associations of drug use with mental health, risks or predictors of drug use and relapse, neurobiological basis of drug use, and behavioral pharmacology. Students often present research at conferences along with faculty.
Substance Abuse Course Sequence

The following are the current courses in the substance abuse sequence:

1. **PSY 334 Perspectives on Substance Abuse (3 s.h.)** – This course is designed to provide students with a usable framework regarding the nature of substance abuse and dependence. Students will explore various perspectives on substance use as well as current issues in its diagnosis and treatment. Prerequisites: PSY 100 and 251, or permission of instructor

2. **PSY 335 Substance Abuse Assessment, Education and Case Management (3 s.h.)** – This course is designed to provide an understanding of the roles of assessment, education, and case management in substance abuse treatment settings. Prerequisite: PSY 334

3. **PSY 336 Ethics and Special Populations in Substance Abuse Treatment (3 s.h.)** – This course is designed to familiarize students with relevant ethical and practice guidelines in substance abuse treatment, as well as with issues vital to effectively working with diverse populations. Prerequisites: PSY 100 and 251

4. **PSY 434 Substance Abuse Treatment Approaches and Techniques I (3 s.h.)** – This course is designed to provide an introduction to basic therapy and counseling skills that are utilized in the treatment of substance abuse as well as current brief therapy approaches. Prerequisite: PSY 334

5. **PSY 435 Substance Abuse Treatment Approaches and Techniques II (3 s.h.)** – This course is designed as an extension of Substance Abuse Treatment Approaches and Techniques I. Through more extensive examination of theory, research, and practice, students will be provided with information that guides the understanding and treatment of substance abuse problems. Prerequisite: PSY 434

6. **PSY 436 Substance Abuse Practicum (3 s.h.)** – This practicum will provide an opportunity for students to develop their individual and/or group substance abuse assessment and treatment skills through supervised work in a treatment center. Prerequisites: PSY 336 and 435, or permission of instructor

7. **Directed Electives** – At least 3 additional semester hours in an educational area that include assessment, case management, professional responsibility, counseling, client, family, and community education, or alcohol and other drug specific knowledge. This includes the following courses:
   - PSY 380 Clinical Psychology (3 s.h.)
   - PSY 424 Abnormal Psychology (3 s.h.)
   - PSY 442 Principles of Behavior Modification (3 s.h.)
   - PSY 444 Biopsychology of Drugs and Addiction (3 s.h.)
   - PSY 454 Psychological Tests and Measurements (3 s.h.)
   - PSY 460 or 463 (lab experience or readings must be in the Substance Abuse area; PSY 460 and 463 may account for a total of 3 s.h.)

Other Unique Opportunities or Features

Besides assisting in research projects, Psychology students have opportunities for extensive contact with faculty through individual readings, undergraduate seminars, and departmental committee memberships. Psychology students can join the Psychology Club or its companion organization Psi Chi, the national honor society in psychology. These organizations publish a newsletter; put on social activities; and sponsor educational events such as lectures, field trips, and programs on careers and graduate school.

Students pursuing substance abuse training have opportunities to complete practicum or other volunteer experiences at campus and community agencies which specialize in substance abuse treatment or prevention. Practicum sites have been arranged with area hospitals, mental health agencies, and the Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Resource Center on campus to provide additional, practical training in working with substance abuse. The BAC (Battle Alcohol Consequences) Squad also offers peer education experience in promoting healthy and responsible decision-making in regards to alcohol and other drug consumption. The Step Up Program through the AOD Center is another training opportunity available to students, which provides information and skills in responding to others’ concerns; prosocial behavior; alcohol awareness (i.e., unsafe drinking); and topics such as eating disorders, gambling, domestic and sexual assault, discrimination, and dealing with anger or depression. See wiu.edu/student_services/aod/step_up_program/index.php.

Students can also earn credit and gain valuable paraprofessional experience by participating in HOTLINE, a student-run crisis intervention telephone service.

For More Information

For more information, visit our website at wiu.edu/cas/psychology/SubstanceAbuse.php or our facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/substanceabuseconcentration.

The Department of Psychology can be contacted by telephone at (309) 298-1593, by e-mail at psychology@wiu.edu, or by fax at (309) 298-2179.