

Minutes of the 25th School Board Meeting

The 25th School Board meeting of SOCIS was held on June 1, 2007. It was attended by the following members:

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| 1. Shashi Bhushan, SOCIS | (Chairman) |
| 2. Prof. Om Vikas, Director IIITM, Gwalior | Member |
| 3. Dr. G. Venkatesh, CEO, SASKEN | Member |
| 4. Prof. Y.N. Srikant, IIS, Bangalore | Member |
| 5. Prof. Manohar Lal, SOCIS, IGNOU | Member |
| 6. V V Subrahmanyam, SOCIS, IGNOU | Member |
| 7. M P Mishra, SOCIS, IGNOU | Member |
| 8. Naveen Kumar, SOCIS, IGNOU | Member |
| 9. P.V. Suresh, SOCIS, IGNOU | (Special Invitee) |
| 10. Sudhansh Sharma, SOCIS, IGNOU | (Special Invitee) |

Prof. M. Balakrishnan, IIT, Delhi, Prof. A.K. Pujari, Hyderabad, Prof. A.R. Khan, Prof. Gayatri Kansal, Dr. Sanjay Mishra, Dr. Kamal Vagrecha could not attend the meeting.

The meeting began with the Chairman welcoming the members and the agenda items were taken up one by one.

Item No.25.1 Confirmation of Minutes of the 24th School Board Meeting

- 25.1.1 As no comments were received from any member on the Minutes of the 24th meeting of the School Board, these minutes were confirmed.

Item No.25.2 To consider and approve launching of M.Phil Programme in Computer Science

- 25.2.1 The Chairman explained about the significance of M.Phil programme with regard to developing good quality teaching skills and research. The members were also informed about large demand of M.Phil qualification for the appointment as faculty in computer science in Colleges and Universities. Also, there is an exemption of M.Phil degree holders the requirement of NET for applying for the post of faculty in computer science.
- 25.2.2 The Board considered and approved the item with the following recommendations:
- M.Phil programme should be launched by the SOCIS with a period of two years duration.
 - It there should be focused on strong research work.
 - The University should identify few research areas for the final year projects.
 - There must be a mechanism for peer group interaction to support good research work environment.
 - The University must make a budgetary support for allowing the students to attend the conferences for presenting their papers and also for filing patents.
 - The admission for the program me may be **restricted** to produce good quality students.

- Students coming from the other streams (non-computer science) should also be permitted to join M. Phil in Computer Science programme.
- The students will be required to publish at least one research paper in the reputed National/ International journals/conferences to complete the partial fulfillment of the degree.

25.2.3 Ph.D. Programme: In this respect, Prof Manohar Lal mentioned that in view of the fact that a number of circulars have been received from the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor to initiate Ph. D programme in the School, the process for Ph. D program should be initiated immediately.

25.2.4 The suggestion for initiating Ph. D program me was considered and approved by the Board members.

Item No.25.3 To consider and approve launching of “Certified VLSI Professional” in collaboration with Powai Labs Tech Ltd.

25.3.1 It was observed by the Chairman that the VLSI (Very Large Scale Integration) is a new growing technology at present. As per the survey there is a requirement of at least 50,000 VLSI professionals by the Indian Industry per year. However, at present around 10,000 VLSI professionals are being made available annually by the various Educational Institutes. Thus, there is a large gap between fresh annual availability of the human resources and requirement in this area.

It was pointed out that at present to service the needs in this respect, of the industry and other research groups, the universities/RECs/IITs etc., the traditional sources of manpower development are generating only a fraction of the required professionals. Hence, there is an urgent need for training VLSI professionals to meet the demand of the industry.

Members were also informed that a sub-group set up by the Planning Commission earlier to fill the gap in the field of VLSI has suggested the following actions that need to be urgently taken for the purpose:

1. Progressively establish the infrastructure for generating VLSI Design Engineers.
2. Promote the development of specialized CAD tools for VLSI design.
3. Strengthen infrastructure for export of VLSI design.
4. Launch VLSI penetration Programmes.
5. Initiate Special Manpower Development Programme for VLSI Design & Related Software.

25.3.2 In view of the above, the matter was discussed in the School Council meeting and considered the proposal received from Powai Labs Tech Ltd. and recommended to launch Certificate Programme in VLSI (6 months duration) initially, which may be further developed as Diploma and M.Tech degree in VLSI with joint efforts of SOCIS, Computer Division and the outside agency.

