

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
COURSE OUTLINE
Reducing Drug Harm: Social Work Practice & Policy

19:910:570

Term:

Instructor:

Office hours:

Email:

I. Catalog Course Description

Harm reduction is a health and human service approach that focuses on reducing morbidity and mortality associated with drug use. This approach, which encourages safer, controlled, and/or reduced use of drugs, complements abstinence-only approaches to drug use. Harm reduction has long been implemented for drug use in international settings and recently was placed on the continuum of care alongside treatment, prevention, and recovery services by leading drug use organizations in the United States, including the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and Office of National Drug Control Policy. As efforts to expand the implementation of harm reduction approaches grow in the United States, students will need greater knowledge about harm reduction. In this course, historical and contemporary issues related to harm reduction for drug use will be examined. Students will gain knowledge and develop critical analysis skills that will be achieved through three course learning components: (1) a historical overview of harm reduction, its principles, and specific types of approaches used; (2) a critical analysis of harm reduction's research evidence and implications for policy and practice; and (3) strategies to promote awareness and implementation of harm reduction equitably across society.

II. Course Overview

The purpose of this course is to teach students historical and contemporary issues related to harm reduction policy and practice, to understand the underlying principles and types of approaches used in harm reduction, to critically analyze the research support on harm reduction, and be able to identify strategies to implement harm reduction equitably across society. Through this purpose, students will be able to ask and answer the critical questions below related to harm reduction:

1. Using a historical lens, what have been and are anticipated to be challenges and opportunities for harm reduction approaches at the policy and practice levels?
2. Which types of harm reduction approaches are commonly used to reduce consequences from drug use and what is the state of the scientific evidence to support harm reduction?

3. Which populations and communities most need to have access to harm reduction approaches? What solutions can help promote equitable opportunities across society?

As students read through this syllabus, they should also remember to closely **review the School-Wide Syllabus** in Canvas or the Student Handbook to find information on the School of Social Work mission statement and learning goals, school-wide policies (including academic integrity policies and the standardized attendance policy), and student resources and supports.

III. Place of Course in Program

This is an elective generalist course. There are no pre-requisites to take this course.

IV. Program Level Learning Goals and the Council of Social Work Education's Social Work Competencies

The MSW Program at Rutgers is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Students are welcome to review CSWE's accreditation standards at www.cswe.org. In keeping with CSWE standards, the Rutgers School of Social Work has integrated the CSWE competencies within its curriculum. *These competences serve as program level Learning Goals for the MSW Program and include the following. Upon completion of their MSW education students will be able to: demonstrate ethical and professional behavior; engage in diversity and difference in practice; advance human rights and social, economic and environmental justice; engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice; engage with individuals, families, groups organizations and communities; intervene with individual, families, groups organizations and communities; and evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.*

This course will assist students in developing the following competencies:

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice

Social workers use ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches in conducting research and building knowledge. Social workers use research to inform their practice decision making and articulate how their practice experience informs research and evaluation decisions. Social workers critically evaluate and critique current, empirically sound research to inform decisions pertaining to practice, policy, and programs. Social workers understand the inherent bias in research and evaluate design, analysis, and interpretation using an anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective. Social workers know how to access, critique, and synthesize the current literature to develop appropriate research questions and hypotheses. Social workers demonstrate knowledge and skills regarding qualitative and quantitative research methods and analysis, and they interpret data derived from these methods. Social workers demonstrate knowledge about methods to assess reliability and validity in social work research. Social workers can articulate and share research findings in ways that are usable to a variety of clients and constituencies. Social

workers understand the value of evidence derived from interprofessional and diverse research methods, approaches, and sources. Social workers: a. apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs; and b. identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.

Assessment of Competency 4 will be based on The Evidence for Harm Reduction Group Presentations (i.e., practice-informed research) and the Harm Reduction Program Resource Catalogue (research-informed practice).

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Social workers identify social policy at the local, state, federal, and global level that affects wellbeing, human rights and justice, service delivery, and access to social services. Social workers recognize the historical, social, racial, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Social workers understand and critique the history and current structures of social policies and services and the role of policy in service delivery through rights-based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist lenses. Social workers influence policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation within their practice settings with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers actively engage in and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy practice to effect change in those settings. Social workers: (A) Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services; and (B). Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. Assessment of Competency 5 will be based on the Harm Reduction Synthesis Paper using material from all sections of the paper.

[Explore the entire set of 2022 CSWE competencies.](#)

V. Course Level Learning Goals

Course level learning goals primarily relate to the aforementioned competencies/program level learning goals as the course engages students in research-informed practice, practice-informed research, and policy practice. Skills from these competencies will emphasize goals related to the study of harm reduction's history, principles, and approaches, scientific research on harm reduction, policy and practice implications, and strategies to promote harm reduction equitably in a changing substance use practice and policy landscape for the social work profession.

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe and understand historical and contemporary issues related to harm reduction for drug use and be knowledgeable about the principles and approaches used in harm reduction programs.

2. Critically analyze the scientific evidence, limitations, and future directions for harm reduction research.
3. Identify strategies that promote awareness and equitable implementation of harm reduction approaches across society.

