

Working with Substance Use Disorders

MHA CREDENTIAL COURSE



Contents

3 WELCOME

4 LEARNING OUTCOMES

5
YOUR COURSE FACILITATOR

6 COURSE OUTLINE

CREDENTIAL & CERTIFICATE

18
HOW TO COMPLETE YOUR COURSE

20FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

23 CONTACTS



Congratulations on your decision to undertake training in this specialized field of mental health. We're thrilled to be joining you on this journey.

Substance use disorders are highly prevalent and impact individuals across the lifespan, leading to a myriad of negative consequences – including legal, financial, relationship, physical, social, spiritual, educational, and occupational.

In this comprehensive course, you'll learn the latest research, interventions, cultural insights and advocacy considerations for supporting clients with a range of substance use disorders.

The course includes engaging video lectures, case illustrations, suggestions for assessment tools and evidence-based interventions, expert video interviews, and a variety of peer-reviewed articles and supplementary readings, carefully created or curated by your course facilitator, Dr. Amanda Giordano.

Before you get started, please continue reading below. This course guide provides important information, instructions and resources you'll need to access and progress through the course.

All the best with your learning.

Kind regards,

Pedro Gondim

CEO, Mental Health Academy.

Pan (M/L

PS If you need any assistance whatsoever, just contact our friendly support team via help@mentalhealthacademy.net and we'll reply as soon as possible.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will have learned how to:

- (1) Characterize addiction and substance use disorders and cite the diagnostic criteria for them.
- 2 Discuss the neurobiology of substance use disorders.
- While differentiating between psychiatric symptoms and those of substance use, outline the essential components of integrated treatment and recognize barriers to providing it.
- 4 Ensure culturally relevant practice, applying multicultural counseling competencies and ethical decision-making to substance use disorder treatment.
- (5) Engage, focus, evoke, and plan in a motivational interviewing way, applying MI principles.
- 6 Outline the symptoms, effects, and withdrawal symptoms of using each of the main classes of drugs of abuse: stimulants, depressants, cannabis, hallucinogens and inhalants, and opioids.
- 7 Cite the key features of contingency management, 12-step programmes, motivational enhancement therapy, CRAFT (community reinforcement and family training), and cognitive behavioral therapy.
- 8 Describe an ideal treatment plan for a given client, including placement into an appropriate care facility, planning for the possible roles of group counseling and/or peer-led groups, and working with an appropriate relapse-prevention model to plan for possible relapse after treatment.
- Outline the key features of the chief family system theoretical orientations and common core assumptions in them.
- Discuss appropriate ways of working with clients who have both trauma and a substance use disorder.
- (1) Apply both individual and environmental prevention strategies to work with university students
- Take up the role of advocate, helping to enhance wellness and reduce barriers to effective treatment faced by clients with substance use disorders.

Your Course Facilitator

Dr. Amanda L. Giordano, Ph.D., is an established scholar, educator, and advocate in the field of addictions counseling.



Dr. Amanda L. Giordano, Ph.D., is an established scholar, educator, and advocate in the field of addictions counseling. As a licensed professional counsellor, her clinical training was in the field of addictions treatment at various levels of care. Dr. Giordano is an associate professor of counseling at the University of Georgia and has authored two books: A Clinical Guide to Treating Behavioral Addictions; and Addictions Counseling: A Practical Approach. Dr. Giordano has been teaching graduate level courses related to addictions treatment for over a decade. She is a prolific scholar in the field of addictions counseling and currently has authored 62 journal articles and book chapters. In addition, Dr. Giordano is a regularly sought-after speaker for both domestic and international conferences and workshops related to treating addiction. She has conducted trainings, produced content, and presented topics related to addictions counseling in the United States, United Kingdom, Austria, Canada, Greece, the Cayman Islands, and Australia. Dr. Giordano writes a blog for Psychology Today, Understanding Addiction, has authored several articles for the Counseling Today magazine (by the American Counseling Association), and has been a guest on a number of news broadcasts and podcasts. She has earned several prestigious awards in recognition of her work including the Addiction/Offender Educator Excellence Award, Russell H. Yeany Jr. Research Award, and Counselor Education Alumni Professional Excellence Award. Dr. Giordano is also the author of Mental Health Academy's internationally-renowned 38-hour credential course, Working with Behavioral Addictions.

