

Minutes of 2nd Meeting of Board of Studies (Philosophy)

The Board of Studies in Philosophy of Sophia College (Autonomous) held its second meeting on 30.03.2019 at 11.00 am in Computer Lab No 2. The following members were present

Dr. Trevor Allis – Chairperson
Dr. Geeta Ramana – V.C. Nominee
Dr. Keith D'Souza
Dr. Tarun Menon
Dr. Arun Iyer
Ms. Rudabeh Navdar

The following members requested leave of absence

Dr. T C Roy – Faculty
Dr. Nilufer Bharucha
Dr. Irfaan Engineer

The minutes of the above meeting are as follows:

1. The minutes of the previous Board of Studies meeting held on 29.09.2018 were approved and passed by the members of the Board.

2. Paper 4 (semester 6) syllabus was discussed. The following points emerged from the discussion of the said paper:

(i) Dr. Keith D'Souza suggested that topics in Continental philosophy should be represented but currently absent from the syllabus. Topics such as: phenomenology of Husserl, Hermeneutics of Gadamer and critical theory of Habermas should find representation.

(ii) Dr. Arun Iyer endorsed Dr. Keith's suggestion and observed that should Dr. Keith's suggestion be implemented then the nomenclature of the course title should be 'Modern and Contemporary Western Philosophy' and not the existing title 'Western Philosophy'.

(iii) Dr. Allis responded to the suggestion and pointed out that the undergraduate syllabi is designed to be in continuation with the postgraduate syllabi in contemporary western philosophy and that the inclusion of topics under continental philosophy would overlap with the postgraduate syllabi. Accordingly, the undergraduate syllabi culminated with the philosophy of Immanuel Kant.

3. Paper 5 was discussed. The following suggestions were made by the members:

(i) Dr. Keith D'Souza suggested that Internal Assessment topics should include social, psychological and gender themes related to the philosophy of religion. He also suggested that these themes could be studied under the external assessment syllabus too. He recommended that a module should be devoted to a comparative analysis of religious issues.

(ii) Dr. Geeta Ramana suggested that the existing unit no. 4 – which is for internal assessment - should be incorporated into the three units and the topics in internal assessment should be left open to students to make as per their choice of interest.

(iii) Ms. Rudabeh Navdar observed that Indian dimension to religion was missing and suggested that it could be accommodated under internal assessment module. As an illustration, she recommended an interpretative analysis of a text like Bhagwad Gita or any similar religious text.

(iv) Dr. Tarun Menon opined that the existing syllabi of the philosophy of religion was essentially epistemological and that it could be made inclusive by introduction of topics that make philosophy of religion socially relevant.

4. Paper 6 was discussed. Members expressed overall satisfaction with the syllabus. However, the following points were made by the following members:

(i) Dr. Arun Iyer pointed out that Unit 2 was an extension of Unit 1 and was in a sense unnecessary. He suggested that the department could consider combining the two units into one. He further recommended that a module on professional ethics and related themes like whistle blowing could be included

(ii) Dr. Tarun Menon recommended the inclusion of a topics on climate change and how philosophy can contribute to the debate on climate change.

(iii) Dr. Allis welcomed the recommendation and agreed to look into the possibility of introducing the theme in consultation with Dr. Roymon who is the faculty in charge for teaching the paper.

5. Paper 7 was discussed. The following recommendations were made by the following members:

(i) Dr. Arun Iyer pointed out that the 'sense of the character of the Republic' was missing from the syllabus. He therefore suggested that the syllabus be designed

Book-wise in relation to the different themes in the Republic. Dr. Allis welcomed the idea and promised to look into the possibility of revising the syllabus accordingly.

(ii) Dr. Tarun Menon recommended a topic on the role of myth and allegory that was, in his view, crucial to appreciating Plato's philosophy as a whole and the Republic in particular. He recommended the inclusion of the topic under one of the modules

6. Paper 8 was discussed. Dr. Tarun Menon pointed out that the syllabus was heavily biased in favour of deductive logic. He suggested that inductive logic should be included to make the syllabus a bit balanced. He further suggested that alternative topics under internal assessment could be explored. He suggested that Mill's inductive method and probabilistic reasoning as examples of topics that could be considered for inclusion. A couple of reference books on inductive logic too were suggested.

7. Paper 9 was discussed. Dr Arun Iyer pointed out that the syllabus made no reference to Patanjali yoga although the topics were clearly part of Patanjali yoga. He suggested that it would be a good idea to spell out that the modules were on Patanjali yoga.

8. Dr. T. Allis made note of the observations and opinions with respect to all the papers discussed and agreed to consider the viability of the suggestions and recommendations given the constraints of an undergraduate syllabus and the intellectual competence of philosophy students.

9. The meeting ended with the vote of thanks by Dr. Allis who appreciated the members for their substantive contribution to syllabus framing.

Chairperson BoS Philosophy



Dr Trevor Allis

Associate Professor

Sophia College (Autonomous)