25.3.3 The programme was accepted in principle by the Board. However, the members made the following suggestions:

- In view of the fact that the School should explore the possibilities of launching the programme only after a thorough discussion in a wider forum involving the other stakeholders in this area such as Semi-conductors Association of India,

STMicromicro Electronics, Cadance Design System etc., specially, in order to decide possible role of the School in the launching of program.

- In view of the fact that the School does not have expertise in this area, it should explore possible collaboration with other Schools and the stakeholders mentioned above
- The School should explore the market acceptability of the programme before offering.
- Should determine the level (PG or UG) at which the program me should be offered.
- To find out the desirability or otherwise of tying up with a specific platform/vendor.

Item No.25.4 To consider and approve the Revised Phase Zero Form for Certificate in Information Technology (CIT)

25.4.1 The Programme Coordinator explained that the Phase Zero Form of CIT and revised syllabi have been approved by the School Board of School of Computer and Information Sciences at its meeting held on 28.2.2006 (Annexure-I). The matter was placed before the 18th Academic Council Standing Committee meeting held on 20.3.06 for consideration and approval (as Item No.10 – Annexure-II). The Committee advised to constitute a Sub-Committee for re-examining the contents of the course. The First meeting of the Committee was held on 9th August 2006, (Annexure-IV). The Committee suggested certain changes, which were placed in the Academic Council’s Standing Committee held on 18th October 2006, (item no. 12 – Annexure V), which suggested to place the revised Phase Zero Form before the School Board for reconsideration and approval.

25.4.2 The Board approved the item and made the following recommendations:

- The programme may be also offered in Hindi and other regional languages.
- The minimum age bar for enrolling into doing the programme may be relaxed/removed.

Item No.25.5 To consider and approve conducting of an Entrance Examination for intake of MCA and BCA students.

25.5.1 The Programme Coordinators explained that due to large intake of students in these programmes, it is becoming difficult to monitor the performance of students and programme centers. There is also a problem in finding a large number of evaluators to evaluate the papers on time. They further explained that many students have huge backlogs of courses to clear. In view of the above, it is required that entrance test for BCA and MCA may be allowed to be conducted to restrict the no. of students.

25.5.2 The Board approved the proposal to conduct an entrance examination for BCA and MCA students..

Item No.25.6 To consider and approve Credit Transfer Policy of BCA/MCA Programme for External Candidates

25.6.1 The Coordinators for the MCA and BCA Programmes explained that as per the University credit transfer/exception policy, the credit transfer/exception for similar courses exists in principle. SOCIS follows the credit transfer/exception scheme from BCA/MCA pre-revised syllabi to BCA/MCA new syllabi. However due to heterogeneity between the programme/courses of different Universities/Institutions, the credit transfer/exception may be given on the merit of individual case. For this purpose, the school requires an approval from the competent authorities.

They further elaborated that the following points may be applied to decide the credit transfer/exception policy for various courses pursued and successfully completed by the students from other Universities/Institutions

1. Credit transfer/exception can be considered only for the courses at the same level, e.g, undergraduate, post graduate etc.
2. A student should have successfully completed the course(s) for which the credit transfer/exemption is requested as per IGNOU's passing criteria. (In case of IGNOU, the passing marks in BCA/MCA courses are 50 %).
3. A student must specify the number of credits of the course(s) wherever applicable, against which the credit transfer/exemption is/are being requested for.
4. The credit transfer for a course can not be allowed if the corresponding course of BCA/MCA of IGNOU has more credits than the credits for the corresponding completed course by the student from other Universities/Institutions.
5. An attested copy of syllabi of the course(s) against which the credit transfer/exemption is/are requested is to be provided along with the application.
6. Student should clearly specify the type (theory/practical) of the course(s) for which credit transfer/exemption is claimed.
7. The credit transfer/exemption will not be given for those courses for which a degree is already awarded by a University/Deemed University/Institutions.

25.6.2 The Board members considered and approved the item.

Item No.25.7 To consider and approve Credit Transfer for CS-54 and CS-51 in MCA in Lieu of MS-4 and MS-51 of MBA

25.7.1 The MCA Programme Coordinator explained that SOCIS has adopted the two courses of School of Management, which form a part of the syllabus of the MBA programme of IGNOU and which are incorporated in the pre-revised syllabus of MCA.