Course Outline

Your Course is delivered entirely online and accessible on-demand, 24/7. The course is divided into 4 modules, with a total of 19 units.

Most units include a video lecture, a requisite resource (video or reading), an assessment, and other learning resources - such as handouts, supplementary readings, and expert interviews. Following is a breakdown of the course content.

A snapshot of course resources:





Module 1

Introduction to Substance Use Disorders

Clinicians already working with substance use disorders know how complex the issue is. For those who do not but are contemplating working with such presenting issues, this first module is an essential eye-opener.

Topics covered include: Prevalence statistics and classification system criteria (i.e. the DSM and the ICD) for substance use disorders; the neurobiology of addiction; multicultural competence and ethical considerations when working with substance misuse; motivational interviewing; and co-occurring disorders.

Module 1: Introduction to Substance Use Disorders

This module includes the following units:

Scope of the Issue and Diagnostic Considerations

In this unit, Dr. Amanda Giordano describes the prevalence of substance use and characterizes addiction and substance use disorders. She explains the several waves of the opioid epidemic in the United States and examines the diagnostic criteria for substance use disorders, offering examples. The DSM and ICD classifications of substance use disorders are compared.

2 Neurobiology of Addiction

In this unit, Dr. Giordano describes the chief structures of the brain, with particular emphasis on the three regions of the brain and the neurons and neurotransmitters whose roles are central to the onset of addiction. She offers a neuroscientific explanation for how drugs of abuse interfere with neurotransmission and outlines the complex interplay of factors that contribute to addiction, including the characteristics of genetic predisposition.

3 Ethical and Multicultural Considerations

In this unit, Dr. Giordano applies multicultural concepts to the understanding of substance use, advocating cultural humility; an ethical, social-justice-informed stance; and culturally-sensitive treatment plans adapted to individual clients. Addressing intersectionality, privilege and oppression, the use of anti-drug laws to control marginalized groups, and broaching, Giordano highlights cultural appropriation and ethical decision-making.

4 Motivational Interviewing

In this unit, Dr. Giordano overviews motivational interviewing (MI) as a tool for working with clients who have substance use disorders and the consequent need to change their behavior. The transtheoretical model, the spirit of MI, and the central notions of change and sustain talk are discussed, as well as the four important tasks of MI. Evoking strategies, such as the importance ruler, exploring extremes, and looking backward and forward are outlined, as well as how to do a directional reflection landing on the side of evoking change talk. Throughout the unit, you are offered ways of collaborating with the client to strengthen their own motivations for change.

5

Co-occurring Disorders

In this unit, Dr. Giordano explains why it is essential for clinicians to be able to distinguish between psychiatric symptoms and those of substance use. She illustrates how co-occurring disorders can manifest in a client and outlines the key components of integrated treatment while acknowledging the serious barriers to providing it.



Module 2

Drugs of Abuse

This module gets down to "brass tacks", offering you basic information about the prevalence of each main class of drugs, its effects on body/mind, what the withdrawal symptoms tend to be, and results of various relevant studies.

In each unit, you will learn about a treatment that is used by clinicians working with clients who have a substance use disorder. Drugs of abuse covered include: methamphetamines; cocaine; nicotine; barbiturates; benzodiazepines; nonbenzodiazepine hypnotics; alcohol; cannabis; hallucinogens and inhalant; opioids. Treatment methods covered include: contingency management, 12-step programmes, motivational enhancement therapy, CRAFT (community reinforcement and family training), and cognitive behavioral therapy.

Module 2: Drugs of Abuse

This module includes the following units:

1 Stimulants

In this unit, Dr. Giordano gives an overview of stimulant drugs and their common effects, outlining the main considerations for working with clients who use methamphetamines, cocaine, and nicotine. As mental health professionals, we need to be able to recognize prescription stimulant misuse when it appears in our rooms, and you are offered perspectives on that. Dr. Giordano also discusses contingency management, which is one approach for treating stimulant use disorders.

