



Syllabus: Psychedelic Therapy: theory, research and practical implications for public health

University of Haifa
School of Public Health
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Semester B
Course number: 286.4657
Time: Online course
Office hours: Thursdays, 9.00-12.00

Course description

The realm of psychedelic science and medicine is swiftly expanding, marked by a growing influx of preclinical and clinical inquiries initiated annually. Current research endeavors have demonstrated the potential of psychedelics as treatments for various mental health disorders. Additionally, they exhibit the capacity to reconfigure brain circuitry, instigate positive shifts in attitudes and principles, facilitate alterations in personality, and influence not only political perspectives but also mindfulness and other cognitive constructs.

Consequently, an increasing number of scholars, medical practitioners, and mental health trainees are becoming drawn to this field. They are actively seeking education and training in this domain. This course serves a dual purpose: it offers an introduction to fundamental subjects within this field while also providing a platform to critically delve into the scientific, political, and ethical quandaries that have woven through its past, continue through its present, and will shape its future.

Course learning outcomes

1. Integrate knowledge from various disciplines including biology, psychology, and social sciences to develop an interdisciplinary understanding of psychedelic substances and their potential therapeutic applications.
2. Explain the historical context surrounding current psychedelic research, including early studies and indigenous practices.
3. Identify the neurobiological, psychological, and spiritual mechanisms through which psychedelics may function as therapeutic interventions for mental health disorders.
4. Analyze the intricate set of political, commercial, and ethical challenges that the field of psychedelic medicine faces as it progresses towards medicalization.

Structure of the course

This elective course will be taught online. It will serve as an introduction to key subjects within the field of psychedelic science, medicine and policy. It offers an opportunity to critically explore the scientific, political, and ethical challenges that have shaped its past, present, and future. Each week's topic will be introduced through short video lectures, followed by supplementary readings and assignments that will be conducted and submitted online.



Short video lectures are for:

- 1) Introducing core topics
- 2) Expanding on the course reading
- 3) Explaining and practicing difficult concepts/theories, getting an overview of major concepts/theories, minor points, and how they fit together

Online activities are for:

- 1) Non-lecture videos (e.g. TED talks, <https://www.ted.com/talks>) and podcasts (e.g. the Cover Story) to provide more examples of key concepts/theories
- 2) Submit assignments

Course evaluation

1. Weekly online quizzes (combined, 100% of your grade)

Course schedule

***יתכנו שינויים בתכני הקורס וברשימת הקריאה**



Week No	Topic	Reading	Lecture structure & assignments
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to the course Categories of psychedelics Ancient history of psychedelics Non-ancient history of medical/clinical use of psychedelics 	<p>Rucker, J. J., Iliff, J., & Nutt, D. J. (2018). Psychiatry & the psychedelic drugs. Past, present & future. <i>Neuropharmacology</i>, 142, 200-218. (Sections 1-3, 200 - 205). https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.neuropharm.2017.12.040</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online filmed lecture: quiz
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History of <u>recreational</u> used of psychedelics 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online filmed lecture Video LSD's Long Strange Trip. Retro Report, The New York Times. 2016. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WouOr579mfY Quiz
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modern clinical trials Set and setting 	<p>Wark, C., & Galliher, J. F. (2010). Timothy Leary, Richard Alpert (Ram Dass) and the changing definition of psilocybin. <i>International Journal of Drug Policy</i>, 21, 234-239.</p> <p>Rucker, J. J., Iliff, J., & Nutt, D. J. (2018). Psychiatry & the psychedelic drugs. Past, present & future. <i>Neuropharmacology</i>, 142, 200-218. (Sections 1-3, 200 - 205). https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.neuropharm.2017.12.040</p> <p>Hartogsohn, I. (2017). Constructing drug effects: A history of set and setting. <i>Drug Science, Policy and Law</i>, 3, 2050324516683325.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online filmed lecture Online quiz (related to lecture and the Wark article)



		<p>https://dx.doi.org/10.1177/2050324516683325</p> <p>Okano, L., Jones, G., Deyo, B., Brandenburg, A., & Hale, W. (2022). Therapeutic setting as an essential component of psychedelic research methodology: Reporting recommendations emerging from clinical trials of 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine for post-traumatic stress disorder. 13. https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsy.2022.965641/full</p> <p>EXTRA: Maia, L.O., Beussant, Y., Garcia, A.C.M., 2022. The Therapeutic Potential of Psychedelic-assisted Therapies for Symptom Control in Patients Diagnosed With Serious Illness: A Systematic Review. <i>Journal of pain and symptom management</i> 63(6), e725-e738.</p> <p>Sloshower, J., Guss, J., Krause, R., Wallace, R. M., Williams, M. T., Reed, S., & Skinta, M. D. (2020). Psilocybin-assisted therapy of major depressive disorder using Acceptance and Commitment Therapy as a therapeutic frame. <i>Journal of Contextual Behavioral Science</i>, 15, 12-19. https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcbs.2019.11.002</p>	
4 and 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern clinical trials continued 	To get a feeling for the elements of how the therapies are conducted familiarize yourself with:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FILMS



