

## **The assignment as described in the syllabus:**

### Comparison of Established and Alternative Treatments (15%)

The study of psychopharmacology is largely based on the success and continued demand for new drug therapies to treat neural and mental illnesses. With the popularity of alternative approaches to medical treatment there has been a greater emphasis placed not only on discovering new natural remedies, but also on the effectiveness and safety of those already known (see <http://nccam.nih.gov/> for interesting information).

Limiting your focus to one neural or mental illness, describe its diagnostic criteria and summarize its history of drug therapy. Identify some alternative drug remedies that have been applied to the treatment of this disorder. Address how a particular alternative treatment compares to the established drug therapy with regard to mechanism of action and effectiveness. Your paper should conclude with 1) your assessment of how the alternative treatment should be used in place of or, in combination with, the primary treatment for the disorder and 2) a summary of the major challenges still to be met in treating this disorder with drug therapy in general.

For the class discussion describe a neural or mental disorder and summarize its history of drug therapy. Identify some alternative drug remedies that have been applied to the treatment of this disorder. Describe what you find most intriguing about the alternative and your estimation of how popular the treatment is compared to the conventional one. This will be an informal presentation that should take approximately 5-10 minutes, including discussion. Handouts or use of the board is encouraged, but PowerPoint presentation will not be included.

Some examples of neural and mental illnesses that are suitable for this assignment: Parkinson's disease, ADHD, depression (many subtypes), anxiety (many subtypes, including OCD), schizophrenia, Alzheimer's disease, epilepsy, obesity and multiple sclerosis. If a topic of interest is not listed, please consult with me.