VI. Required Texts and Readings

To minimize financial barriers, this course does not have a required text, and provides all required readings through the Rutgers University Library “Reading List” that is integrated into your Canvas course. To find your readings:

Click on the “Reading List” tab in the Canvas navigation bar to the left-hand side of the course. Please note: this list contains links to articles and other required readings separate from the textbook (if applicable). Please follow the syllabus and/or Canvas Readings and Resources page in each module for more specific required readings and resources for each week (including textbook/media). For further instructions [please click here for a video tutorial](#)

VII. Course Attendance and Participation Policies

Attendance

Please refer to the school-wide syllabus for the standard attendance policy for classes in on-the-ground (traditional) program, intensive weekend program (IWP), and asynchronous online program.

In order to gain the most from their educational experience, MSW students are expected to attend class regularly. You should arrive to class on time and stay for the entire duration of class.

Students must arrive to class on time and stay for the entire duration of the class. More than 3 late arrivals and/or early departures will result in deductions from the participation portion of your grade. More than 3 absences may result in the failure of the class. In the event you miss a class, there will be no make-up options for the in-person participation points that day.

Students are expected to read all course-related emails sent to their Rutgers email account and course announcements/messages posted in Canvas to stay informed of any changes in the course schedule, readings, or assignments.

Respect for Others and Internet Etiquette

This course has room for multiple and diverse perspectives, and it is essential for us to treat each other with respect when opinions are shared. The RU SSW supports an inclusive learning environment where diversity, individual differences and identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.) are respected and recognized as a source of

strength. Students and faculty are expected to respect differences and contribute to a learning environment that allows for a diversity of thought and worldviews. Please feel free to speak with me if you experience any concerns in this area. Language should be used which recognizes diversity and is respectful of others. This includes gender inclusive language. Students, faculty, and staff may share their pronouns and names, and these gender identities and gender expressions should be honored. During this course, it may be difficult to disguise references to specific organizations and people, so such information must stay in the classroom. Confidentiality is vital.

Please be respectful of the learning environment and do not use devices during class for purposes unrelated to the course. Laptops and tablets are only permitted for taking notes or reviewing course materials and should not be used to check email, social media, or search the internet for content unrelated to the course. Use of cell phones (including text messaging) or any similar type of electronic device is also not permitted in class. If there is a serious emergency and you need to take a call, please do so outside of the classroom so as not to disturb your colleagues.

Zoom Camera Policy (for synchronous remote classes only)

In order to promote interactive learning, engagement, and community building, we expect students enrolled in synchronous remote classes (i.e., 'Zoom') courses to turn their cameras on for the duration of class. RU SSW also expects: 1) students should be in as private and distraction free environment as possible in order to support focused learning; and 2) students should not be engaged in other activities during class (driving, at work, etc.). If you are unable to turn your camera on for a particular week, please communicate to let me know before class.

X. Assignments and Grading

All written assignments **must** follow APA format. The professor reserves the right to reduce the letter grade for any assignment that does not confirm to APA format.

Assignment Value

- 15%: Reading Group Participation (1% weeks 2-8 & 10-14; 3% week 15)
- 30%: Harm Reduction Program Resource Catalogue (2 mini-assignments x 15%)
- 25%: Group Podium Presentations on The Evidence for Harm Reduction
- 30%: Harm Reduction Synthesis Paper

Late Work

Late assignment submissions will be allowed at a penalty of a 10% point reduction for each day late. No late assignments will be allowed for weekly participation.

See full assignment details at the end of this syllabus.

VIII. Policy on Audio/Video Taping & Course Materials

Course materials prepared by the instructor, together with the content of all lectures and review sessions presented by the instructor are the property of the instructor. Video and audio recording of lectures and review sessions without the consent of the instructor is prohibited. On request, the instructor will usually grant permission for students to audio tape lectures, on the condition that these audio tapes are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless explicit permission is obtained from the instructor, recordings of lectures and review sessions may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course.

IX. Course Outline

All readings should be completed prior to the synchronous course session that week.

Module 1 Course Introduction

Module Learning Objectives

- Explain and outline the course expectations, objectives, and timeline
- Identify relevant professional and personal experiences with harm reduction
- Define and describe harm reduction approaches for drug use

Readings & Materials

No readings assigned in advance of the Week 1 course session

In-Class Activities & Resources

Activities

- Syllabus review
- Ice breaker and community building exercises
- Engaged discussion about the Harm Reduction International website and Mountain Plains Addiction Technology Transfer Center “What is harm reduction?” poster

Resources

- Harm Reduction International: <https://hri.global/>
- “What is harm reduction?” poster: https://attnetwork.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/mpatc_harm-reduction-eng_poster_508.pdf

Module 2 A Historical Overview of Harm Reduction

Module Learning Objectives

- Examine and analyze the history of harm reduction for drug use in the United States

- Examine and analyze the history of harm reduction for drug use in international settings

Required Readings & Materials

Des Jarlais, D. C. (2017). Harm reduction in the USA: The research perspective and an archive to David Purchase. *Harm Reduction Journal*, 14, 51, 1-7. DOI: 10.1186/s12954-017-0178-6