		<p>Mithoefer, A., Jerome, L., Ruse, J., Doblin, R., Gibson, E., & Ot'alora M.G. (2015). A Manual for MDMA-Assisted Psychotherapy in the Treatment of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. https://maps.org/research-archive/mdma/MDMA-Assisted-Psychotherapy-Treatment-Manual-Version7-19Aug15-FINAL.pdf.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on Clinical Research, Episode 1: The Johns Hopkins Story https://www.horizonspb.com/the-johns-hopkins-story Magic Mushrooms and the Healing Trip. The New Yorker. 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=am12fHnOhXQ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=am12fHnOhXQ TedTalk: Psychedelics: Lifting the veil, Robin Carhart-Harris https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZIaTaNR3gk Podcast: The Huberman Lab: Dr. Robin Carhart-Harris: The Science of Psychedelics for Mental Health https://www.hubermanlab.com/episode/dr-robin-carhart-harris-the-science-of-psychedelics-for-mental-health
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Methodological problems in clinical trials of effects of psychedelic assisted therapy 	<p>van Elk M, Fried EI. History repeating: guidelines to address common problems in psychedelic science. <i>Therapeutic Advances in Psychopharmacology</i>. 2023;13. doi:10.1177/20451253231198466</p> <p>Doss, M. K., Barrett, F. S., & Corlett, P. R. (2022). Skepticism about Recent Evidence That Psilocybin “Liberates” Depressed Minds. <i>ACS Chemical Neuroscience</i>, 13, 2540-2543.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online filmed lecture Quiz



7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Methodological problems in clinical trials of effects of psychedelic assisted therapy 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PODCAST Listen to episode 6 of bad trip – “open heart surgery” https://www.psymposia.com/powertrip/ Transcript: https://www.thecut.com/2022/03/cover-story-podcast-open-heart-surgery.html
8	How do psychedelics work? Part 1: Behavioral and clinical neurobiology	<p>Carhart-Harris, R. L. (2019). How do psychedelics work?. <i>Current opinion in psychiatry</i>, 32(1), 16-21. https://dx.doi.org/10.1097/ycp.0000000000000467</p> <p>Vollenweider, F. X., & Preller, K. H. (2020). Psychedelic drugs: neurobiology and potential for treatment of psychiatric disorders. <i>Nature Reviews Neuroscience</i>, 1-14. https://dx.doi.org/10.1038/s41583-020-0367-2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online filmed lecture Online quiz <p>FILM: (Start at 5:45min): Pollan, Michael. <i>Psychedelics and How to Change Your Mind</i>. Bioneers. 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5DrM90dg5t4</p> <p>PODCAST/FILM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How Psilocybin Can Rewire Our Brain, Its Therapeutic Benefits & Its Risks Huberman Lab Podcasthttps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eIxVfn02Ss
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do psychedelics work? Part 2: Healing and mystical-type experiences, emotional breakthrough, personal insights, ego dissolutions 	<p>Wießner, I., Falchi, M., Palhano-Fontes, F., Feilding, A., Ribeiro, S., & Tófoli, L. (2023). LSD, madness and healing: Mystical experiences as possible link between psychosis model and therapy model. <i>Psychological Medicine</i>, 53(4), 1151-1165. doi:10.1017/S0033291721002531</p> <p>Roseman, L., Nutt, D. J., & Carhart-Harris, R. L. (2018). Quality of Acute Psychedelic Experience Predicts Therapeutic Efficacy of Psilocybin for Treatment-Resistant Depression. <i>Frontiers in Pharmacology</i>, 8.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online filmed lecture Watch film: https://www.horizonspbc.com/the-johns-hopkins-story Online quiz



		<p>Extra</p> <p>Kirmayer, L. J. (2004). The cultural diversity of healing: meaning, metaphor and mechanism. <i>British medical bulletin</i>, 69(1), 33-48. https://dx.doi.org/10.1093/bmb/ldh006</p> <p>Barrett, F. S., & Griffiths, R. R. (2017). Classic hallucinogens and mystical experiences: phenomenology and neural correlates. In <i>Behavioral neurobiology of psychedelic drugs</i> (pp. 393-430). Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg. https://dx.doi.org/10.1007/7854_2017_474</p>	
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do psychedelics work? Part 3: Healing and challenging experiences 	<p>Gashi, L., Sandberg, S., & Pedersen, W. (2021). Making “bad trips” good: How users of psychedelics narratively transform challenging trips into valuable experiences. <i>International Journal of Drug Policy</i>, 87, 102997.</p> <p>Breeksema JJ, Kuin BW, Kamphuis J, van den Brink W, Vermetten E, Schoevers RA. Adverse events in clinical treatments with serotonergic psychedelics and MDMA: A mixed-methods systematic review. <i>Journal of Psychopharmacology</i>. 2022;36(10):1100-1117. doi:10.1177/02698811221116926</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online filmed lecture Online quiz
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethical dilemmas: abuse, suggestibility Treatment with psychedelics: risks and concerns MAPS guidelines, training 	<p>https://www.thecut.com/tags/cover-story-podcast/</p> <p>McNamee, S., Devenot, N., Buisson, M., 2023. Studying Harms Is Key to Improving Psychedelic-Assisted Therapy—Participants Call for Changes to Research Landscape. <i>JAMA Psychiatry</i>.</p> <p>Peluso, D., Sinclair, E., Labate, B., Cavnar, C., 2020. Reflections on</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online filmed lecture Online quiz



		crafting an ayahuasca community guide for the awareness of sexual abuse. Journal of Psychedelic Studies 4(1), 24-33.	
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Students that receive accommodation letters, and need academic adjustments, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations as early in the semester as possible.