

Minutes of the AC Meeting held on 9 March 2013

Minutes of the AC Meeting held on 9 March 2013

AC:12:01	Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 19th May 2012
-----------------	--

The minutes were confirmed.

AC: 12: 02	ATR on the Minutes of the XV AC meeting held on 19th May 2012
-------------------	---

The ATR was noted.

AC:12: 03	Reporting Items
------------------	------------------------

i. Campus land

The Department of Human Resource Development, Government of Sikkim, handed over 265.94 acres of land at Yangang at a formal function held at the PWD guesthouse in Yangang on 25th January 2013. The function was attended by the Secretary, HRD, Govt. of Sikkim, the Director of Higher Education, HRD, Sub-Divisional Magistrate of Ravongla (the subdivision under which Yangang falls), the Deputy Commissioner of South District, the Zilla Adhyaksha of South District, senior officials of the HRD Department, the donors of land and other villagers. The University was represented by the Vice-Chancellor, the Adviser (F) acting as Registrar, and the Director of College Development Council.

At present mutation of the land handed over to the University is going on along with the process of resettling the villagers.

Advertisement seeking Expression of Interest for Project Management Consultants has been floated already and the Building Committee has been constituted as per the UGC guidelines for XI Plan.

ii. University Review Committee

The Vice-Chancellor, after interacting with different sections of the University and the society at large for more than two months, considered it appropriate to constitute a University Review Committee consisting of some senior academics from within and outside the University, college Principals, HRD officials, and civil society representatives. The purpose of constituting the Committee was to review some important aspects of the academic, administrative, examination, and other programmes of the University. It was also to explore ways to better connect with the local people and the colleges affiliated with the University. The Committee sat from 7th to 9th of February 2013 and submitted their report on the last day. The report is scheduled for discussion later in the day.

iii. Appointment of the Registrar

As per the University Act the first Registrar is to be appointed by the Visitor for a period of 3 years out of which about 2 years is yet to be completed, as the two Registrars who joined the University so far served as Registrars for less than one year. When the present Vice-Chancellor joined the University there was an Acting Registrar who informed him that the

issue of “residual clause” was pending before the MHRD. The VC inquired about it during his meeting with the MHRD officials in November 2012 but there was no clear picture in this regard. The VC also raised this issue with the Chancellor who is a reputed former judge of Supreme Court of India. In consultation with the MHRD officials the VC scouted for, as an interim arrangement, an able and efficient officer to serve as Registrar of the University to be appointed under Statute 6(4). He identified the present incumbent for the post and offered him the post to which he first hesitated and finally agreed. In the meantime a letter from MHRD came saying that the University may hold a fresh selection committee with Prof. A. N. Rai, VC of NEHU and Prof. P. Tandon, former VC of NEHU, as Visitor’s nominees.

The University intends to take necessary step as per the letter of MHRD at the earliest and will keep the Council informed about the development in this regard.

The reported items were noted.

AC:12: 04	Item for Ratification
------------------	------------------------------

i. Appointment of Heads, I/Cs and Deans

All the 21 departments and 1 School of the University were run with the help of Coordinators without any clear guidelines on their powers and functions. Hence the University appointed HoDs/ICs for all departments. They were also provided with the guidelines on powers and functions subsequent to their appointment.

The University also appointed two Deans, one in charge of the Schools of Sciences and Policy Planning Studies and the other in charge of the Schools of Humanities and Social Sciences in view of the fact that there are only two professors in the University. The two Deans were also provided with necessary guidelines on their powers and functions subsequent to their appointment.

The matter was ratified by the Council.

ii. Himalayan Pharmacy Institute, Majhitar

The University issued a letter to the Principal of the Himalayan Pharmacy Institute, Majhitar approving 45% as the minimum qualifying marks for admission to 1st Year B. Pharm from 2013 and increase in the percentage of seats in lateral entry from the existing 10% to 20%. The approval was granted in view of the urgency of decision and the same was within the revised AICTE norms.

The University also issued Affiliation Order to the Institute for the year 2012-13, as the Institute had already paid the affiliation fees and the University had failed to send an inspection team in due time. However, the affiliation is granted with the condition that the Institute must comply with the University’s norms for affiliation for B. Pharm.

The matter was ratified by the Council.

AC:12: 05

Items for Consideration of Approval

i. Ex post-facto approval of the syllabi for I and II semester PG courses in History, Political Science, Mathematics, English, and Commerce.

Following an agitation by students leading to the blockade of the NH31A for over 8 hours during May 2012 and subsequent signing of an agreement between the University and the Government of Sikkim, Master's classes were started in Tadong Government College for History, Political Science, Mathematics, English, and Commerce. The University provided the syllabi for the five subjects on the basis of the UGC model syllabus, but has not brought the matter for post-facto approval of the Academic Council as yet. The University also agreed to start these five subjects in the University from July 2013.