Collins, S.E., Clifasefi, S.L., Logan, D.E., Samples, L.S., Somers, J.M., & Marlatt, G.A. (2011). Current status, historical highlights, and basic principles of harm reduction. In Marlatt, G.A., Larimer, M.E., & Witkiewitz, K. (Eds.), *Harm reduction: Pragmatic strategies for managing high-risk behaviors (2nd edition)* (pp. 3-35) New York: Guilford Press.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (2023). *Harm reduction framework*. Available at: <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/harm-reduction-framework.pdf>

Recommended Readings & Materials

National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2022). *NIH invests in a new harm reduction research network*. Available at: <https://nida.nih.gov/about-nida/noras-blog/2022/12/nih-invests-in-new-harm-reduction-research-network>

In-Class Activities & Resources

Activities

- Reading group participation
- Lecture and discussion
- Introduce the Harm Reduction Program Resource Catalogue assignment

Module 3

The Impact of Stigma, Politics, and Ideology on Harm Reduction Support

Module Learning Objectives

- Identify and analyze how stigma and misconceptions impact harm reduction support
- Identify and analyze how political and ideological factors impact harm reduction support

Required Readings & Materials

Yang, L. H., Wong, L. Y., Grivel, M. M., & Hasin, D. S. (2017). Stigma and substance use disorders: An international phenomenon. *Current Opinion in Psychiatry*, 30(5), 378-388. DOI: 10.1097/YCO.0000000000000351

Earp, B. D., Lewis, J., Hart, C. L., & with Bioethicists and Allied Professionals for Drug Policy Reform. (2021). Racial justice requires ending the war on drugs. *The American Journal of Bioethics*, 21(4), 4-19. DOI: 10.1080/15265161.2020.1861364

Habib, D. R. S., Giorgi, S., & Curtis, B. (2023). Role of the media in promoting the dehumanization of people who use drugs. *The American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse*, 29(4), 1-10. DOI: 10.1080/00952990.2023.2180383

Kulesza, M., Teachman, B. A., Werntz, A. J., Gasser, M. L., & Lindgren, K. P. (2015). Correlates of public support toward federal funding for harm reduction strategies. *Substance Abuse Treatment, Prevention, and Policy*, 10(1), 1-8. DOI: 10.1186/s13011-015-0022-5

Recommended Readings & Materials

Baker, L. S., Smith, W., Gulley, T., & Tomann, M. M. (2020). Community perceptions of comprehensive harm reduction programs and stigma towards people who inject drugs in rural Virginia. *Journal of Community Health*, 45, 239-244. DOI: 10.1007/s10900-019-00732-8

Wild, T. C., Koziel, J., Anderson-Baron, J., Asbridge, M., Belle-Isle, L., Dell, C., ... & Hyshka, E. (2021). Public support for harm reduction: A population survey of Canadian adults. *PLoS One*, 16(5), e0251860, 1-18. DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0251860

King, N. B. (2020). Harm reduction: A misnomer. *Health Care Analysis*, 28(4), 324-334. DOI: 10.1007/s10728-020-00413-x

In-Class Activities & Resources

Activities

- Reading group participation
- Lecture and discussion
- Engaged discussion about the Drug Policy Alliance (DPA) drug war history page
- Google “harm reduction” to discuss news media coverage across political spectrum

Resources

- DPA drug war history: <https://drugpolicy.org/drug-war-history/>

Module 4

Principles, Assumptions, and Goals of Harm Reduction

Module Learning Objectives

- Describe and identify the principles and assumptions underlying harm reduction
- Describe and identify the goals and desired outcomes of harm reduction

Required Readings & Materials

Klein, A. (2020). Harm reduction works: Evidence and inclusion in drug policy and advocacy. *Health Care Analysis*, 28(4), 404-414. DOI: 10.1007/s10728-020-00406-w

Vakharia, S. P., & Little, J. (2017). Starting where the client is: Harm reduction guidelines for clinical social work practice. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 45, 65-76. DOI: 10.1007/s10615-016-0584-3

Ruefli, T., & Rogers, S. J. (2004). How do drug users define their progress in harm reduction programs? Qualitative research to develop user-generated outcomes. *Harm Reduction Journal*, 1, 8, 1-13. DOI: 10.1186/1477-7517-1-8

In-Class Activities & Resources

Activities

- Reading group participation
- Lecture and discussion
- In-class time to work on the Harm Reduction Program Resource Catalogue assignment
- Engaged discussion about the National Harm Reduction Coalition (NHRC) pages on the foundations and principles of harm reduction

Resources

- NHRC harm reduction foundations: <https://harmreduction.org/issues/harm-reduction-basics/foundations-harm-reduction-facts/>
- NHRC harm reduction principles: <https://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/>

Harm Reduction Program Resource Catalogue: Mini-Assignment I (national/federal)
DUE end of Week 4 @ 11:59 PM

Module 5

Types of Harm Reduction Approaches

Module Learning Objectives

- Describe and identify the wide range of approaches used in harm reduction
- Differentiate the harm reduction types and priorities used by different organizations

Required Readings & Materials

National Institute on Drug Abuse (2022). *Harm reduction*. Available at: <https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/harm-reduction>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (2023). *Harm reduction*. Available at: <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/harm-reduction>

