

MINUTES of the October 17, 2022 Second Board of Studies Meeting of the Department of Political Science for the Academic Year 2022-23

Members present were Prof. Prashant Kelkar, Prof. Chaitra Redkar, Prof. Kalpana Dixit, Prof. Kannamma Raman, Ms. Harini Calamur, Ms. Shahnaz Shaikh, Ms. Rishika Robert, and Dr. Paul Rozario.

Dr. Rozario shared the Agenda for the Meeting which was :-

AGENDA

- 1) To discuss and approve the replacement of SYBA Gandhism (Applied Component) Paper with a Paper on Public Policy
- 2) To discuss the Possibility and feasibility of introduction of Additional Courses on Digital Democracy, etc.

In response to the point raised by Ms. Calamur regarding updating the syllabus, mentioned in the Minutes of the last Board of Studies Meeting, Prof. Raman expressed her reservations about how does one understand the present if you knock off the past. She suggested that you need to keep the old and that you cannot just leave it out. Prof. Redkar opined that this kind of response (demand for updating) is generally seen when there is some kind of apprehension in retaining grand old ideas and that we should qualify these sentiments. She emphasized that we can certainly think about the pedagogy and how we teach, so as to basically make the students connect the content with their reality and as a part of their very existence, such that it is not something which is just bookish.

Dr. Rozario assured the members that the classical political thinkers and the basic content of Paper V Western Political Thinkers would remain intact with no change.

Dr. Rozario then said that the members consider again the suggestion made by Prof. Redkar to replace Gandhism and introduce Public Policy as the Applied Component Course for SYBA. Prof. Redkar stated that the rationale for this was that she was not sure that such a course resonates much with the students. However she stated that if Gandhism Paper was to be continued, a lot more would have to be done to justify the Applied Component part. She suggested visits to Shantivan, in Panvel, and learning of spinning the charkha from an expert at Mani Bhavan, as also interviews with Gandhian Activists, or doing projects on topics like Sustainable Development (Vandana Shiva's work – mentioned by Prof. Raman).

Prof. Dixit stated that she agreed with Prof. Redkar's suggestion, and that she approved of replacing Gandhism with Public Policy as the Applied Component Paper, while pointing out that it had been already agreed upon in the previous meeting.

Prof. Raman explained in detail the history of the introduction and evolution of Gandhism as a Paper in Sophia College, highlighting the traditional and emotional connect with the course at Sophia College. She stated that replacing Gandhism with Public Policy as the Applied Component Paper would depend on the number of students opting for it. Dr. Rozario said that about 60 students have been opting for Gandhism in the last few years. He also mentioned that the Additional Course on Public Policy offered earlier by the Department of Political Science, with Dr. Raman as Course Director, had been received very well among the students, with many students keen to take it up as a Course. He also opined that offering Public

Policy would increase the USP of the Department of Political Science, and that it could be marketed as a viable career option.

Prof.Raman expressed her reservations whether SYBA students would be able to cope with Public Policy. She suggested that it could be offered in TYBA, and that Political Communication would be good alternative to replace Gandhism at the SYBA level. She explained that she had had a positive experience with the applied component and practical aspect of conducting Political Communication as a Course.

On a practical note, taking into consideration that Dr.Rozario was on Leave and Ms. Shaikh would be going for her Maternity Leave, Prof.Redkar magnanimously suggested that we could continue with Gandhism and consider incorporating the changes from 2023-24 or whenever it was convenient.

After some detailed discussion, the prevailing consensus that seemed to emerge was that in SYBA, Gandhism could be offered in Semester III and a Paper on Political Communication/Electoral Studies be offered in Semester IV. In TYBA, Paper IV - Political Process In Modern Maharashtra, could be substituted with a Paper on Public Policy. Parts of Paper IV - Political Process in Modern Maharashtra could be infused/added into Paper II - Indian Political System. Also, in Paper III - Public Administration the focus and content on Maharashtra Administration could be substantively enhanced in Semester IV.

To a query from Prof. Dixit as to what were the possible alternatives to Gandhism as Applied Component Paper, Prof. Redkar suggested that a Paper on Local Self Government or Panchayati Raj would be useful, as it would make possible many project work opportunities such as visits to BMC, interviews with Local Corporators, study or research on the Municipal Wards in which students reside, etc..

Ms. Calamur cautioned against the blanket removal of Gandhism Applied Component Paper. Her reasoned advice, was that we retain it in the Syllabus Pool, but need not offer it, in the immediate short term. Prof. Raman and Prof. Redkar approved this suggestion.

On the introduction of Additional Courses on Digital Democracy (suggested by Ms.Calamur) and Cyber Politics, as also Media Democracy (suggested by Prof.Raman), it was decided that after the content and course structure were prepared, it could be discussed and approved in the upcoming meetings. Dr.Rozario requested Ms. Calamur and Prof.Raman for detailed inputs on the suggested Additional Courses.

The members approved the List of Names for Examiners, Moderators and Re-Evaluators.

Dr.Rozario thanked all the members and the meeting was closed.