In view of the above, the University seeks the Council's indulgence on the following matters:

- a. Post-facto approval to start the five subjects mentioned above in the University from July 2013.
- b. Post-facto approval to the syllabi used for I and II semester courses in the five subjects mentioned above.

The matter was approved subject to the condition that the syllabi of those five subjects would be revised before the next academic session.

ii. Permanent Affiliation to (1) Tadong Government College, (2) Sikkim Law College, and (3) Harkamaya College of Education

It may be recalled here that the above colleges in Sikkim were permanently affiliated to North Bengal University prior to their coming under Sikkim University after the passage of the Sikkim University Act, 2006, which brought all the colleges in Sikkim under the University. But when Sikkim University came up their status was that of temporarily affiliated colleges, reportedly leading to serious difficulties for seeking financial support from the UGC under Sections 2f and 12(b) of the UGC Act.

As per the latest amendments to the UGC Regulations on Affiliation issued in April 2012, accreditation by NAAC or any other central/state accreditation body is a must for permanent affiliation.

The Review Committee considered the issue and recommended that the University may consider giving permanent affiliation to the above three colleges as a special case. However, henceforth the applications for permanent affiliation may be processed strictly according to the UGC Regulations on Affiliation issued on April 2012.

The Council considered and approved the recommendation of the Review Committee.

iii. One year LLM programme

The UGC in its letter dated 21st January 2013 has approved the suggestion of the Round Table on Legal Education set up by the MHRD for one-year LLM degree programme. This

programme is valid only in such universities/institutions where there is provision for post-graduate legal studies. It is further clarified that the LLM programme of one year as well as two years will remain valid.

The Council resolved to defer the matter.

iv. Service Conditions of faculty members (probation period, lien and counting of service during the contract period for all purposes)

The University has a list of 21 conditions for joining the University, including the probation period of two years, although the UGC Regulations 2010 clearly say that the probation period is for one year only. The University has also made it mandatory for teachers coming from other universities to resign from their lien before joining the University. They also cannot join politics, apply for any jobs anywhere, etc.

It may further be recorded that many of them served the University in its formative period with little or no facilities. Many of them also left the University during the past two years on account of our University's service conditions.

The Council may therefore consider the following to encourage the selected teachers to join the University:

- a. Reduction of the probation period to one year and waiving the remaining period of one year for those who have completed the probation period of one year already.
- b. The University should not insist on resignation from lien, which is a right they have earned by performing duty in the institutions they have come from.
- c. The University should revise its content in the "offer of appointment" significantly in order to make the selected teachers feel welcome.
- d. The period of contract in Sikkim University may be counted for all service purposes.
- e. In order to attract teachers of high caliber the Council may allow the protection of pay in particular as per GoI rules.

The Council considered the proposal of the University and approved it.

v. Service Condition of the Librarian

The University advertised the post of Librarian as a tenure post and the incumbent was to get hard-furnished accommodation and a light vehicle as per the advertisement. This perhaps happened due to oversight on the part of the University authorities because the post of the Librarian is a permanent post but he is not entitled to hard-furnished accommodation or a light vehicle under the UGC rules.

In view of the above, the Council may consider commuting the post of the Librarian from a tenure post to a permanent post.

The matter was approved by the Council.

vi. Panel of Experts for Examination and Selection Committees

The University needs a panel of experts approved by the Council for (1) conducting practical examinations in various departments, (2) evaluating the theses and conducting viva of MPhil and PhD candidates in various departments, and (3) for constituting selection committees for a large number of posts (129 out of 201 total posts) under XI Plan lying vacant at present in each department.

The Council approved the panels of experts placed by the Chairman.

vii. Constitution of the Affiliation Committee

The University has been granting temporary affiliation to various colleges in Sikkim on the basis of the inspection reports submitted by various inspection committees. It is therefore proposed that an Affiliation Committee be constituted for scrutinizing the applications for affiliation and inspection reports before submitting its comments for consideration of the Academic Council. This will ensure better management of affiliation matters. Therefore the University proposes the following composition for it:

Vice-Chancellor or Pro-Vice-Chancellor	Chairman
Director of Public Instruction/Higher Education or his nominee	Member
Three nominees of the Academic Council, including one representative of a private/missionary college	Members
Controller of Examinations	Member
Director, College Development Council	Member-Secretary

The Council approved the composition of the Affiliation Committee and nominated the following members to the Affiliation Committee:

Dr. N. K. Paswan
Dr. N. Satyanarayan
Fr. Daniel, Loyola College

viii. Amendment to Sikkim University Act, 2006

Section 3(2) of the Sikkim University Act, 2006 says: “The headquarters of the University shall be at Gangtok”.

