### Subject Description Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Code</th>
<th>RS1A02</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject Title</td>
<td>Obsessions, Compulsions and Addictions in Modern Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Value</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster Area</td>
<td>Human Nature, Relations and Development (HRD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium of Instruction</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-requisite / Co-requisite / Exclusion</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Objectives

Humans are habitual beings. Obsessions, compulsions, and addictions are part of normal human experience that often engages us in goal-directed behavior and to pursue meaning, but could also captivate us in rewarding and/or detrimental ways. This subject aims to help students understand the nature and range of common obsessions, compulsive and addictive behaviors in modern societies. The subject further examines how biological make-up, individual motivation & emotion, and socio-economic forces could shape compulsive and addictive behavior. Students are guided to explore and identify strategies that are effective in managing obsessions, compulsions and addictions used by individuals and by the society.

### Intended Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:

(a) Analyze the origins, functions and impact of common compulsions and addictions for individuals and for modern societies.

(b) Conduct a self-assessment of one’s lifestyle, well-being, obsessions, compulsive and addictive behavior.

(c) Critically examine lay and professional theories of addictions and compulsions.

(d) Analyze the individual, social, cultural, and economic factors shaping compulsive and addictive behavior.

(e) Explore and identify strategies for management of compulsions and addictions by individuals and by the society.

### Subject Synopsis/Indicative Syllabus

1. **The Nature and Roots of Obsessions, Compulsions and Addictions**
   
   (a) Origins of obsessions and compulsions
   
   (b) Biological, psychological, and social theories of addictions.
   
   (c) The “Serious Leisure” perspective
   
   (d) Over-eating, obesity, eating disorders, ‘nutritionism’
   
   (e) Weight, figure, and beauty
   
   (f) Love, obsessions, and stalking
   
   (g) Compulsive sex and pornography
   
   (h) Compulsive buying and hoarding
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching/Learning Methodology</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lectures:</strong> Introduce to students about the common types of compulsive and addictive behavior in modern societies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online exercises:</strong> Students are required to watch videos related to compulsive and addictive behaviors and provide reflections on them. Complete online questionnaires and exercises that help them understand their own obsessions, compulsions, and addictions.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Workshop (in tutorial groups):</strong> Using discussion, role plays, demonstrations, guide students to critically examine the origins and features of compulsions and addiction, and examine the key strategies in containing and managing compulsions and addictions by individuals and the society.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Seminar:</strong> Each student will prepare and give a presentation to share about their own serious leisure, obsessions, compulsions, and addictions with the class.</td>
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</table>
Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific assessment methods/tasks</th>
<th>% weighting</th>
<th>Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Essay</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>a b c d e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Quiz</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Seminar</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The students will write a short essay on the nature, origins, and management of a particular type of compulsive or addictive behavior that they are interested in. The assignment requires them to integrate knowledge learned, and to reflect on their own growth and development. Students are encouraged to make use of the results of the online questionnaires or self-assessment exercises in self-reflection.

The multiple choice quiz will be a comprehensive test of student’s knowledge of key concepts and their learning in the subject.

For the seminar, students will share their experience in one kind of serious leisure, obsession, compulsion, or addiction. The topic will require students to develop deeper self-understanding, examine how the obsession or addictive behavior is rewarding to them, how it may have impact on their health and motivation, and how they manage such behavior.

Student Study Effort Expected

Class contact:
- Lectures 26 Hrs.
- Workshops 6 Hrs.
- Seminars 6 Hrs.

Other student study effort:
- Self-study 50 Hrs.
- Preparation of seminar presentation 20 Hrs.

Total student study effort 108 Hrs.

Reading List and References


Boon, J., & Sheridan, L. (Eds.). *Stalking and psychosexual obsession: Psychological perspectives for prevention, policing and treatment*. Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.


