

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
SOPHIA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS)
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF STUDIES MEETING HELD ON 5th MARCH 2020

The fourth meeting of the Board of Studies of the Department of English was held on 5th March 2020, and it was attended by the following members:

1. Ms Jihasa Vachharajani: Chairperson, and Head, Department of English, Sophia College (Autonomous)
2. Dr Marie Fernandes: **VC's Nominee** – Principal, St Andrew's College, Mumbai
3. Prof Mala Pandurang: **Subject Expert** – Principal, Dr BMN College of Home Science (Autonomous), (SNDT University, Mumbai)
4. Mr Jeronimo Pinto: **Representative from the Industry or the Corporate Sector/ Allied Area** – Writer
5. Ms Samira Nadkarni: **Alumnus, Sophia College** – Member, Department of English, St Andrew's College, Mumbai
6. Dr (Sr) Ananda Amritmahal: Principal, Sophia College, and Member, Department of English, Sophia College (Autonomous)
7. Ms Samrita Sinha: Member, Department of English, Sophia College (Autonomous)
8. Ms Nishtha Dev: Member, Department of English, Sophia College (Autonomous)
9. Dr Elwin Susan John: Member, Department of English, Sophia College (Autonomous)

The following members were absent:

1. Dr Asha Achuthan: **Subject Expert** – Advanced Centre for Women's Studies, School of Development Studies (TISS)

The minutes of the third meeting of the Board of Studies of the Department of English, Sophia College (Autonomous), held on 27th August 2019, were read and passed unanimously.

The proposed revised syllabi (under autonomy) to be scrutinised at the meeting had been emailed to the members in advance. The revised syllabi were briefly presented again, and this was followed by some discussion.

The Board suggested that under the Choice-Based Credit System followed by the institution, the students should be offered either a choice between certain papers, or, a choice of texts within the papers which are offered to them.

Prof Pandurang requested the members of the Department to formulate an overall outline for the syllabi of all three years so that the revisions made to the First Year Bachelor of Arts (FYBA) and Second Year Bachelor of Arts (SYBA) syllabi could be studied in relation to the proposed structure of the Third Year Bachelor of Arts (TYBA) syllabus.

Members of the Board pointed out that most of the tools used for the paper on Literary Theory were Eurocentric, and reflected a white, male perspective. There did not seem to be adequate

representation to ensure that the subject could be studied through the lenses of race, caste, class, and gender. The Board suggested that the paper be restructured in order to make it more inclusive and diverse. Various suggestions were made with reference to ways of arranging the syllabus, strategies that can expand the scope of study in terms of application (especially through the IA) as well as ways of introducing more challenging texts to students who would like to study them. It was recommended that more recent writings in critical thought and theory be included in the syllabi. The Board also discussed the possibility of restructuring the paper on Popular Fiction along the lines of the Literary Theory paper, with each module divided into segments on theory and application. It was suggested that links to visual and literary material available online be included in the section on recommended readings, which could be renamed “recommended texts” to account for the non-literary texts in the list. It was further suggested that the content as well as the teaching methodology to be employed by the teacher be clearly reflected in the syllabus.

The Board recommended that the Mass Communication syllabus could include perspectives on caste. The inclusion of readings on caste and body politics in modules on the ‘Internet’ and ‘Cell Phones’ was emphasised. Recommendations were made regarding the same. Suggestions were made with regard to the introduction of post-1990s broadcasting policies in the unit on ‘Television’. For the module on ‘Film’, it was suggested that a few women-centric films and movements be added to the syllabus.

Prof Mala Pandurang suggested the Department of English, Sophia College (Autonomous) could collaborate with S.N.D.T University to organise a Refresher Course for the academic enrichment and pedagogical enhancement of teachers of English. The course could provide them with an opportunity to exchange ideas and to share their areas of academic interest with one another.

The Board also suggested that the Department could conduct a Shakespeare film festival to introduce students to works of Shakespeare that are not prescribed in their syllabus.

A list of the moderators was presented and accepted by the Board, and a resolution to that effect was passed unanimously. Resolutions regarding the acceptance of the following syllabi were also passed unanimously:

- FYBA English Course of studies, for implementation in Semesters I and II of the Academic Year 2020-2021
- SYBA English Courses of studies, for implementation in Semesters III and IV of the Academic Year 2020-2021
- SYBA Mass Communication Course of studies, for implementation in Semesters III and IV of the Academic Year 2020-2021

The meeting then ended with the Chairperson extending warm thanks, on behalf of the Department, to the external members of the Board of Studies for their generous expenditure of time, energy and thought.