Harm Reduction International (2023). *What is harm reduction?* Available at: <https://hri.global/what-is-harm-reduction/>

National Harm Reduction Coalition (2020). *Harm reduction resource center: Harm reduction issues*. Available at: <https://harmreduction.org/resource-center/>

Safehouse (2023). *The Safehouse Model*. Available at:
<https://www.safehousephilly.org/about/the-safehouse-model>

New Jersey Department of Health (2023). *Harm Reduction Centers*. Available at:
<https://www.nj.gov/health/hivstdtb/hrc/>

New Jersey Harm Reduction Coalition (2023). *More resources*. Available at:
<https://njharmreduction.org/more-resources/>

In-Class Activities & Resources

Activities

- Reading group participation
- Lecture and discussion
- Introduce the Group Podium Presentation assignment
- Share harm reduction programs from Resource Catalogue Mini-Assignment I

Module 6

Examining the Scientific Evidence for Harm Reduction

Module Learning Objectives

- Examine and analyze the scientific evidence from harm reduction research
- Examine and critique the limitations and gaps in existing harm reduction research

Required Readings & Materials

Marlatt, G. A., & Witkiewitz, K. (2010). Update on harm-reduction policy and intervention research. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 6, 591-606. DOI: 10.1146/annurev.clinpsy.121208.131438

Wakeman, S. E., Larochelle, M. R., Ameli, O., Chaisson, C. E., McPheeters, J. T., Crown, W. H., ... & Sanghavi, D. M. (2020). Comparative effectiveness of different treatment pathways for opioid use disorder. *JAMA Network Open*, 3(2), e1920622-e1920622, 1-12. DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2019.20622

Levendgood, T. W., Yoon, G. H., Davoust, M. J., Ogden, S. N., Marshall, B. D., Cahill, S. R., & Bazzi, A. R. (2021). Supervised injection facilities as harm reduction: A systematic review. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 61(5), 738-749. DOI: 10.1016/j.amepre.2021.04.017

Wenger, L. D., Doe-Simkins, M., Wheeler, E., Ongais, L., Morris, T., Bluthenthal, R. N., ... & Lambdin, B. H. (2022). Best practices for community-based overdose education and naloxone distribution programs: Results from using the Delphi approach. *Harm Reduction Journal*, 19, 55, 1-9. DOI: 10.1186/s12954-022-00639-z

Recommended Readings & Materials

Giulini, F., Keenan, E., Killeen, N., & Ivers, J. H. (2023). A systematized review of drug-checking and related considerations for implementation as a harm reduction intervention. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs*, 55(1), 85-93. DOI: 10.1080/02791072.2022.2028203

Wilson, D. P., Donald, B., Shattock, A. J., Wilson, D., & Fraser-Hurt, N. (2015). The cost-effectiveness of harm reduction. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 26, S5-S11. DOI: 10.1016/j.drugpo.2014.11.007

Safehouse (2023). *Resources: The Science*. Available at:
<https://www.safehousephilly.org/resources/the-science>

In-Class Activities & Resources

Activities

- Reading group participation
- Lecture and discussion
- Engaged discussion about the resources managed by the National Harm Reduction Technical Assistance Center (NHRTAC)

Resources

- NHRTAC resources: <https://harmreductionhelp.cdc.gov/s/topiccatalog>

Module 7

Hesitancies and Concerns about Harm Reduction

Module Learning Objectives

- Examine and analyze concerns and hesitancies about harm reduction
- Examine and identify future directions needed to clarify the evidence for harm reduction

Required Readings & Materials

Javadi, R., Lagana, K., Krowicki, T., Bennett, D., & Schindler, B. (2022). Attitudes toward harm reduction among substance use treatment professionals in Philadelphia. *Journal of Substance Use*, 27(5), 459-464. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14659891.2021.1961320>

Packham, A. (2022). Syringe exchange programs and harm reduction: New evidence in the wake of the opioid epidemic. *Journal of Public Economics*, 215, 104733, 1-24. DOI: 10.1016/j.jpubeco.2022.104733

Lambdin, B. H., Bluthenthal, R. N., Humphrey, J. L., LaKosky, P., Prohaska, S., & Kral, A. H. (2023). ‘New evidence’ for Syringe Services Programs? A call for rigor and skepticism. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 104107, 1-4. DOI: 10.1016/j.drugpo.2023.104107

Gannon, K., & Pasman, E. (2023). “Knowing or not knowing”: Living as harm reductionists in Twelve Step recovery. *Journal of Substance Use & Addiction Treatment*, 145, 208954. DOI: 10.1016/j.josat.2023.208954

Jones, C. M., Compton, W. M., Han, B., Baldwin, G., & Volkow, N. D. (2022). Methadone-involved overdose deaths in the US before and after federal policy changes expanding take-home methadone doses from opioid treatment programs. *JAMA Psychiatry*, 79(9), 932-934. DOI: 10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2022.1776

Recommended Readings & Materials

Ostrach, B., Buer, L. M., Armbruster, S., Brown, H., Yochym, G., & Zaller, N. (2021). COVID-19 and rural harm reduction challenges in the US Southern Mountains. *The Journal of Rural Health*, 37(1), 252-255. DOI: 10.1111%2Fjrh.12499

