Welcome Week 2018
Micro-Seminars

Buzzed – Modern Pharmageddon,
Abuse or Addiction

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In conventional terms, “buzzed” is normally linked to the effect encountered after smoking various plants, drinking various alcoholic drinks, or ingesting various substances. Buzzed is the “high” one experiences. This seminar will inform students about other dangerous drug products that are skyrocketing in improper use, including opioids, benzodiazepines (Adderall), and synthetic drugs. These drugs, when used inappropriately are very dangerous. Over the course of the two-day program, we will survey the most recent news stories and discoveries about prescription opioids, purple drank (a concoction which includes a prescription-strength cough syrup), and bath salts. We will present information regarding the biological and behavioral changes in addiction, distinctive drug effects on the adolescent (young adult) brain, and trends from popular culture related to these drugs.

In quick-reference summaries, this class will report on how these drugs enter the body, how they manipulate the brain, their short-term and long-term effects, the different “highs” they produce, and the circumstances in which they can be deadly. This seminar aims to provide a clear understanding of how these substances work and the dangers and consequences of their use. Public Health workers in Los Angeles have identified a drug problem that has been emerging in the United States – an alarming epidemic of drug abuse, labeling the current climate as “Pharmageddon”. From buzzed to pharmageddon, this seminar will provide students with an overview of these substances, their addictive qualities, and their associated risks to individuals and society at large.

The first session of this micro seminar will introduce opioids, benzodiazepines, and synthetic drugs, their common names, and briefly describes the drug’s “buzz,” immediate hazards (overdose, etc.), and dangerous interactions with other substances. There will be discussions on the drug’s history, effects, and other topics, such as, when pertinent, addiction. The second session will contain information on the working of the brain, drugs in general, addiction in general, and legal issues. Together these two sessions are intended to dispel some of the myths associated with drug use and abuse.