

E622 A AUT24 Wisdom and Happiness

Course Summary

The course is aimed at students who want to reflect on how to live more fulfilling personal and professional lives.

In this course, we will study how we can become wiser and happier in our personal, professional and civic lives. Wisdom is an expertise in dealing with difficult questions of life and adaptation to its complex requirements. Wisdom takes a long-term perspective and underpins individual and societal happiness. Wisdom and happiness are founded on a healthy relationship with reality, with oneself, and with other people. This course will address how to grow in wisdom and happiness, drawing on diverse disciplines and traditions, including psychology, systems theory, philosophy, and the humanities.

Some of the questions we will address are:

- Who is a wise person? What are the sources of wisdom?
- What can science teach us about how we can be happier?
- What are some examples of myopic and short-termist thinking in organizations and what are the consequences?
- What is the relationship between happiness and personal relationships? What types of attitudes, and behaviours does science link to good vs. poor relationships? For example, what predicts divorce vs. happy marriages?
- What are human virtues? Why are certain qualities considered virtues by the world's wisdom traditions (such as courage, honesty, fairness or kindness), but not others (such as attractiveness, richness, or intelligence)?
- Why and how are benevolence, sincerity, respect, courage, gratitude and hope linked to wisdom and happiness?
- How can arts and books support our happiness and flourishing?
- If you would like to spend some of your money on charitable causes, what would those causes be? Why?

Credit: 11

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Develop a mastery over the ideas, attitudes and behaviours that lead to sustainable happiness and a generative life.

2. Develop an awareness on the pitfalls of reductionist, myopic, and short-termist thinking in personal, professional, and societal life.
3. Articulate your most fundamental values and character strengths, and reflect on how you can maximize their relevance in your life, to increase your happiness and the happiness of others.
4. Reflect on how you can make the world a better place by leveraging your values, character strengths, and skills.
5. Identify domains and methods by which you can grow in wisdom and happiness.