Johnson, M. (2022). Let's face it: Harm reduction has failed. *The Hub*. Available at: <https://thehub.ca/2022-06-14/lets-face-it-harm-reduction-has-failed/>

In-Class Activities & Resources

Activities

- Reading group participation
- Lecture and discussion
- Guest speaker – harm reduction research expert
- Time to develop outlines for Group Presentations

Module 8

Challenges and Opportunities for Harm Reduction in Health Care Settings

Module Learning Objectives

- Describe and identify challenges for harm reduction uptake in health care settings
- Describe and identify opportunities for harm reduction uptake in health care settings

Required Readings & Materials

Unachukwu, I. C., Abrams, M. P., Dolan, A., Oyekemi, K., Meisel, Z. F., South, E. C., & Aronowitz, S. V. (2023). “The new normal has become a nonstop crisis”: A qualitative study of burnout among Philadelphia’s harm reduction and substance use disorder treatment workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Harm Reduction Journal*, 20, 32, 1-12. DOI: 10.1186/s12954-023-00752-7

Perera, R., Stephan, L., Appa, A., Giuliano, R., Hoffman, R., Lum, P., & Martin, M. (2022). Meeting people where they are: Implementing hospital-based substance use harm reduction. *Harm Reduction Journal*, 19, 14, 1-7. DOI: 10.1186/s12954-022-00594-9

Hobden, K. L., & Cunningham, J. A. (2006). Barriers to the dissemination of four harm reduction strategies: A survey of addiction treatment providers in Ontario. *Harm Reduction Journal*, 3, 35, 1-20. DOI: 10.1186/1477-7517-3-35

Richert, T., Stallwitz, A., & Nordgren, J. (2023). Harm reduction social work with people who use drugs: A qualitative interview study with social workers in harm reduction

services in Sweden. *Harm Reduction Journal*, 20, 146, 1-13. DOI: 10.1186/s12954-023-00884-w

Recommended Readings & Materials

Moses, T. E., Chou, J. S., Moreno, J. L., Lundahl, L. H., Waiteo, E., & Greenwald, M. K. (2022). Long-term effects of opioid overdose prevention and response training on medical student knowledge and attitudes toward opioid overdose: A pilot study. *Addictive Behaviors*, 126, 107172. DOI: 10.1016/j.addbeh.2021.107172

In-Class Activities & Resources

Activities

- Reading group participation
- Lecture and discussion
- Finalize Group Podium Presentations with professor's review of slide draft
- Mid-semester check-in between professor and students

*****SPRING RECESS next week*****

Module 9

Group Podium Presentations on The Evidence for Harm Reduction

Module Learning Objectives

- Produce and deliver a research presentation for the class
- Identify and critique harm reduction research evidence from other presentations

Readings & Materials

No assigned readings since the weekly session is dedicated to group presentations

In-Class Activities & Resources

Activities

- Group Presentations: 30 min each group (20 min presentation + 5-10 min for questions)

Module 10: March 26

Health Policy Considerations for Harm Reduction *Back-Up for Group Presentations*

Module Learning Objectives

- Examine and analyze the historical timeline of harm reduction policies
- Examine and analyze contemporary and emerging harm reduction policy and legislation

Required Readings & Materials

Nadelmann, E., & LaSalle, L. (2017). Two steps forward, one step back: Current harm reduction policy and politics in the United States. *Harm Reduction Journal*, 14, 37, 1-7. DOI: 10.1186/s12954-017-0157-y

O’Keefe, D., Ritter, A., Stooove, M., Hughes, C., & Dietze, P. (2020). Harm reduction programs and policy in Australia: Barriers and enablers to effective implementation. *Sucht*, 66(1), 33-43. DOI: 10.1024/0939-5911/a000641

Safehouse (2023). *United States v. Safehouse*. Available at:
<https://www.safehousephilly.org/us-v-safehouse>

Mahone, A., Enich, M., Treitler, P., Lloyd, J., & Crystal, S. (2023). Opioid use disorder treatment and the role of New Jersey Medicaid policy changes: Perspectives of office-based buprenorphine providers. *The American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse*, 1-12. DOI: 10.1080/00952990.2023.2234075

Recommended Readings & Materials

The White House, Executive Office of the President, Office of the National Drug Control Policy (2022). *National Drug Control Strategy*. Available at:
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/National-Drug-Control-2022Strategy.pdf>

In-Class Activities & Resources

Activities

- Reading group participation
- Lecture and discussion
- Introduce the Harm Reduction Synthesis Paper assignment
- Engaged discussion about the DPA page for state-by-state drug decriminalization laws and legislation and the announcement from New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) about harm reduction center expansion

Resources

- DPA state-by-state drug decriminalization: <https://drugpolicy.org/decriminalization-legislation/>
- NJDOH harm reduction center expansion: <https://www.nj.gov/health/news/2023/approved/20230831a.shtml>

Module 11

Strategies for Promoting Harm Reduction Knowledge Among Social Workers

Module Learning Objectives

- Examine and analyze harm reduction educational approaches for social work students
- Identify harm reduction and substance use standards used in the social work profession