2 Depressants

In this unit, you get to learn about the depressant drug class: specifically, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, nonbenzodiazepine hypnotics, and alcohol. Dr. Giordano discusses the effects of ingestion of each class on the brain and body and outlines the effects of withdrawal. You hear numerous prevalence statistics and learn about several medications approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for alcohol use disorder. Project MATCH is summarized, along with how you may work with a client attending a 12-step programme for a substance use disorder.

3 Cannabis

In this unit, Dr. Giordano discusses different forms of cannabis products and explains the differences: not just in potency and how psychoactive they are, but also in terms of how they are ingested, with edibles and vaping growing in popularity. You learn the effects and typical withdrawal symptoms of cannabis use. Dr. Giordano explains a program to help young people say "no" to cannabis, and the treatment method highlighted in this unit is motivational enhancement therapy.

4 Hallucinogens and Inhalants

In this unit, you learn about hallucinogens and inhalants as Dr. Giordano explains the chief drugs of each type, outlining the main effects and which, if any, withdrawal symptoms are observed for each one. The state of current research, issues of setting, the hypothesized mechanism of action, and ethical considerations are discussed. The therapy highlighted in this unit is that of community reinforcement and family training, which is indicated when an individual is resistant to getting help.

5

Opioids and Synthetic Drugs

When opioids began to be widely prescribed as pain killers in the United States, misuse of them arose, leading to greater use of heroin, and eventually fentanyl. That epidemic still rages in the U.S. and beyond, so Dr. Giordano explains how important it is for mental health professionals to know about the prevalence, effects, and withdrawal symptoms of opioid use. You learn which drugs are used for medication-assisted treatment to help people overcome addiction. This unit also covers several prevalent synthetic drugs, and their effects on the body/mind. The treatment method highlighted in this unit is cognitive behavioral therapy, which has a solid history of empirical support for use with substance use disorders; you learn how functional analysis, urge surfing, skill learning, and broadening one's coping strategies are all important aspects of treatment.



Module 3

Aspects of Substance Use Treatment

This module walks you through some of the chief stops along the recovery journey.

The first stop (Unit 1) is to understand the importance of assessment and screening with all clients. Unit 2 is where clinician and client decide which type of setting will best serve the client's rehabilitation needs, so you learn about the different levels of care. Typically, a client's recovery journey will include group counseling and possibly peer support groups as part of the effort, so Units 3 and 4 respectively address those aspects. In the final stop, Unit 5, you will explore the ways in which you can help the client think adaptively about relapse, which is highly likely to occur.

Module 3: Aspects of Substance Use Treatment

This module includes the following units:

1 Assessments and Screening Instruments

From the very first session, mental health professionals have a responsibility to broach the question of substance use with clients. Intake forms and discussions with clients can be structured to identify problematic substance use. Multiple screening and assessment tools are available, and Dr. Giordano discusses the populations, purposes, and situations for which each of the chief ones is designed. Ethical considerations, including appropriateness of an instrument for a given client, inclusion of cultural factors, and holistic assessment all help ensure that periods of screening and assessment can also be counseling sessions.

(2) Treatment Settings and Placement

Once clients are ready to take on the momentous changes that come with overcoming substance use disorder, there is the question of which type of setting will best serve their rehabilitation efforts. In this unit, you learn about the different levels of care, from inpatient care to outpatient treatment services, and how clients' acute withdrawal symptoms may need to be managed in preparation for treatment. The American Society of Addiction Medicine has established placement criteria to match clients to the most appropriate care, and you learn the six domains of those criteria.

3 Group Counseling for Substance Use Disorders

In this unit, Dr. Giordano makes a strong case for the many benefits and therapeutic factors of group counseling, helpfully occurring along with individual and sometimes peer-led counseling, for those in recovery from substance use disorders. Giordano explains the different types of groups and the parameters that need to be set before any group sessions take place, including group agreements. Clients need to be screened to "set them up for success" and to ensure that the group will not be undermined by the client's presence; Giordano discusses the factors that should be taken into consideration and what a general screening process might look like. She outlines the topics, skills, and activities that are common in group counseling for SUDs. Giordano also notes the usefulness of the Johari Window for conceptualizing group development.



