

UGC Draft UG Curriculums: Key Features and States' Objections Explained

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UGC Draft Curriculum Latest News

- The **University Grants Commission (UGC)** recently released draft undergraduate curriculums for feedback.
- However, Opposition-ruled states such as Karnataka and Kerala have raised objections.
- Both states have formed expert panels to review the drafts before submitting their formal responses.
- The UGC has invited comments nationwide, but these objections highlight federal concerns over curriculum design and its alignment with state priorities.

Learning Outcomes-based Curriculum Framework (LOCF)

- The **Learning Outcomes-based Curriculum Framework (LOCF)** is an educational model designed to enhance higher education by focusing on outcomes — what students should know, understand, and achieve — rather than just content delivery.

- It was developed by the **University Grants Commission (UGC)** and similar bodies to promote quality, skill-based, and holistic learning.

Key Components

- **Graduate Attributes:** Broad qualities such as intellectual curiosity, problem-solving skills, ethical conduct, and adaptability expected after completing studies.
- **Programme Outcomes:** Defined learning outcomes for the entire degree program.
- **Course Outcomes:** Specific, measurable outcomes for individual courses, describing what students can do upon completion.

Goals of LOCF

- **Shift in Focus** – Moves away from passive memorisation to active construction and application of knowledge and skills.
- **Student Empowerment** – Encourages active learning where teachers act as facilitators rather than mere instructors.
- **Skill Development** – Builds critical 21st-century skills like analytical reasoning, critical thinking, and problem-solving for a tech-driven world.
- **Enhanced Employability** – Equips students with industry-relevant knowledge and competencies, improving workforce readiness.
- **Holistic Development** – Promotes not only academic knowledge but also values, attitudes, ethics, and lifelong learning, ensuring all-round growth.

Key Features of UGC's Proposed Undergraduate Curriculum

- The UGC has released **draft curriculum frameworks for nine subjects**, including anthropology, chemistry, commerce, economics, geography, home science, mathematics, physical education, and political science.
- Designed as *Learning Outcomes-Based Curriculum Frameworks (LOCFs)*, they define the concepts and skills students should acquire.
- Aligned with the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, the drafts envision flexible four-year multidisciplinary undergraduate programmes with multiple exit options.
- They also integrate **Indian Knowledge Systems** into higher education.
 - Mathematics electives include '**Kala Ganana**' (timekeeping traditions) focusing on India's lunar, solar, and lunisolar calendars.
 - Similarly, '**Philosophy of Indian Mathematics**', introduces the study of Vedas, Vedangas, Puranas, and Darshanas as branches of learning.
- These additions aim to blend traditional knowledge with modern education.

Integration of 'Bharatiya' Knowledge in Draft Curriculum

- The new UGC draft LOCFs place strong emphasis on incorporating **Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS)** into undergraduate courses.
- For instance, the chemistry curriculum includes a unit on **traditional Indian dietary practices from Ayurveda** under “food chemistry”, recommending texts like *Ayurvedic Cooking for Self-Healing*.
- Similarly, the draft commerce curriculum introduces a course on **Indian management principles**, featuring lessons from the *Bhagavad Gita*, *Ramayana*, and Vedantic perspectives alongside modern concepts.
- Earlier frameworks lacked such components. Officials clarified that while UGC had issued LOCFs for 38 subjects since 2019 under the choice-based credit system, the rollout of NEP 2020 has prompted a fresh framework.
- According to NEP, a future **Higher Education Commission of India (HECI)** will ultimately set outcome-based frameworks, though it is yet to be established.

Opposition from States over Draft Curriculum

- The draft UGC curriculum has drawn sharp criticism from opposition-ruled states.
- Kerala’s Higher Education Minister labelled it “obsolete,” “unscientific,” and influenced by *Hindutva ideology*.
- Experts cited references like *Ram Rajya* in commerce (as part of CSR discussions) and the inclusion of V D Savarkar’s *The Indian War of Independence* as recommended reading in political science, alongside a separate elective on Savarkar.
- Karnataka’s Higher Education Minister alleged that the framework aims to impose central government ideologies and objected to UGC’s interference in state curriculums.
- However, UGC clarified that **universities retain autonomy** to adapt or redesign modules.
- In fact, during earlier LOCF rollouts, universities, including the University of Kerala, had revised their courses in line with UGC guidance.

Source: IE | TH | LS

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