Required Readings & Materials

Estreet, A., Archibald, P., Tirmazi, M. T., Goodman, S., & Cudjoe, T. (2017). Exploring social work student education: The effect of a harm reduction curriculum on student

knowledge and attitudes regarding opioid use disorders. *Substance Abuse*, 38(4), 369-375. DOI: 10.1080/08897077.2017.134144

Pasman, E. (2022). Reducing stigma toward medication for opioid use disorder through social work education, research, and practice. *Journal of Social Work Practice in the Addictions*, 22(1), 86-92. DOI: 10.1080/1533256X.2022.2016339

Lister, J.J. (2019). Practical strategies for social workers to combat the opioid epidemic. *ATTC Messenger*. Available at: <https://attcnetwork.org/practical-strategies-for-social-workers-to-combat-the-opioid-epidemic/>

Recommended Readings & Materials

Council on Social Work Education (2022). *Substance use disorders expansion of practitioner education in social work: A pilot project*. Available at: <https://www.cswe.org/getattachment/04c7edd8-c40b-4fa0-ba68-bd19e11b720d/Prac-Ed-Final-Evaluation-Report-2022.pdf?lang=en-US>

In-Class Activities & Resources

Activities

- Reading group participation
- Lecture and discussion
- In-class time to develop an outline for the Harm Reduction Synthesis Paper
- Engaged discussion about the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) substance use initiatives and National Association of Social Workers (NASW) substance use standards

Resources

- CSWE substance use initiatives: <https://www.cswe.org/centers-initiatives/substance-use-initiatives/>
- NASW substance use standards: <https://www.socialworkers.org/Practice/NASW-Practice-Standards-Guidelines/NASW-Standards-for-Social-Work-Practice-with-Clients-with-Substance-Use-Disorders>

Module 12

Strategies for Engaging with Community Stakeholders in Harm Reduction Efforts

Module Learning Objectives

- Describe and identify challenges for harm reduction uptake in community settings
- Describe and identify opportunities for harm reduction uptake in community settings

Required Readings & Materials

Childs, E., Biello, K. B., Valente, P. K., Salhaney, P., Biancarelli, D. L., Olson, J., ... & Bazzi, A. R. (2021). Implementing harm reduction in non-urban communities affected by opioids and polysubstance use: A qualitative study exploring challenges and mitigating

strategies. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 90, 103080. DOI: 10.1016/j.drugpo.2020.103080

Ashford, R. D., Curtis, B., & Brown, A. M. (2018). Peer-delivered harm reduction and recovery support services: Initial evaluation from a hybrid recovery community drop-in center and syringe exchange program. *Harm Reduction Journal*, 15, 52, 1-9. DOI: 10.1186/s12954-018-0258-2

Jones, C. M. (2019). Syringe services programs: An examination of legal, policy, and funding barriers in the midst of the evolving opioid crisis in the US. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 70, 22-32. DOI: 10.1016/j.drugpo.2019.04.006

Lister, J. J., & Joudrey, P. J. (2023). Rural mistrust of public health interventions in the United States: A call for taking the long view to improve adoption. *The Journal of Rural Health*, 39(1), 18-20. DOI: 10.1111/jrh.12684

In-Class Activities & Resources

Activities

- Reading group participation
- Lecture and discussion
- Guest speaker – harm reduction program expert

Harm Reduction Program Resource Catalogue: Mini-Assignment II (state, county, or community level) *DUE end of Week 12 @ 11:59 PM*

Module 13: April 16

How Criminal Approaches and Social Biases Impact People Who Use Drugs

Module Learning Objectives

- Describe and identify populations most impacted by criminal approaches to substance use
- Describe and identify social biases that influence perceptions about harm reduction

Required Readings & Materials

Ray, B., Korzeniewski, S. J., Mohler, G., Carroll, J. J., Del Pozo, B., Victor, G., ... & Hedden, B. J. (2023). Spatiotemporal analysis exploring the effect of law enforcement drug market disruptions on overdose, Indianapolis, Indiana, 2020–2021. *American Journal of Public Health*, 113(7), 750-758. DOI: 10.2105/AJPH.2023.307291

Hart, C. L., & Hart, M. Z. (2019). Opioid crisis: Another mechanism used to perpetuate American racism. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 25(1), 6-11. DOI: 10.1037/cdp0000260

Rouhani, S., Schneider, K. E., Weicker, N., Whaley, S., Morris, M., & Sherman, S. G. (2022). NIMBYism and harm reduction programs: Results from Baltimore City. *Journal of Urban Health*, 99(4), 717-722. DOI: 10.1007/s11524-022-00641-7

Donnelly, E. A., Wagner, J., Stenger, M., Cortina, H. G., O'Connell, D. J., & Anderson, T. L. (2021). Opioids, race, and drug enforcement: Exploring local relationships between neighborhood context and Black–White opioid-related possession arrests. *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 32(3), 219-244. DOI: 10.1177/0887403420911415

In-Class Activities & Resources

Activities

- Reading group participation
- Lecture and discussion
- In-class time to work on the Harm Reduction Synthesis Paper
- Share harm reduction programs from Resource Catalogue Mini-Assignment II
- Engaged discussion about the DPA drug war statistics page