Peer Support Groups

As one component of recovery, along with individual and group counseling, peer support groups can be invaluable for clients overcoming substance use disorders. In this unit, Dr. Giordano explains the philosophy and benefits which peer support groups can confer. She goes over the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and outlines 12-step programs spawned by it, as well as non-12-step programs available in many communities. You also learn how to refer a client to a peer support group.



Relapse Prevention

Relapse into using again is a sad reality for the vast majority of people trying to overcome a substance use disorder. Thus, helping the client plan how to avoid relapse, or what to do when it happens, is crucial to overall success. In this unit, Dr. Giordano shares how we can help clients adaptively conceptualize relapse. She offers three models for relapse prevention, outlining their key features and strategies. Giordano also explains what is meant by post-acute withdrawal syndrome, an important phenomenon for both client and clinician to be aware of. A somewhat surprising factor in relapse prevention is your response as therapist to news that your client has relapsed; Giordano shares a case example to help you understand which responses to client relapse will be more helpful.



Module 4

Substance Use Counseling with the Family and Special Populations

In this final module, you will explore considerations for substance use counseling in specific settings: the family, clients with trauma, and university students.

Unit 1 explores how addiction impacts family roles and the whole family system, not just the individual client. In Unit 2, you will gain an understanding of the bi-directional relationship between substance use disorder and trauma, and what treatment modalities can support this client population. In Unit 3, the focus is on specific strategies to support university students whose high prevalence rate of drugs of abuse, in combination with late teen/young adult developmental issues, bring about unique challenges for mental health professionals, parents, and societies. In the final unit, you will learn how mental health professionals can become effective advocates for clients with substance use disorders.

Module 4: Substance Use Counseling with the Family and Special Populations

This module includes the following units:



There is no question about it; the addiction of one member of a family affects all family members and the system itself. Mental health professionals thus need to know how to identify the ways in which active addiction impacts family roles and the whole system. In this unit, Dr. Giordano explains the unspoken rules that family systems dealing with addiction typically adopt and details the higher risks faced by such families. She outlines the various family systems theoretical orientations and the core assumptions common to most approaches. Significant time is spent examining how to identify and treat adolescent substance use. The family checkup and multisystemic therapy are explained.

2 Substance Use and Trauma

It's no surprise to most counsellors that substance misuse and trauma go hand in hand. In this unit, Dr. Giordano explains the strong bi-directional association between the two, sharing research findings linking the trauma of adverse childhood experiences to substance use. There are different types of trauma, and different effects of it. You learn what the main types are and hear about the various categories of traumatic effects. Emotion dysregulation figures centrally in both substance use and trauma, so Giordano details five categories of strategies for enhancing emotion regulation. She explains the main features of programs which address substance use and trauma simultaneously and outlines the principles of trauma-informed care.

3 Substance Use in College Settings

In this unit, Dr. Giordano notes the transitional nature of the university years for the traditional college age student, a situation which, in combination with other risk factors common to the developmental age and the collegiate setting, means that university-aged students are at increased risk for substance use disorders. Citing study results and prevalence statistics, Giordano underscores the need for urgency on relevant policy development. She explains incapacitated sexual assault, motives for university student stimulant misuse, and negative side effects. The BASICS program and both individual and environmental prevention strategies are outlined. College recovery programs are an important resource for university students in recovery; the main features of these and the standards they must meet are discussed, along with what mental health professionals working on college campuses need to remember



Prevention and Advocacy Efforts

In this final unit, Dr. Giordano highlights the role of advocacy and how mental health professionals can advocate for clients in the substance use disorder space. She briefly traces the history and aims of advocacy movements and outlines the still formidable barriers faced by those with substance use disorders attempting to get quality treatment. Advocacy can occur at multiple levels, and Giordano lists actions you can take at each level to engage in advocacy.

Credential & Certificate

Upon successful completion of all 19 mandatory assessments, you'll be issued with an MHA Digital Badge and a CE Certificate of Attainment.



Course Duration

The total duration of this course is **30 hours**. This is based on a calculation of the number of hours required to read all requisite articles, watch video lectures and complete the online assessment components.



