

Model Curriculum on Substance Abuse: Prevention and Management



The University Grants Commission

Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg
New Delhi – 110002

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August, 2026

Published by : Secretary, University Grants Commission,
Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi – 110002

Designed by : **e-Governance Cell**
University Grants Commission, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,
New Delhi – 110002

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Curriculum Framework Outline

Course Title: Substance Abuse: Prevention and Management

Level: Undergraduate and Postgraduate

Total Credits: 2 (30 Hours)

Mode: Theory / Practical Activities (Sensitization, Awareness and Community Engagement)

Unit	Title
I	Understanding Substance Abuse
II	Science of Addiction
III	Prevention of Substance Abuse
IV	Identification and Management
V	Ethics, Law, Policies and Programmes
VI	Youth Engagement and Action

NCrF Level: 4.5–8

**As per UGC Curriculum and Credit Framework for Undergraduate Programmes (<https://www.ugc.ac.in/e-book/FYUGP/mobile/index.html>), a one-credit of tutorial work means one-hour engagement per week. In a semester of 15 weeks duration, a one-credit tutorial in a course is equivalent to 15 hours of engagement.*

A one-credit course in practicum or lab work, community engagement and services, and field work in a semester means two-hour engagement per week.

In a semester of 15 weeks duration, a one-credit practicum in a course is equivalent to 30 hours of engagement.

The proposed number of credits per course and the credit distribution are suggestive and the HEIs may decide on course credits and distribution over semesters in a manner that will facilitate the students to meet the minimum credit requirements.

Course Outcomes (CO)

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

CO1: Analyze the fundamental concepts, epidemiological trends, and multidimensional consequences of substance abuse and addiction.

CO2: Explain the neurobiological and psychosocial mechanisms underlying addiction, including associated risk factors and mental health vulnerabilities.

CO3: Design comprehensive prevention strategies utilizing life skills, peer, family, and higher educational institution support, community engagement, and public awareness initiatives.

CO4: Understand screening and early identification, clinical management protocols, rehabilitation and recovery frameworks for individuals experiencing substance use disorders.

CO5: Evaluate the human rights, ethical, legal, and policy frameworks governing substance abuse management, as well as the role of civil society.

CO6: Execute practical strategies such as sensitization campaigns, community engagement activities, and novel awareness initiatives to actively promote a substance-free environment.

UNIT I: Understanding Substance Abuse

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

ULO 1.1: Differentiate between types of substances and their use, misuse, dependence, and addiction.

ULO 1.2: Analyze epidemiological trends and the multidimensional consequences of addiction.

Unit Outline

Concepts and Terminology: Drug use, misuse, abuse, dependence, and addiction; concept and classification of psychoactive substances; Substance Use Disorders (SUD): definition, diagnostic criteria, and continuum of substance use, characteristics of addiction.

Types of Psychoactive Substances: Alcohol, tobacco and nicotine products, cannabis and cannabis-derived products, opioids and prescription opioids, stimulants, sedatives, hypnotics, hallucinogens and dissociative substances, inhalants, emerging psychoactive substances and locally prevalent drugs.

Acute and Chronic Effects of Substance Use: Pharmacological effects of major classes of psychoactive substances, short-term and long-term physical, psychological, behavioural, and social consequences, health risks associated with polysubstance use and overdose.

Epidemiology of Substance Use: Global trends in substance use and Substance Use Disorders; national and regional epidemiological patterns; prevalence, incidence, and emerging trends among vulnerable populations.

Consequences of Substance Use and Addiction:

Individual consequences: Impact on physical and mental health, impaired cognitive functioning, academic and occupational difficulties, and financial burden.

Family consequences: Family conflict, domestic violence, marital disruption, child neglect, financial burden and caregiver burden.

Social consequences: Road traffic accidents, stigma, social exclusion, conflict with law and community disruption.

National consequences: Public health burden, economic costs, reduced workforce productivity, and challenges to law enforcement and social development.

Suggested Readings

1. Ambekar, A., Agrawal, A., Rao, R., Mishra, A. K., Khandelwal, S. K., & Chadda, R. K. (2019). *Magnitude of Substance Use in India*. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India & AIIMS, New Delhi.
2. Murthy, P., Manjunatha, N., Subodh, B. N., Chand, P. K., & Benegal, V. (2010). *Substance Use and Addiction Research in India*. Indian Journal of Psychiatry, 52(Suppl 1), S189–S199.

3. World Health Organization. (2024). *Global Status Report on Alcohol and Health and Treatment of Substance Use Disorders*. Geneva. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240096745>

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UNIT II: Science of Addiction

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

ULO 2.1: Explain the neurobiological and psychosocial models of substance abuse and addiction.

ULO 2.2: Understand risk factors, protective factors, and mental health vulnerabilities of substance abuse and addiction.

Unit Outline

Neurobiology of Addiction: Brief overview of the brain reward pathway, role of dopamine and other neurotransmitters in addiction, neuroadaptation, craving, and relapse.

Psychosocial Models of Addiction: Psychological and social determinants of substance use and addiction.

