SOPHIA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS)
MASS MEDIA DEPARTMEMT

BOARD OF STUDIES | MAY 29, 2020

Special Circular Resolution

The Board of Studies in Mass Media, Sophia College, (Autonomous), hereby approves and ratifies the change in the nomenclature of the Bachelor of Mass Media (B.M.M.) programme to "Bachelor of Arts (Strategic Communication and Journalism)" [B.A. (S.C.J.)].
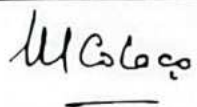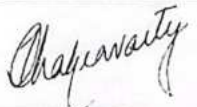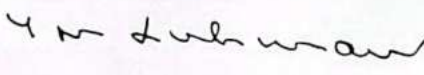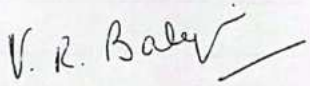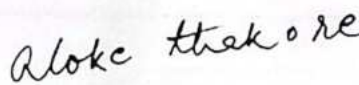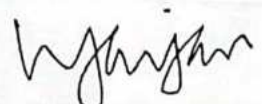
Students of the programme will be awarded a **Bachelor of Arts degree in Strategic Communication and Journalism.**

This is in keeping with the parameters outlined in Section 9 (Matters regarding Starting of New Courses) in the (Revised) UGC Guidelines for Autonomous Colleges published in 2018, which give autonomous colleges the freedom to rename and restructure existing courses, clearly stating:

> "An autonomous college may rename an existing course as per the UGC Notification on Specification of Degrees, 2014 as amended from time to time after restructuring/ redesigning it with the approval of the college Academic Council as per UGC norms. The university should be duly informed of such proceedings."

The new nomenclature will be implemented for the incoming batch of 2020-21 to meet the academic needs of the new curriculum plan which has been passed by the Board of Studies for Mass Media on August 31, 2019, and the Academic Council of Sophia College (Autonomous) at their meeting held in September 2019.

BOARD OF STUDIES IN MASS MEDIA | SOPHIA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS)

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MASS MEDIA DEPARTMENT | SOPHIA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS)

PROPOSAL TO INTERCHANGE TWO PAPERS IN THE SYLLABI OF SEMESTERS V AND VI FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2020—21

We, in the Mass Media department of Sophia College (Autonomous), are currently facing some challenges in migrating classes traditionally taught in a brick-and-mortar set-up to a virtual environment.

In a recently conducted **survey of 68 second year students** who are now due to enter **the third and final year of the BMM programme**, we tried to gather data to ascertain their access to technology and internet connectivity, and also their concerns about online teaching.

In this year, as per the current curriculum, they will **specialise in Advertising or Journalism.**

These are some of the findings of our survey:

- 48.5% of the students reside in cities and towns outside Mumbai.
- 27% of the students residing both within and outside Mumbai report frequent power outages in their neighbourhoods.
- 72% of the students share laptops / desktop computers / tablets with other members of their family, and do not have exclusive use of these devices to work on detailed and intensive projects.
- 20% of the students do not have a broadband internet connection at home.
- 39% of the students have very poor Wi-Fi connectivity at home.

Some of the key concerns expressed by the students during an **online orientation session** conducted by the BMM faculty on June 5, 2020, included:

- The fear of not being able to replicate the interactivity they typically experience in a traditional classroom on an online conferencing platform
- The possibility of having to miss out on classes owing to unreliable internet connectivity and power outages
- The inability to comprehend detailed visual and verbal information when attending classes/ conferences on their smart phones
- Having to carve time out in the family schedule to access technological devices like laptops and PCs that are shared with siblings who are also students, and working professionals in the family
- The inability to work on key design projects on laptops that are not well-equipped to run heavy desktop software like Adobe Creative Cloud or Corel Draw
- Feelings of anxiety and intimidation at the prospect of studying Advertising Design and News Design remotely, when these papers typically call for active teacher-student interaction and more personalised guidance and attention; and a sense of losing out on hands-on practical training

In the light of these findings, we propose to interchange two intensive design-related papers from Semester V with two more theoretically oriented papers from Semester VI.

- For the TYBMM Advertising students, the paper titled "Advertising Design" in Semester V will be interchanged with "Legal Environment and Advertising Ethics" from Semester VI.
- For the TYBMM Journalism students, the paper titled "News Design" in Semester V will be interchanged with "Issues in the Global Media" from Semester VI.

The two design papers are taught entirely through practical application. Unlike the other papers in Semester V, they do not have a written semester-end examination. In addition to the 40-mark internal assessment component, they are marked out of 60 on comprehensive final student projects with extensive design deliverables.

- The Advertising students work on a branding and advertising campaign to promote a product, service or idea, with design elements ranging from corporate identity, stationery, product packaging, press, magazine and outdoor advertisements, a product microsite, point of purchase, and a storyboard for a television commercial.
- The Journalism students work on creating an eight-page broadsheet newspaper, a 32-page magazine, and a news website.

These projects are assessed through a viva-voce examination conducted by an external examiner at the end of the semester.

Both papers are taught in the College Computer Laboratory where students have access to design software like Adobe Photoshop, Adobe InDesign, Adobe Illustrator and Corel Draw.

It also gives the teachers of the papers the chance to monitor the completion of design tasks more closely and to assist students with practical problems more seamlessly in real time. This cannot be accomplished easily in an online environment.

We hope with the phased lifting of the lock down owing to COVID-19, we will have the chance to transition back to brick-and-mortar teaching environments by the end of the coming semester.

In Semester VI, these two papers can be taught systematically with adequate technological infrastructure, and personalised and regular interface between teachers and individual students.

The two papers from Semester VI that are being brought to Semester V can be taught in a more simple, discursive format, and supplemented with adequate readings and presentations, to enable the students to grasp theoretical and critical concepts more effectively.

We ask that this change be made only for the academic year 2020 – 21. In the following academic year, we will return to the current course structure.

ANNEXURES

The following documents have been appended with this proposal for your perusal:

1. The list of course titles currently taught in Semesters V and VI for the TYBMM Advertising Class
2. The list of course titles currently taught in Semesters V and VI for the TYBMM Journalism Class

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