Digital Credential and CE Certificate

Upon successful completion of all 19 assessments, you'll be issued with an MHA Substance Use Disorders Digital Badge and a CE Certificate of Attainment.

A Digital Badge is a form of Digital Credential (also known as 'micro-credential') that can be verified/validated online. A digital badge signals your achievement to potential employers and stakeholders, as they are able to verify your learning/skill acquisition outcomes in real-time, over the web.

In addition to your MHA Digital Badge, you'll receive a downloadable CE Certificate of Attainment highlighting the 30 CE hours you've completed.

Both Digital Badge & Certificate of Attainment can be used to demonstrate your course completion and learning achievement.

How to Complete Your Course

Once you have reviewed this Guide and are ready to tackle your first unit, we suggest following this 6-step workflow (repeating it for each unit).

6-Step Workflow		Modules			
1	Read requisite readings. This will set the stage for watching the video lecture.	1	2	3	4
2	If you like to take hand notes, download and print the lecture's presentation slides. If you prefer to write electronically, start a document.				
3	Watch the video lecture, stopping (use the pause button) whenever you need to take notes or reflect on certain concepts. Tip: Lectures are broken down into smaller "chapters" to help you keep track of your progress.				
4	Complete the assessment for that unit. If you do not pass on your first try, don't worry – you can review your responses and re-submit new answers.				
5	Explore the supplementary learning resources [Optional]. Each unit includes a range of additional resources, such as video interviews, readings, guides, and more. Tip: We highly recommend watching the expert video interviews (they are filled with practical knowledge, covering a wide range of topics).				
6	Interact via the course's Private Facebook Group [Optional]. Our Facebook Group (click here to access) is a private forum that facilitates discussions with other course participants and your course facilitator. While joining the group is not mandatory, it is a great way to network, join discussions and learn from your peers.				

Assessment Methods

The course includes 19 multiple-choice, online assessments. To advance (i.e. unlock access) to the next module, you must complete the multiple-choice assessments for each of the units within the module you're currently in.

For successful completion of an assessment, you must attain a minimum 80% pass rate. As the assessment is competency-based, if you don't pass in your first try, you will have the opportunity to review, save and re-submit your answers.

Supplemental Learning Resources

Supplemental learning includes articles, expert interviews, videos, and more. Although these resources are not part of the core program, they were created or curated to expand your knowledge and understanding of substance use disorders (and how to best support clients struggling with addictions). As such, we recommend that you review them (especially the interviews).

After Completion

Through the MHA Learning Portal, you'll have lifetime, unrestricted access to all core course resources* – so you can refresh your knowledge at any time. You will also have continued access to the private Facebook Group – this medium will be used as a networking hub for mental health professionals participating in the course.

*Core course resources include your requisite readings, video lectures and handouts, and assessments. Some supplemental resources are accessible outside of the MHA portal, and may not be continually available in the future.



Questions & answers to help you navigate through the program.

How are course content and learning materials delivered?

Your course materials will be accessible online via the MHA Learning Portal (i.e. website). Course materials include journal articles, handouts and other downloads, video lectures, and online (multiple-choice) assessments. You will be able to access these materials and learning tools from most computer systems and mobile devices. Technical support will also be available in case you experience any difficulty accessing course resources.

What is the duration of the course?

The total duration of this course is 30 hours. This is based on a calculation of the number of hours required to read all requisite (i.e. core) articles, watch video lectures and complete the online assessment components. It does not include additional time required to read/watch/access supplemental learning resources.

What are the assessment requirements for this course?

The course includes 19 multiple-choice, online assessments. To advance (i.e. unlock access) to the next module, you must successfully complete the multiple-choice assessments for each of the units within the module you're currently in. For successful completion of an assessment, you are required to attain a minimum 80% pass rate. As the assessment is competency-based, if you don't pass in your first try, you will have the opportunity to review, save and re-submit your answers (there are no re-attempt limits).

What Certification do I get upon completion of this course?