Risk and Protective Factors: Biological and psychological risk factors: genetic predisposition, stress and coping, depression and anxiety, personality disorders, trauma, and adverse childhood experiences. Social and environmental risk factors: peer influence, family environment, social media, academic stress, poverty, unemployment, economic and community factors. Protective factors: resilience, family support, positive peer relationships, life skills, social connectedness, and supportive environments, psychosocial and mental health support services, welfare schemes and policies.

Mental Health and Other Vulnerabilities: Relationship between mental health and substance use disorders, dual diagnosis and substance-induced psychiatric disorders, suicide and self-harm risk associated with substance use. Substance use among special vulnerable populations: adolescents, women, older adults, healthcare professionals, and other high-risk groups.

Suggested Readings

1. Koob, G. F., & Volkow, N. D. (2016). Neurobiology of Addiction: A Neurocircuitry Analysis. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 3(8), 760–773. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366\(16\)00104-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366(16)00104-8)
2. Volkow, N. D., Koob, G. F., & McLellan, A. T. (2016). *Neurobiologic Advances from the Brain Disease Model of Addiction*. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 374(4), 363–371.
3. Bolton, D. (2023). A revitalized biopsychosocial model: Core theory, research paradigms, and clinical implications. *Psychological Medicine*, 53(16), 7504–7511. doi:10.1017/S0033291723002660

UNIT III: Prevention of Substance Abuse

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

ULO 3.1: Explain the principles and strategies of substance abuse prevention at the individual, family, institutional, and community levels.

ULO 3.2: Apply life skills and collaborative approaches to promote healthy behaviours and prevent substance abuse among peers and within the community.

Unit Outline

Prevention Interventions:

Foundations of Prevention: Concept and importance of substance abuse prevention; goals and principles of prevention; levels and strategies of prevention: primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention; universal, selective, and indicated prevention; health promotion; early identification and screening.

Self-management and Life Skills: Self-awareness, emotional regulation, decision-making, problem-solving, stress management, communication, assertiveness and refusal skills, resilience, and healthy lifestyle practices.

Peer Support and Campus Action: Peer influence and peer leadership; managing peer pressure; creating supportive campus environments; student-led prevention initiatives; peer education; early identification and referral; promoting substance-free campus culture.

Family and Community Engagement: Role of parents and caregivers; strengthening family communication; community participation; collaboration with educational institutions, healthcare providers, local self-governments, and civil society organisations.

Media and Public Awareness: Health communication strategies; awareness and behaviour change communication; use of traditional, digital and social media; public awareness campaigns; advocacy; addressing myths, stigma, and misinformation related to substance use.

Suggested Readings

1. Griffin, K. W., & Botvin, G. J. (2010). Evidence-based interventions for preventing substance use disorders in adolescents. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 19(3), 505–526. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chc.2010.03.005>
2. International Society of Substance Use Professionals. (2020). Universal Prevention Curriculum. ISSUP. <https://www.issup.net/training/universal-prevention-curriculum>
3. McKenzie, J., & Seabert, D. (2008). Prevention: primary, secondary, and tertiary. In *Encyclopedia of epidemiology* (Vol. 2, pp. 839–840). SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412953948.n367>

4. World Health Organization. (2000). Primary Prevention of Substance Use: A Facilitator Guide. World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland. https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/substance-use/primary-prevention-guide-17.pdf?sfvrsn=a8f74eaf_2

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UNIT IV: Identification and Management

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

ULO 4.1: Identify individuals at risk of substance use disorders through appropriate screening, early identification, and assessment strategies.

ULO 4.2: Explain the principles and components of evidence-based management, including clinical treatment, psychosocial interventions, rehabilitation, and recovery support.

Unit Outline

Screening and Early Identification: Validated screening tools (ASSIST, AUDIT, CAGE, CRAFFT etc.); Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT); early identification in healthcare, educational, and community settings; referral pathways.

Clinical Management and Treatment: Management of intoxication, withdrawal, and dependence; pharmacological and non-pharmacological treatment; continuity of care and multidisciplinary management.

Psychosocial Support and Counselling: Transtheoretical model of change; brief interventions; individual, family, and group counselling; behavioural therapies; relapse prevention; family engagement; peer support; stigma reduction and recovery-oriented care; after care.

Rehabilitation and Recovery: Rehabilitation services; community-based rehabilitation; vocational and social reintegration; recovery support systems; long-term follow-up; harm reduction approaches; roles of healthcare professionals, families, communities, and support organizations in sustaining recovery; support groups and AA/NA groups.

Suggested Readings

1. The Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme. (2020). The UTC for substance use disorders: Trainer's Guide (4th ed.). International Society of Substance Use Professionals. <https://www.issup.net/training/universal-treatment-curriculum>
2. Humeniuk, R., Henry-Edwards, S., Ali, R., Poznyak, V., & Monteiro, M. (2010). The ASSIST-linked brief intervention for hazardous and harmful substance use: Manual for use in primary care. World Health Organization, Geneva. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/978-92-4-159939-9>
3. Raihan, N., & Cogburn, M. (2023). *Stages of change theory*. StatPearls Publishing. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK556005/>
4. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2013). Systems-level implementation of Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) (Technical Assistance Publication Series 33). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://library.samhsa.gov/product/tap-33-systems-level-implementation-screening-brief-intervention-and-referral-treatment>

UNIT V: Ethics, Law, Policies and Programmes

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

ULO 5.1: Explain the ethical, legal, and policy frameworks guiding substance abuse prevention in India.