Resources

- DPA drug war statistics: <https://drugpolicy.org/drug-war-stats/>

Module 14

Strategies to Ensure Harm Reduction Policy and Practice Implementation is Equitable

Module Learning Objectives

- Examine and analyze disparities in access to harm reduction approaches
- Identify strategies to promote equitable access to harm reduction implementation

Required Readings & Materials

Lopez, A. M., Thomann, M., Dhatt, Z., Ferrera, J., Al-Nassir, M., Ambrose, M., & Sullivan, S. (2022). Understanding racial inequities in the implementation of harm reduction initiatives. *American Journal of Public Health*, 112(S2), S173-S181. DOI: 10.2105/AJPH.2022.306767

Rosales, R., Janssen, T., Yermash, J., Yap, K. R., Ball, E. L., Hartzler, B., ... & Becker, S. J. (2022). Persons from racial and ethnic minority groups receiving medication for opioid use disorder experienced increased difficulty accessing harm reduction services during COVID-19. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*, 132, 108648, 1-5. DOI: 10.1016/j.jsat.2021.108648

Wolfson, L., Schmidt, R. A., Stinson, J., & Poole, N. (2021). Examining barriers to harm reduction and child welfare services for pregnant women and mothers who use substances using a stigma action framework. *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 29(3), 589-601. DOI: 10.1111/hsc.13335

Goodyear, T., Mniszak, C., Jenkins, E., Fast, D., & Knight, R. (2020). “Am I gonna get in trouble for acknowledging my will to be safe?”: Identifying the experiences of young sexual minority men and substance use in the context of an opioid overdose crisis. *Harm Reduction Journal*, 17, 23, 1-14. DOI: 10.1186/s12954-020-00365-4

Lister, J. J., Weaver, A., Ellis, J. D., Himle, J. A., & Ledgerwood, D. M. (2020). A systematic review of rural-specific barriers to medication treatment for opioid use disorder in the United States. *The American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse*, 46(3), 273-288. DOI: 10.1080/00952990.2019.1694536

Recommended Readings & Materials

Kinnard, E. N., Bluthenthal, R. N., Kral, A. H., Wenger, L. D., & Lambdin, B. H. (2021). The naloxone delivery cascade: Identifying disparities in access to naloxone among people who inject drugs in Los Angeles and San Francisco, CA. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 225, 108759, 1-10. DOI: 10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2021.108759

Owczarzak, J., Weicker, N., Urquhart, G., Morris, M., Park, J. N., & Sherman, S. G. (2020). “We know the streets:” race, place, and the politics of harm reduction. *Health & Place*, 64, 102376, 1-8. DOI: 10.1016/j.healthplace.2020.102376

In-Class Activities & Resources

Activities

- Reading group participation
- Lecture and discussion
- In-class time to work on the Harm Reduction Synthesis Paper
- Engaged discussion about NHRTAC priority populations

Resources

- NHRTAC priority populations:
<https://harmreductionhelp.cdc.gov/s/topic/0TO3d0000000JNsGAM/priority-populations>

Module 15

Course Summary

Module Learning Objectives

- Recall course learning experiences that influenced harm reduction knowledge
- Identify future actions to utilize harm reduction knowledge gained in real-world settings

Readings & Materials

No readings assigned in advance of the Week 15 course session

In-Class Activities & Resources

Activities

- Reading groups (individual 5 min presentation on 3 things learned from course readings)
- Engaging activity to maintain community building established in the class

- Time to complete SIRS
- Time to meet the professor for any final questions on Harm Reduction Synthesis Paper

Harm Reduction Synthesis Paper
DUE end of Week 15 @ 11:59 PM

X. Course Assignments

Reading Group Participation

15% of final grade

Students will participate in-class with a reading group (of varying composition) each week of the course. During this time, students will discuss the readings from the week together and come up with key points they want to present back to the class (i.e., a “snapshot” of the reading). The reading groups will involve multiple approaches, such as breaking into dyads (“pair and share”), thematically organized groups (e.g., by student practicum setting type), role play, and point-counterpoint formats.

Students will earn participation points for engaging in critical discussions and for making at least one brief but substantive contribution (“a reading snapshot”) summarizing their group’s process and/or key takeaways about harm reduction. Participation grades will not be evaluated in any form (i.e., there are no correct answers) other than by engaging meaningfully during group time and sharing a contribution that demonstrates close attention to the reading material.

Examples of contributions during reading snapshots may include providing a succinct overview of a reading, highlighting a thought-provoking section of a reading, critiquing a reading, or posing questions not answered by a reading. In the event a student does not attend class (or arrives after reading groups), they will not earn that week’s participation points.