When you complete this course, you'll be issued with an MHA Working with Substance Use Disorder Digital Badge and a CE Certificate of Attainment. A Digital Badge is a form of Digital Credential (also known as 'microcredential') that can be verified/validated online. A digital badge signals your achievement to potential employers and stakeholders, as they are able to verify your learning/skill acquisition outcomes in real-time, over the web. In addition to your MHA Digital Badge, you'll receive a downloadable CE Certificate of Attainment, which can also be used as proof of completion and printed (if you would like to display it in your office/workspace).

How is the MHA Digital Badge different from a traditional CE Certificate?

Digital badges are a form of an electronic portfolio to track and showcase your educational achievements. When you are issued with a digital badge, you'll receive a unique URL (link) that includes information about your achievement – such as the duration of a course you completed, the organisation that issued the badge, and what you had to do to receive it (e.g. complete assessments). Unlike a CE Certificate, information in your digital badge is verifiable **online and in real-time**, making it a more reliable source of data for prospective employers. Badges can also be more easily shared online and integrated into your website, digital professional profile (e.g. LinkedIn account), etc.

Will my MHA Digital Badge be recognized by employers?

Digital credentials are becoming increasingly more popular among employers and traditional educational institutions, such as Universities (you may have heard of the move towards micro-credentialing). Some of the world's biggest companies, such as Microsoft, and respected education providers, such as Harvard University, already issue digital credentials for their courses and workplace-related learning. Many experts believe that digital portfolios and digital credentials will eventually replace traditional CVs and provide learners with expanded opportunities to showcase their skills and educational achievements to prospective employers.

Does MHA offer other credential courses?

Yes. Visit this page to learn more about other Credentials we currently offer.

Can I save course content for future reference?

Your course guide, requisite readings, handouts and other supplemental materials can be downloaded and saved to your computer. Video content and assessments cannot be downloaded; however, they are accessible via the MHA Learning Portal at any time (including after you have successfully completed the course). All enrolled course participants will have lifetime access to requisite course learning materials.

What are the system requirements for watching videos?

Our video platform (Vimeo) is compatible with all up-to-date browsers (Chrome, Safari, Firefox, Opera, and Edge) and operating systems (Windows, Mac and mobile devices), and most residential internet connections should be more than adequate to watch the videos. If you experience any difficulties accessing video content, you can contact us for support at any time.

Do I need a Facebook Profile to join the discussion forum (i.e. Facebook Group)?

Yes, to access the forum and join in the group discussions, you will need a Facebook Profile. If you do not have a Facebook profile, we recommend setting one up to join the group, as it may enhance your learning experience and provide you with the opportunity to learn from and interact with your peers and course facilitator. While recommended, joining the Facebook Group is **not** a requirement to access and complete this course.

I live in a remote area with slow internet. Will I be able to access the lectures and other videos?

You may experience difficulties watching videos if your internet speed is very slow. We recommend that you contact your Internet Service Provider (ISP) to devise a solution. If that's not possible, you may wish to consider allocating time for travel, so you can access video content using a more appropriate connection (there will be approximately 14 hours of video content throughout the course).

What is your course refund policy?

This course includes a 14-day money back guarantee that empowers you to try the program entirely risk-free. If within 14 days of your enrollment **and before** completion of the first module* you're not entirely thrilled with the high level content you have access to, just email us to help@mentalhealthacademy.net and we'll give you your money back. No questions asked.

*Refund eligibility criteria: You will <u>not</u> be eligible for a full refund if: 1) You have completed all 4 assessments for Module 1) Your cancellation/refund request is emailed 15 (or more) days after your enrollment date. Please see our Terms & Conditions for more details.

Can I copy and or share course learning materials and resources?

Courses materials are only to be used by the individual person that enrolled in the course. Sharing your course access details and resources constitutes a breach of copyright and may result in the cancellation of your enrollment and ineligibility to access Certificates.

I'm an MHA member. How is this course different from what I can access with my membership?

MHA Membership Courses (available via our Catalog) are shorter, specific programs – with most courses ranging from 1 to 4 hours in duration. MHA Credential Courses are designed to provide a deeper-dive, content-rich experience (20+ hours of learning) backed up by real-life case studies and illustrations.



Need Support? Contact us and we'll get back to you as soon as possible.

Email: help@mentalhealthacademy.net Phone (business hours only): 804-293-0184