ULO 5.2: Apply ethical and human rights principles to analyze substance use prevention programmes.

Unit Outline

1. Human Rights and Ethical Foundations of Substance Use Prevention

Human rights principles in substance use prevention: right to health, dignity, equality, non-discrimination, and access to evidence-based prevention and care.

Ethical principles: respect for autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice, confidentiality, privacy, and informed consent.

Ethical and human rights issues in substance use prevention across different settings.

Rights-based and ethical decision-making in the design, implementation, and evaluation of prevention programmes.

2. Legal and Policy Frameworks: Overview of national drug control and public health policies

Key legislations:

Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985

Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003

Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016

Mental Healthcare Act, 2017

Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Act (PECA), 2019

3. National Programmes and Initiatives

National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR)

Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA)

National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP)

Government-led community-, school-, college-, and workplace-based substance use prevention initiatives

4. Community Participation and Multisectoral Collaboration

Role of civil society organizations, educational institutions, youth organizations, families, community leaders, and local self-government institutions in substance use prevention.

Community engagement, advocacy, stigma reduction, and promotion of recovery-oriented approaches; building community resilience through multisectoral partnerships and coordinated prevention strategies.

Case studies and policy analysis of community-based substance use prevention programmes.

Suggested Readings

1. Parmar, A., Narasimha, V. L., & Nath, S. (2024). National drug laws, policies, and programs in India: A narrative review. *Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine*, 46(1), 5–13.
2. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. (2023). *Implementation framework of the Scheme of National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR)*. Government of India. https://socialjustice.gov.in/writereaddata/UploadFile/Scheme_for_NAPDDR.pdf
3. Joseph, S., & Hemalatha, K. (2021). Addiction treatment in India: Legal, ethical and professional concerns reported in the media. *Indian Journal of Medical Ethics*, 6(4), 306–313. <https://doi.org/10.20529/IJME.2021.030>
4. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime & World Health Organization. (2018). International Standards on Drug Use Prevention (2nd ed.). <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/prevention/prevention-standards.html>

UNIT VI: Youth Engagement and Action

Upon completion of this unit, students will be able to:

ULO 6.1: Execute practical sensitization and experiential awareness activities.

ULO 6.2: Design community engagement campaigns and novel preventive strategies.

Unit Outline

The students are expected to be engaged in some (at least 5) of the following or similar identified activities to encourage their engagement and participation:

1. Sensitization

Visit to rehabilitation centre, documentary/movie screening, pledge, poster display, role play, stakeholder interaction, expert talk by enforcement authorities.

2. Awareness

Guest lecture, interactions with NGOs, drug-free institute self-declaration.

3. Community engagement

Social media campaign/material, institutional and community level.

4. Novel initiatives

Ideathon, best practices, innovative strategies, case studies, storytelling, survey-based studies and roadmap planning.

Additional Readings

1. National Survey on Extent and Pattern of Substance Use in India, National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre, AIIMS, New Delhi (2019), Published by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India.
https://www.aiims.edu/images/pdf/Departments_Centers/NDDTC/Magnitude_Substance_Use_India_R_EPORT.pdf
2. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2025). *World Drug Report 2025*.
<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/world-drug-report-2025.html>
3. Baldi, A., Bhatia, R., & Kumar, R. (2026). *Drug Abuse*. Rudransh Books Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.
4. National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2020). *Drugs, brains, and behavior: The science of addiction – Treatment and recovery*. NIH, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
<https://nida.nih.gov/publications/drugs-brains-behavior-science-addiction/treatment-recovery>
5. NIDA Brain Interactive Modules. <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWezyUz7MLp9stKGD-jriV-81n6ZL16CM>

6. WHO Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP) Guideline for Mental, Neurological and Substance Use Disorders, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/B09329>
7. World Health Organization. (2022). Global Alcohol Action Plan 2022–2030 to strengthen implementation of the Global Strategy to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol. World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240056343>
8. Babor, T. F., Higgins-Biddle, J. C., Saunders, J. B., & Monteiro, M. G. (2001). AUDIT: The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test – Guidelines for use in primary care (2nd ed.). World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-MSD-MSB-01.6a>
9. Ahuja, N. (2024). *A Short Textbook of Psychiatry* (7th ed.). Jaypee Brothers Medical Publishers.
10. Mahadevan, J., Gautam, M., & Benegal, V. (2024). Mental health and well-being for the prevention of substance use disorders. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, 66(Suppl 2), S272–S282. https://doi.org/10.4103/indianjpsychiatry.indianjpsychiatry_716_23
11. The WHO ASSIST package for hazardous and harmful substance use (2009). World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/the-who-assist-package-for-hazardous-and-harmful-substance-use>