In view of the fact that the University has been granted land for its permanent campus at Yangang the Council may consider the proposal to amend the above provision as follows:

Section 3(2) shall be replaced with “The headquarters of the University shall be at Yangang, South Sikkim”.

The Council approved the matter.

ix. Amendment to Sikkim University Statute 15

The University proposes some changes in Statute 15, which deals with Schools of Studies and Departments with the view to (1) reducing the establishment cost of the Schools from the existing 17 to the proposed 6, (2) to make the Schools academically more integrated from within, (3) to do away with (a) Schools without any department, (b) Schools with a single department, and (c) Schools with only two departments. The University is of the view that a School must have at least three departments for meaningful cross-fertilization of ideas.

The Council approved the matter.

x. Professor A. C. Sinha Collection of Books and Theses

Professor A. C. Sinha taught at Gujarat Vidyapith and the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi before moving to North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong where he taught for about three decades. During his long stint at NEHU he accumulated a large number of valuable and rare books and doctoral theses on Northeast India. His collection may be approximately 800-1000 books and theses many of which are related to Sikkim, as he himself wrote two books and numerous articles on this Himalayan state during the past four decades or so.

During his recent visit to the University as the Chairman of the University Review Committee he expressed his desire to donate his collection to our university, which the Vice-Chancellor welcomed with gratitude. The total value of his collection, even on the prices at which they were bought, may be well above seven lakhs and he bought them out of his hard-earned salary.

In view of the above the Council may consider permitting the University to accept his donation at a token payment of rupees one lakh only.

The Council approved the proposal. The Council further decided that the University shall bear the expenses towards transportation of the books and the donor be felicitated during the University Foundation Day.

xi. Institution of the Sikkim University Special Lectures

The University wishes to launch the Sikkim University Special Lectures from April 2013 by inviting scholars belonging to different disciplines and walks of life from the state as well as outside it from time to time. Such scholars may be paid actual travelling expenses by economy class airfare, a token honorarium of Rs.3000/- per lecture and a modest hospitality. The content of the lectures may be published in both English and Hindi languages in our university newsletter.

It is hoped that the Lectures will establish and strengthen the intellectual link between the University and its catchment area as well as the country as a whole. Occasionally even scholars from outside India may be invited to deliver the lecture during their visit to the country.

The Council approved the proposal.

xii. Report of the University Review Committee

The report of the University Review Committee is placed here for consideration of the Council.

The Council considered the report of the University Review Committee in detail and approved as per details provided separately.

xiii. Replacement of existing Ordinances with First Ordinances

There are numerous Statutes and Ordinances drafted by the University during the past five years. The general features of the existing Statutes and Ordinances are as follows:

1. There is no record to show that all of them are approved by the relevant Authorities of the University.
2. There is no record to show that a single Ordinance is approved by the concerned ministry and assented to by the Visitor.
3. There is no record to show that the First Ordinances were drafted with prior permission from the concerned ministry, as is required under Section 30 (2) of the University Act, 2006.
4. The Ordinances are often not in consonance with the Government of India orders and circulars issued from time to time.
5. Excepting two Ordinances on recruitment of teaching and non-teaching staff, which are more than 47 and 43 pages long respectively, the source of the Ordinances is not indicated, which makes them legally infructuous.
6. The Ordinances are drafted in such a manner that they contain the nature and force of Regulations, thereby reducing the strength of Ordinances and their flexibilities.

In view of the above facts the Council may consider replacing all existing Ordinances promulgated till date, with or without the approval of the University Authorities, with the "First Ordinances" placed here for consideration of the approval of the Council. The Council may also authorize the University to take resort to Acts, Statutes and Government of India orders issued from time to time for subjects that are not covered by the set of Ordinances placed here.

The Council approved the matter.

AC:12: 06	Items from the Chair
------------------	-----------------------------

- i. Letter from the UGC dated 27th November 2012 the operation part of which is quoted below: "The Commission considered the report of the Expert Committee on

Minutes of the AC Meeting held on 9 March 2013

Disaster Management and approved the introduction of an optional paper on Disaster Management at UG level across the universities/colleges. The Commission further decided that Disaster Management be introduced as one of the topics in Orientation and Refresher Courses offered by the Academic Staff Colleges”.

The matter was noted.

- ii. Letter from the UGC dated 16th January 2013 containing the following recommendation: “UGC and AICTE would ensure that Cyber Security/Information Security is introduced as a subject in the universities/technical institutions at the under-graduate and post-graduate levels.

The matter was noted.

Sri K. M. Deb
Member-Secretary

Prof. T. B. Subba
Chairman