

# Draft UGC curriculum puts focus on 'ancient wisdom'

Framework suggests exploring contributions of Indian mathematicians, and inclusion of 'Bharatiya philosophy' in commerce, traditional beverages in chemistry, and *dharmic* thought in economics

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The University Grants Commission (UGC) has released draft Learning Outcomes-based Curriculum Framework (LOCF) for anthropology, chemistry, commerce, economics, geography, home science, mathematics, physical education, and political science.

The LOCF stresses on the inclusion of Indian Knowledge Systems in each subject. The UGC has invited feedback from stakeholders on the LOCF. This new curriculum comes at a time when Opposition-ruled States are protesting against the focus on these systems on grounds of alleged 'saffronisation' of the curriculum.

While the LOCF on chemistry starts with a salutation to Saraswati, the commerce curriculum suggests colleges to teach Kautilya's *Arthashastra*. V.D. Savarkar's *Indian War of Independence* has found a place in the reading list for the course on 'Bharatiya Struggle for Independence'.

Though the National Education Policy promotes multidisciplinary courses



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and holistic education, the LOCF prioritises single-major pathways and most credits are allocated to discipline-specific courses, leaving limited room for multidisciplinary exploration.

Every LOCF speaks in detail about how Indian systems should be added in the studies. Mandala geometry and yantras, rangoli and kolam as algorithmic art forms, temple architecture and *ayādi* ratios will be included in courses on mathematics. The objectives include exploring the foundational contributions of Indian mathematicians to arithmetic, geometry, algebra, and calculus, and analysing key mathematical concepts and techniques developed in India

and their applications.

'Bharatiya philosophy' will be added in commerce education. "Commerce education must incorporate the holistic learning approach derived from Bharatiya philosophy. The ancient Gurukul system emphasised the all-round development of individuals, encompassing physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual growth. These values, when applied to Commerce, promote ethical decision-making, responsible leadership, and sustainable business practices," the LOCF said, adding that Kautilya's *Arthashastra* provides insights into trade regulations, governance, and financial management, which remain rele-

vant today. Indian concepts of wealth and prosperity in *dharmic* thought; role of the king in economy; trade and labour ethics; guild codes and collective enterprise; ecological and agrarian values; principles of *dana* and indigenous exchange systems will be taught in economics courses.

In chemistry, in a module on "Chemistry of Alcoholic Beverages", traditional Indian fermented beverages and preparation methods for *kanji*, *mahua*, toddy and chemical reactions involved in the conversion of sugars to ethanol during fermentation will be taught.

Chemistry will have a brief idea of ancient Indian Knowledge of *Parmanu*. In a unit on atomic structure, recapitulation of concept of atom in ancient India will be taught along with Bohr's theory and its limitations.

On Anthropology, the draft curriculum says ancient Indian thinkers like Charaka, Sushruta, Buddha, and Mahavira have long discussed the symbiotic relationship between nature and culture, offering indigenous perspectives on concepts central to anthropology.