



MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY



**Mahatma Gandhi University
Priyadarsini Hills P. O.
Kottayam, Kerala - 686560**

(Re-accredited by NAAC with A Grade)

Curriculum Policy

Curriculum Policy of the Mahatma Gandhi University

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The Background: This policy provides a framework for curriculum development and revision throughout a program's lifecycle that is purposeful and intentional, and learner-centred regardless of the mode of delivery. Articulated program and course learning outcomes support this learner-centred curriculum.

Why does the Curriculum need development or revision?

- Changing academic, industry, and community needs
- Changes in pedagogy or instructional methodology
- Changing needs of students
- Changing national, provincial and professional association standards
- New directions and initiatives from the government

Scope: This policy applies to all current and potential higher education programmes and courses delivered by Mahatma Gandhi University across all its programmes at all its campuses

Policy Statement

At Mahatma Gandhi University, the Academic Council, Board of Studies, Deans of the Faculties and the CSS jointly are responsible for quality control of the University's educational activities through rigorous monitoring and reviewing academic policy and course development curriculum course delivery and assessment review.

The Academic Council's, BOS's, and CSS's processes ensure that:

- The curriculum is consistent with the mission and vision of the University
- The Policy complies with the various State/National/UGC/State Higher Education Council policies and standards
- It is outcomes-based and learner-centred
- Course design is quality managed and involves extensive relevant input from internal and external stakeholders
- Courses are delivered and assessed as required; at a minimum, a holistic review occurs as part of an annual curriculum review; followed by a limited inspection and strategic review every three years
- Issues relating to course delivery and assessment are identified and acted upon promptly
- Examples of good practice in course delivery and assessment are identified, and this information is disseminated across campuses and through Learning, Teaching, Assessment and BOS/Curriculum Committee meetings
- Staff and students can contribute to the ongoing quality review of course delivery and assessment

- Mahatma Gandhi University continuously improves the quality of the courses offered to its students.

Policy definitions

Curriculum: The master plan for selecting content and organising learning experiences to change and develop students' behaviours and insights, the totality of student experiences in the educational process. It is precisely the planned instruction sequence or a view of the student's experiences regarding the educator's instructional goals. All curricula are informed by the nature of the discipline/field, the philosophical beliefs of the teacher, the students and the broader context in which the curriculum is enacted. It includes:

1. Disciplinary knowledge, i.e. the list of subjects, topics and the texts included in the course of study (syllabus)
2. Disciplinary ways of knowing, skills and practices
3. Teaching methodologies
4. Assessment practices

Curriculum alignment means coherence between different curriculum levels and between elements within a curriculum. At the macro level, it means vertical coherence between the purpose of qualification, qualification exit level outcomes and outcomes for courses and modules. At the meso level, this means horizontal coherence between courses and between modules that make up a course. At a micro level, curriculum alignment refers to internal coherence between course/module elements: the purpose of course/module, learning outcomes, teaching methodologies, and assessment methods.

Learning outcome: It describes what students should be able to do by the time they have completed a module, course or programme leading to a qualification. Outcomes are complex and embody knowledge, skills, practices and values/attitudes.

Principles Governing the Policy:

1. Design of curricula at all levels is responsive to the discipline/field, the student's learning needs, and the social context, considering our position as a university in Kerala, India
2. Curricula are relevant, up-to-date, and demonstrate awareness of the cultural heritage of the State and India on the disciplinary canon and teaching and assessment approaches in the discipline.
3. While designing curricula, all elements are aligned at macro, meso and micro levels
4. Develop learning outcomes, which include knowledge and understanding of a discipline/ field as well as cognitive, general and professional practices and skills for each course or programme as per the UGC requirements and universal level descriptors
5. Consult with key stakeholders in the curriculum design and review process
6. Stakeholders should include current and past students, academics, and professional bodies and, where appropriate, employers in both the private and public sector

7. Reviewing processes should be part of a curriculum plan to accommodate new ideas and knowledge in disciplines/fields. Minor revision (maximum 20% of the revision of the modules) of the curricula may be done annually, and Major revision of the curricula (50% or above revision of the modules) should be carried out every third year.
8. Curricula must be reviewed before beginning an academic year; no revision of curricula shall be carried out after starting a programme in an academic year.
9. Equity and Redress are issues that need to be accommodated in the curriculum. Curricula must be designed to meet all the students admitted to the university's educational needs. Ways in which the articulation gap between school and university can be bridged need to be clearly stated
10. Diversity of the student body and academics calls for curricula which are sensitive to the different backgrounds and outlooks of those engaged in the teaching and learning processes

Directives for implementing the policy

1. In all curriculum design processes, the principles described above should be considered
2. In the development of curricula, departments/schools should formulate their purposes as well as learning outcomes to facilitate the identification of specific outcomes for various courses and modules
3. The planned outcomes need to be explicitly communicated to students in course/module guides and should appear in the University calendar and other relevant documents
4. Regular critical review of curricula should be standard practice in every department. The faculty council should set apart a meeting at the end of every academic year in March for an annual review of the curriculum and include all the minor revisions as suggested by the course coordinators
5. Meeting of the Board of Studies should be convened in the second year (month of March) to initiate the routine 3rd yearly major revision of the curriculum. Major revision of the curriculum should be completed before the beginning of a programme, and no major revision of the curriculum shall be permitted in between the conduct of any programme
6. Student and peer feedback data should be elicited regularly to feed into curriculum review decisions
7. Interdisciplinary curriculum planning should be encouraged
8. In planning curricula, departments should accommodate the diverse educational, linguistic and cultural backgrounds of students
9. Heads of Departments / Course coordinators will be required to report to the Credit and Semester System (CSS) regularly in respect of their development and review of curricula