Assignment requirements

- Attend class
- Complete the required readings prior to class
- Engage in a critical discussion of the readings with classmates
- Provide one brief but substantive contribution during “reading group snapshots”
- Participation will be worth **1 point** for weeks 2-8 and 10-14 (i.e., **12 total points**)
- Participation in week 15 will be worth **3 points**; this last snapshot will involve an informal 5 min presentation by each student reflecting and describing 3 key things they learned from any of the semester’s course readings

Harm Reduction Program Resource Catalogue

30% of final grade (15% for each mini-assignment) (5% for each program description)

Students will compile a resource catalogue of harm reduction programs in the United States. This assignment involves mini-assignments, which combined will yield six distinct harm reduction program descriptions at varied levels (national/federal, state, county, community), allowing students to pursue and examine programs of personal and professional interest. In Mini-Assignment I, students will gather/describe resources at the national or federal level, whereas in Mini-Assignment II, resources will be gathered/described at the state, county, or community level. These programs can be implemented in health care settings, community settings, via technology, or be remote/online educational resources. Programs can be in the planning stage (pre-implementation) and can focus on any type of drug or legal substance.

Assignment requirements

- Mini-Assignment I = describe 3 harm reduction programs (national or federal)
- Mini-Assignment II = describe 3 harm reduction programs (state, community, county)
- Program information can be gathered from websites, journal articles, brochures, etc.
- All descriptions need to be at least 1-page (written like journals) (see template below)

Harm Reduction Program Description Template

Section Header	Section Detail Examples
Program Overview (1 paragraph, 1 point)	name of program; location or setting where program activities occur; history of program; funding sources
Program Purpose (1 paragraph, 1 point)	harm reduction approaches used by program; goals or mission of program (e.g., reduce death rates, treat all with dignity); target populations; eligibility rules
Program Challenges and Opportunities (1 paragraph, 1 point)	planning or implementation barriers and successes; critiques or limitations of the program
Program Emphasis on Research & Equity (1 paragraph, 1 point)	whether program has been evaluated (practice-informed research) and/or is guided by research findings (research-informed practice); program strategy to ensure reach to underserved populations
Reference Page (2 references in APA, 1 point)	1 reference for program; 1 reference from a relevant course reading

Given the wide landscape of resources students are allowed to select, program descriptions with highly similar resources (i.e., many of the same programs) may be subject to academic integrity review. All work on this assignment should be completed alone.

Group Podium Presentations on The Evidence for Harm Reduction

25% of final grade

Students will work as part of a group to deliver a presentation to the class regarding the evidence for harm reduction. There is no set protocol for the types of evidence students have to choose, though the professor will provide feedback to groups to guide the process. Furthermore, the course readings will also provide illustrative examples of scientific evidence for harm reduction. Some examples could include reviewing the evidence for a specific type of harm reduction service, reviewing the evidence for harm reduction programs among underserved populations, or providing a critical review of gaps or limitations of harm reduction research.

During the weeks leading up to the presentation, groups will provide an outline (in-class) of their topical focus to receive the professor's input, and one week before the presentation, groups will provide a draft of their PowerPoint slides (in-class) for the professor's review. All students in the group are required to take on approximately the same level of responsibility during the presentation. In the event a student fails to meet their responsibilities, they may be subject to greater point deduction than other group members. In addition, groups need to prepare a moderated question and answer session at the close of their presentation as well as a 1-page dissemination tool (handout, fact sheet) to succinctly summarize key points from their presentation.

Assignment requirements and point structure:

- Gain professor's feedback in-class on the presentation outline (**2 points**)
- Gain professor's feedback in-class of slide draft (**2 points**)
- Deliver a 20 minute group presentation using PowerPoint for the class (**15 points**)
- Provide 5-10 minutes to answer questions – one group member will moderate (**3 points**)
- Prepare a 1-page dissemination tool (handout, fact sheet) for the presentation (**3 points**)

Harm Reduction Synthesis Paper

30% of final grade

Students will synthesize all of the harm reduction material covered during the course for their final paper. The paper needs to be at least 6 pages in length (not counting the cover page or reference page) and include the following sections (with headers) as outlined below. Section I of the paper should draw on course content from Weeks 1-5; Section II of the paper should draw on course content from Weeks 6-10; and Section III of the paper should draw on course content from Weeks 11-15.

The writing style of the Harm Reduction Synthesis Paper should use a professional voice, be reviewed for grammar and spelling prior to submission, draw on course readings or other scholarly resources to support the paper's assertions, include a cover page and reference page, and use current APA style for all sections.

Paper sections, required components, and point structure:

- Cover page (**1 point**)
- Section I: Historical overview of harm reduction, its principles, and specific approaches
 - 2 pages minimum (**7 points**)
 - 3 or more unique in-text citations (2 or more from refereed journals) (**2 points**)
- Section II: Critical analysis of research evidence and implications for policy and practice
 - 2 pages minimum (**7 points**)
 - 3 or more unique references (2 or more from refereed journals) (**2 points**)
- Section III: Strategies to promote awareness and implementation equitably across society
 - 2 pages minimum (**7 points**)
 - 3 or more unique references (2 or more from refereed journals) (**2 points**)
- APA format and reference page
 - Reference page with all references in APA format (**1 point**)
 - All in-text citations in APA format (**1 point**)

Given that the paper requires the use of structured headers that draw directly upon the resources in the course modules, student papers will overlap to a degree. However, the voice, perspectives, assertions, and references should substantially vary from student to student. Submissions that are highly similar may be subject to academic integrity review. All work on this assignment should be completed alone.