

## MINUTES OF THE 36<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF STUDENT SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON APRIL 9, 2015 IN THE BOARD ROOM, NEW VC BLOCK, IGNOU

The 36<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Student Services Committee (SSC) was held on April 9, 2015 at 2.30 p.m. in the Board Room, New VC Block, IGNOU. The meeting was attended by the following :

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|--|---|------------------|
| 1. Prof. Nageshwar Rao, Vice Chancellor                                | - | Chairperson      |
| 2. Prof. P. Prakash, PVC   | - | Special Invitee  |
| 3. Prof. Sushma Yadav, PVC   | - | Member           |
| 4. Dr. Sanjeev Pandey, Member BoM &<br>Regional Director (RC, Delhi-1) | - | Member           |
| 5. Prof. Gracious Thomas, Director, SOSW                               | - | Special Invitee  |
| 6. Dr. Srikant Mohapatra, Director, RSD                                | - | Member Secretary |

Prof. D. Gopal, Member, SSC could not attend the meeting. Dr. Indrani Lahiri attended the meeting from RSD to assist the Member Secretary. The meeting was also attended by the Academics from RSD.

Dr. Mohapatra, Director, RSD and Member Secretary welcomed Prof. Nageshwar Rao, Vice Chancellor, Members and the Special Invitees to the 36<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the SSC.

With the permission of the Chair, the Agenda points of the meeting were considered, and the Proceedings were as follows :

<b>Item No. 1</b>	To Report the minutes of the 35 <sup>th</sup> SSC meeting (Emergency).
The draft minutes of the 35 <sup>th</sup> meeting of the SSC was approved to be placed before the BoM. The confirmation of the minutes of the 33 <sup>rd</sup> and 34 <sup>th</sup> Student Services Committee as approved by the 121 <sup>st</sup> BoM was reported to the Committee.	
<b>Item No. 2</b>	Action Taken Report
The Member Secretary informed at length the various initiatives taken on the decisions of SSC in the earlier three meetings. The Committee noted the actions taken on various items and made the following observations :	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The revamping of Student Service Center and Public Information Unit for providing better services to students were discussed at length. The members observed that in spite of the initiatives taken information flow to the students is not adequate. It has been agreed upon that continuous orientation to the Learners as well as Academic Counsellors is urgently required to address this issue. In order to ensure improvement in information flow, it has been thought appropriate that programme guides and assignments shall be placed on the IGNOU website with the permission of the Competent Authority.</li> <li>2. The Committee deliberated at length on issues related to maintenance grant and felt that such grant is necessary, especially for high enrollment centers and even for those located in remote locations. The Committee decided that the existing scheme should be reviewed and guidelines be amended keeping in mind the operational issues at the Learner Services Centres.</li> </ol>	

3. Regarding establishment of Study Center maintained by IGNOU the following issues were discussed :

- i. Examination of IGNOU's statutory provisions for maintaining and establishing Study Center by IGNOU, and strategies to be evolved for establishment of such centers.
- ii. Space and manpower of the Regional Centres could be effectively utilized by establishing a study center at the campus of the Regional Centres having its own building.

The Committee decided that details of this initiative along with operational and infrastructure guidelines be proposed and placed for consideration of the Committee.

4. Regarding the Scheme of scholarships for books to IGNOU students belonging to SC, ST and PH, the Chairman informed that MHRD has granted funds for utilization to IGNOU with approval of statutory committees of IGNOU.

**Item No. 3**

To consider the proposals for establishment of new LSCs, activation of programmes at existing LSCs and closure/keeping in abeyance of LSCs.

The Member Secretary presented the recommendations for establishment of 42 Regular Study Center, 20 Programme Study Centers and 22 Spl. Study Centers, activation of 183 Programmes at existing Study Centers and closure of 38 Learner Support Centers.

The Committee considered and approved the proposals for the establishment of 27 (Enclosed as Annexure-1). The Committee also asked one of the members (Dr. Sanjeev Pandey, Member, BoM) to reviews the proposals submitted for closure of Study Centres under Regional Centre, Delhi-2.

In view of the priority being given by GoI for educational development in the North-East Region (NER), the Committee observed that adequate steps may be taken to augment the establishment of Learner Services Center network in NER on a priority basis.

The Committee was also informed that Study Centers were difficult to establish in all districts of NER due to lack of Academic Counsellors having experience as per norms prescribed by IGNOU. Most Academic Counsellors do not have experience although they have necessary qualifications. This was also true for other states in the country where study centers could not be established in remote locations due to lack of approved Academic Counsellors. Lack of teaching experience was also a road block in establishment of Army-Navy Study Centers under the IAEP/INEP Projects.

Observing that IGNOU Study Centrs have not yet been established in every district of the country even after 25 years of existence of the University, the Committee agreed that there was a need to revisit the criteria for appointment of academic counsellors and perhaps the 5 years teaching experience should not be considered mandatory. The Member Secretary informed that the

Statutes and Ordinance of the University has been silent on appointment of Academic Counsellors.

The Committee decided that in view of the above, norms for appointment of Academic Counsellors in IGNOU needs to be reviewed.

Before concluding the discussions, Member Secretary brought up few points for the consideration of the Committee :

- a. Monitoring of IGNOU Regional center and Study Centers had taken a back seat and this activity needs to be revived urgently.
- b. IGNOU degrees are not being recognized by many institutions and universities. There is an urgent need for the university to respond immediately to any correspondence which talks about distinction between ODL and Regular Universities and copy of the MHRD letter emphasizing parity between the two should be circulated.
- c. MHRD has given 12 MeLT Vans to the University, which have to be collected from IIT, Roorkee, and expenditure has to be incurred for this activity. The Chairman approved that expenditure can be made as per University norms.
- d. It was agreed upon by the members that committees may be constituted immediately to address the mentioned below :
  - i. Strategy for continuous orientation of Academic Councillors and part-time staff of the LSCs.
  - ii. Relaxation of criteria for appointment of Academic Councillors
  - iii. Drawing up an action plan for monitoring of RCs and SCs

The Meeting ended with vote of thanks to the Chair.



**(Srikant Mohapatra)**  
**Director (RSD) &**  
**Member Secretary, SSC**