

TERI School of Advanced Studies
Department of Policy Studies

Minutes of the Board of Studies (BoS) Meeting dated 09.12.2020

A meeting of the Board of Studies (BoS) of Department of Policy Studies (DoPS) was conducted on 9th December 2020 at 1.45 PM by online mode.

Following were present in the meeting:

Meeta Keswani Mehra (Member)
Avanish Kumar (Member)
Sukanya Das (Chair)
Nandan Nawn (Member)
Shantanu De Roy (Member)
L. N. Venkataraman (Member)
Smriti Das (Member)
Kavita Sardana (Secretary)

Gopal K Sarangi, Swarup Dutta, Soumendu Sarkar, Jaya Vasudevan, Shri Prakash, Seema Sangita and Chandan Kumar were invited to the meeting for facilitation.

Agenda

1. *Confirmation of minutes of the last meeting held on 17 June 2020.*
 2. Approval for the change in the structure of the MSc. Economics program
 3. To seek comments and suggestions from BoS members on the concept Note for MA-SDP Program Revision and relevant findings from the preliminary review by core faculty members
 4. Approval of course outlines of the following two new courses to be introduced in the M.A PPSD program: *Sustainable Infrastructure Development & Public Health: Approaches, Issues and Policy Perspectives*
 5. Any other matter with the permission of the chair
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1. **Agenda 1:** Confirmation of minutes of last meeting held on 17th June 2020. The Board confirmed the minutes of the meeting.

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2. Agenda 2:

Dr. Soumendu Sarkar, Program Coordinator, presented the revised program structure with the rationale for revision and supporting findings of feedback from stakeholders. The following issues came up for discussion:

- a. Prof. Avanish asked if the program faculty has discussed the pros and cons of bargaining the academic rigor of a Masters' thesis with course track- in terms of future employability and future admissions. Dr. Soumendu Sarkar responded that an extensive discussion has taken place in MPEC of MSc Economics program regarding this and the MPEC believed this would improve admissions, intake, retention, and employability opportunities for students- as the new structure will expose students to various sub-fields in Economics. Additionally, he emphasized that the compulsory core course of Research Methods will continue to be offered to all students- this will provide an opportunity for an informed decision on the part of the students to choose between rigorous academic research or additional courses.
- b. Prof. Meeta Mehra supported the change and suggested that in the longer run an option of expanding the specialization to Environment and Development or Environment and Finance can be explored. Additionally, she recommended that a full seminar course can be introduced under the supervision of faculty to present literature review of seminal papers. She further suggested that a few electives can be offered with assessments that emphasizing on literature review, policy briefing for academic rigor.
- c. Dr. Nandan Nawn put forward two observations. All the MSc. Economics students to receive mentorship for making a choice between thesis and course track. Across the courses offered from second semester, students learn to write literature survey, critical review, present seminal papers, essay and research proposal. In the proposed structure shared, the assessment criteria of the electives offered by the program in its fourth semester will have a strong emphasis on research component.

Resolution: It was decided that the modified structure for MSc Economics program will be forwarded to the Academic Council for consideration.

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Agenda 3:

Dr. Gopal Sarangi, Program Coordinator, presented the concept note for the revision of MA in Sustainable Development Practice program with its rationale and supporting findings of feedback from internal faculty members. The following issues came up for discussion:

- a. Prof Meeta suggested that courses may be introduced to develop research skills, methodological and conceptual understanding to harmonize with what is offered in similar programs elsewhere and especially in the institutions abroad.
- b. Prof. Avanish supported the program restructuring and the process adopted for the same. He recommended that practice, exposure, and experience component of the program should be retained. He suggested that domain (sustainable development) understanding/knowledge should continue to be very critical for this program. In addition, courses in emerging areas such as CSR and sustainability, and balance between domain knowledge and learning tools will be critical for restructuring of the program.
- c. Dr. Nandan Nawn suggested structured feedback should be collected as a part of review process first and then only the process of re-structuring, if any, be initiated. He also suggested consulting ' Evaluation Reforms in Higher Educational Institutions publishing by UGC in order to revisit program and course outcomes on the one hand and linking course outcomes and assessments on the other.

Resolution: Necessary actions will be initiated based on the inputs received from the BoS members and a revised outline will be presented again before the BoS with 1) findings from structured feedback as part of the review process and 2) methodology spelling out the alignment of program and course outcomes

Agenda 4:

Mr. Shri Prakash presented the course outline for the course *Sustainable Infrastructure Development* to be offered to the MA (Public Policy and Sustainable Development program).

- a. Prof. Avanish suggested that regulation and governance should be separated, words and terminologies to be specific in reference to the objectives, program objectives to be

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aligned with course objectives and lastly to articulate objectives that can be deliverable and measured through assessments.

Resolution: The comments suggested by the BoS members will be addressed and revised version will be submitted for approval in the Academic Council meeting.

Dr. Chandan Kumar presented the course outline for the course *Public Health: Approaches, Issues and Policy Perspectives* to be offered to the MA (PPSD program).

- a. Dr. Sukanya Das suggested that for Module 2 the questions to be mapped with the topics covered in the module. She further suggested to look into how far the details of epidemiology will serve as a value addition in the given course and in the MA (PPSD) program.
- b. Prof. Meeta suggested aggregator is needed for burden of disease-methods to impute a value of health damages from different kind of diseases must be included in the module preceding policy discussion. This would further help understand how to be able to identify populations worst affected according to various socio-economic demographics. She further suggested going beyond epidemiology in Module 2 leading up to Module 3.
- c. Prof. Avanish suggested that in order to achieve objectives of the course work, in the third module, policy perspective needs to be aligned with National Policy and measurement Framework. A balance needs to be achieved between methods and mapping on to the framework in module 3 due to limitation in terms of hours.

Resolution: The comments suggested by the BoS members will be addressed and revised version will be submitted for approval in the Academic Council meeting.

Agenda 5:

Dr. Jaya put forward an informal discussion seeking suggestion from the BOS members in launching a new program of M.A in Sustainable Public Policy.

- a. Prof. Avanish and Dr. Nandan suggested that rationale has to be well developed. Structured feedback to be collected on the proposed program and can be presented in the BoS.

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- b. Dr. Seema suggested thinking about how this program is different from other programs with-in the university like M.Tech (UDM), MA(SDP),etc.
- c. L. N. Venkataraman suggested about the importance to consult the MPEC of the PPSD before discussing at the BoS. This is essential not only to the institutional requirements but also to approach the practicalities of the proposed program as the PPSD do not have specific faculty members.

Resolution: The concept note may be developed first. It should include the USP of the program, along with a comparison of similar programs on Master's in Public Policy.

The Chair then concluded the meeting with a vote of thanks.

Sukanya Das

[Sukanya Das]
Chairperson, DRC