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Academic Council is the apex academic body to approve and ratify the use of a curriculum/its major revisions for any programme in the university.
2. On approval of the Academic Council, The Vice-Chancellor of the University shall issue an order to implement the curriculum/significant revision for a particular programme in the University.
3. In emergencies, Vice-Chancellor can approve the curriculum of a programme upon the recommendation of the BOS, subject to ratification of the Academic Council within three months of the beginning of the programme.
4. Credit and Semester System (CSS) should check whether the curriculum is as per the CSS norms of the university before the curriculum of a programme is submitted to Academic Council/Vice-Chancellor for its approval
5. Board of studies should design curricula for modules/courses by the principles in this policy; once a curriculum for a programme is approved by the university, the same must be submitted to the Academic Council with the recommendation to get it approved before the beginning of the programme
6. Faculty council should regularly evaluate and review curricula (using feedback data). The council shall discuss all the minor revisions in a meeting in March at the end of the academic year. All the modifications should be implemented before the beginning of the programme in every academic year. Minor revision of the curriculum is not permitted once a programme is started in an academic year.
7. Course coordinators/members of the BOS should coordinate curriculum design and review processes in collaboration with teams of academics to design and review the draft modules, courses and programmes for primary and minor revisions for discussion in the Faculty Council/BOS meeting the case may be.
8. Head of the Departments (HOD)/Directors who are the Chairpersons of the BOS should give leadership about disciplinary curriculum decisions and processes
9. HOD/Director or BOS chairperson should ensure that course coordinators and academics are designing and reviewing curricula in line with the policy principles and directives
10. Deans of the Faculty should verify whether curriculum revisions are correctly done and offer high-level leadership and facilitate deliberations on issues affecting curriculum decisions and processes in their respective faculty
11. Deans should establish quality assurance processes across departments (at the programme level) in their faculty to ensure that the policy principles and directives are met; they should approve and sign the document before submitting it to the CSS for final checking.
12. Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of the University offers a range of academic staff development courses and programmes with a focus on curriculum design and review processes

13. IQAC also offers consultations with individual academics or departments on curriculum issues and collaborates with academics and departments on curriculum research projects

Curriculum Review Criteria

Review proposals are reviewed based on the following considerations:

- A. Consistency with the vision and mission:** The consistency between the proposal and the vision and mission of the School/Department and the University. The BOS, CSS and the Academic Council shall consider the judgment and input of the relevant Dean, HOD and Faculty council. University may appoint expert committees to exercise their independent judgment to evaluate whether a Curriculum/revision proposal is consistent with the mission of the Department/School and the University.
- B. Appropriate rigour:** The extent to which the Curriculum/revision proposal reflects the academic content and rigor expected at a comprehensive state institution in the country. Reviewers consider the following factors:
1. Whether the proposer demonstrates that similar courses or programs are offered at comparable comprehensive state institutions in the country or abroad in standard institutions
 2. Whether the content of courses and programs is consistent with course/program titles and descriptions
 3. Whether the academic content appears commensurate with the level of the course or program (e.g., undergraduate or graduate)
- C. Sufficient evidence:** Whether the proposal provides sufficient detail and evidence for reviewers to determine if the proposal is reasonable and appropriate given available resources and the Department's/School's/University's vision and mission.

Special Policy Review Procedures

The CSS will initiate and suggest to the HODs a policy review procedure as directed by the respective state and national requirements/directives.

Good Practices

- The process and workflow of curriculum development and management should be transparent, with all relevant parties knowing where a particular curricular item is in that process. Ideally, the system supporting the process should be capable of both displaying where/when objects pass through review stages and tracking processing times so that systemic issues can be identified
- Whenever a dispute originates between the decisions of two different bodies in the curriculum work-flow, it is advisable that when such conflicts become apparent that the two (or more) parties should meet to discuss and resolve issues outside the process to facilitate the approval of the action or conclude that the proposal should be withdrawn. The faculty initiator should always be permitted to attend any such meetings to contribute
- There should be both deadlines and a recommended timeline and clear expectations for the time required to complete each component of curriculum development and review.

- Deadlines should reflect the last reasonable date at which an item could, with little or no revision, be approved and implemented for the deadline's associated academic term of implementation.
- As many Initiators may tend to underestimate the need for revisions to their proposal, continual efforts should be made to educate faculty about the process
- The recommended timeline should reflect a process that accommodates and anticipates revisions, expected consultations with relevant stakeholders, and practical issues such as holidays or times of unusual activity
- The recommended timeline should be publicised to ensure that curricular actions are initiated and progress at a pace that balances flexibility and innovation with proper consideration and advice from relevant stakeholders
- Committees should strive for consensus; quorums and approvals should be set such that the majority of voting members must vote in favour of passing a motion, and no single member or constituency can unilaterally veto or block a motion
- Committees should meet regularly enough to render decisions on development courses efficiently; most such committees meet (or otherwise conduct business) every month, being mindful of administrative deadlines and the work of associated curricular bodies. Activity (or inactivity) of review bodies regarding specific curriculum actions should be accessible to all stakeholders
- Decisions on proposals should have the following outcomes/conclusions: approval without changes; approval pending specific changes; request for revisions

Process and Procedure: The process begins when an individual faculty member or the entire faculty council, or a stakeholder of the University Programme recognises a need for a revision to the course, an existing programme of study, or curriculum standard recognises the opportunity for a new system, or programme of study, or curriculum standard. A proposal is subsequently prepared using the appropriate principles and as per the directives given in the curriculum policy document. The specific procedure for implementation depends on the nature of the proposal, again, as per the directives/roles and responsibilities given in the policy document.