



Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - 2024-2025

Exchange

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam offers many English-taught courses in a variety of subjects, ranging from arts & culture and social sciences, neurosciences and computer science, to economics and business administration.

The International Office is responsible for course approval and course registration for exchange students. For details about course registration, requirements, credits, semesters and so on, please [visit the exchange programmes webpages](#).

Behaviour and the Brain part 1: Addiction

Course Code	P_BBAA_1
Credits	6
Period	P5
Course Level	200
Language Of Tuition	English
Faculty	Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sc.
Course Coordinator	dr. M.J. Gevonden
Examiner	dr. M.J. Gevonden
Teaching Staff	dr. M.J. Gevonden
Teaching method(s)	Written partial exam, Lecture, Study Group

Course Objective

By the end of this course you will have learned to

- Evaluate the short-term benefits and long-term consequences of drug use on human behavior and health, demonstrating comprehension and analysis of related factors.
- Explain the interconnected biological, psychological, and social factors influencing behavior, with a specific emphasis on drug use and addiction, demonstrating comprehension and application of theoretical frameworks.
- Critique the role of research in advancing understanding of biopsychosocial factors in drug use and addiction, demonstrating synthesis and evaluation of research outcomes.
- Apply methods for collecting and analyzing data pertaining to human behavior, demonstrating competence in data acquisition and interpretation.
- Demonstrate proficiency in communicating scientific knowledge through effective presentation techniques, illustrating the ability to convey complex information through a poster.

Course Content

When we engage in behaviour, we often hope to gain something, to be rewarded. To optimize the reward we receive, we exquisitely fine-tune our behaviour and become expert reward-seekers. Our behaviour can lead to positive effects, such as gaining new skills and achieving academic success, but it may also have negative consequences, for instance the short-term reward of drug intake may lead to addiction.

During part I of this pre-minor you will gain knowledge of the biological and psychosocial processes that play a role in relation to drug use and addiction. We will address the nature of drugs, their short-term reward, long-term negative effects, and related progression into addiction, as well as non-drug related addictions. Throughout the course you will also learn more about the scientific methods researchers use to increase this knowledge. During the tutor groups you will actively search for existing knowledge on drug use behaviour and recent study outcomes, while also taking on the researcher role and collecting and analysing data on addictive behaviours yourself.

Additional Information Teaching Methods

Twice weekly lectures (3hrs/w) and tutorials (1.5hrs/w). Preparatory Canvas assignments need to be completed on time to be admitted to the tutorials. If more than one tutorial session is missed, a poster grade cannot be obtained and the course cannot be completed.

Method of Assessment

70 % of final grade: combination of midterm test and final test with open-question, open-book tests (on-campus, through Testvision). Combined grade of both tests required to be sufficient. Separate tests cannot be resat, but a resit is held covering all course material.

30% of final grade: Poster about a recent research article on addiction (group assignment) Poster needs to be presented by each student at an event during final week of class, and grade for the poster needs to be sufficient.

Literature

Literature consists of specific articles that will be posted on Canvas and materials provided on-line by national and international addiction research institutes (in particular by the American National Institute on Drug Abuse). The reading list includes a chapter from the book used in Behaviour and the Brain, part 2.

Brain and Behavior: A Cognitive Neuroscience Perspective (2nd ed., Eagleman & Downar, 2024)

For those interested in more in-depth information on the biology of addiction the latest (14th) edition of "Julien's primer of drug action" by Advokat, Comaty, & Julien is recommended.

Additional Information

This course is taught by the department of Biological Psychology and is linked to Behaviour and the Brain part 2: (coordinated by the department of Cognitive Psychology). Note that this is course is only taught in English.

Custom Course Registration

You can only enrol for the preminor courses after the preminor information session early 2025.