The correspondence between the courses of SOCIS and the adopted courses of MBA, is shown by the following table:

School of Management			SOCIS		
Course Code	Course Name	Credits	Course Code	Course Name	Credits
MS-4	Accounting and Finance for Managers	6	CS-54	Accounting and Finance on Computers	4
MS-51	Operational Research	6	CS-51	Operational Research	4

As per the University rules, credits of a course will be accounted for the award of only one certificate/ one Diploma / one Degree. The Coordinator suggested that in case of CS-54 and CS-51 where the course material is completely borrowed from MS-4 and MS-51, without any modification by SOCIS, the credit transfer may be given for CS-54 and CS-51 in MCA in lieu of MS-4 and MS-51 of MBA, particularly, in view of the fact that the evaluation methodologies are nearly the same for the corresponding courses of MBA and MCA. However, there will be no credit transfer from MS-04 to MCS-035 because, in this case, a different methodology is adopted.

25.7.2 The Board considered and recommended that the School should identify a new course that need to be pursued by the students in lieu of MS-04. This is in view of the fact that the credits of a course can be accounted for the award of one certificate/one diploma/one degree only.

Item No.25.8 To consider and approve Expert Committee Meeting for Relooking of the Course structure of CS-60 (Foundation Course in Mathematics in Computing)

25.8.1 The Programme Coordinator explained that students enrolling in MCA and BCA programmes belong to all streams like Arts, Commerce, Science. Thus their exposure and understanding of the concepts of Mathematics are not uniform. Therefore, CS-60 was offered as a bridge course adopted from School of Sciences.

He further explained that the course is mainly designed for students of mathematics stream. Hence, the students from non-mathematics stream face serious problems, and only a few students of BCA and MCA are able to qualify CS-60.

In view of the above facts, the Committee may be formed to re-examine the course structure and suggest the structure of the course, keeping in view the background of our students and also the expected mathematical skills desired to be delivered for pursuing BCA/MCA.

25.8.2 The Board considered and approved the item.

Item No.25.9 To consider and approve Moving from the offer of stream courses to a pool of elective courses in the 5th semester of MCA (Revised) Programme.

25.9.1 The MCA Programme Coordinator explained that in the 5th semester of the revised MCA programme, in addition to the three compulsory courses (MCS-051 to MCSL-054), the students need to opt for one stream comprising of 3 courses. There are four streams approved, each having three courses. However, in view of the practical problems, for the first cycle, the School has offered only three courses, one from each of the streams:

MCSE-003 (Artificial Intelligence and Knowledge Management)
MCSE-004 (Numerical and Statistical Computing)
MCSE-011 (parallel Computing)

Therefore, it is proposed to create a pool of elective courses without any stream consideration and the students be required to opt for any three courses irrespective of streams.

25.9.2 The Board considered and approved the item.

Item No.25.10 To consider and approve the ODL Module for the Learners of various Programmes of SOCIS & Item No.25.11 Training Modules for Academic Counsellors

The Chairman informed the members that the School had received the Minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Committee on Module on ODL for Distance Learners and Training Modules for Academic Counsellors which was held on January 23, 2007. He further informed that the Faculty of the School in the School Council meeting had made the following recommendations:

“There is no specific need of a separate Module on ODL for computer science students and the Training Modules for Academic Counsellors, but the methodology should be given in the respective programme guides to help the learners and academic counsellors”.

The Board considered and approved the proposal.

Item No.25.12 Future Directions of the School

25.12.1 The Chairman explained the need to prepare the future plan of the School in terms of identification and development of new programmes and skills at a national level or a global level in partnership with other universities or institutes in the country, specially, in view of the suggestions & recommendations gathered in the Brainstorming meeting on National Mission and Education through Distance Learning held in the last week of December, 2006. He also observed the need of offering graduate finishing courses to impart the skills to IT graduates.

25.12.2

The following are the recommendations of the School Board:

- Initiate a project for online examination and evaluation on a much larger scale.
- Launch IGNOU certified courses for development of vocational skills.
- Conduct IT clinics for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)
- Consider and develop the concept of graduate finishing school courses and further SOCIS should organize graduate finishing courses in partnership with reputed industries to develop the following types of skills:
 - Generic Skills
 - Domain Specific Skills
 - Soft Skills
- IGNOU should also collaborate with NASSCOM type of organizations to identify and empower graduates with new skills sets.
- The SOCIS should explore to establish a Chair sponsored by the industry for taking up new initiatives and challenges.

The meeting ended with a Vote of Thanks to the Chair.

(Shashi Bhushan)