

**University of Delhi****Concept Note on the Centre for Hindu Studies**

The world over there is a growing recognition of the significance of the foundational values of the Hindu civilization and philosophy for the hope it holds for a fast- accelerating materialist society driven by concomitant psychological, cultural and social consequences.

In order to inculcate a sound and ethical statecraft, a peaceful and sympathetic global order, to safeguard national territorial boundaries and practice true democratic spirit, preserve environment and respect nature, bring greater social harmony and to resolve numerous other conflicts in modern life in a larger global order, it is important to study the Hindu worldview. The practical benefits of Ayurveda and Yoga are beginning to make a mark in the global stage to promote physical and mental well-being of millions of people.

Among many great civilizations of the ancient world, it is only the Hindu civilization that has managed to survive and refashion itself time and again. This becomes all the more significant in the face of critical challenges arising out of foreign invasions of more than a thousand years.

As the first speaker in the Constituent Assembly of India (11<sup>th</sup> December, 1946), the great Hindu philosopher Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan said that 'the great ideal for which this country has stood' had survived the assaults of invaders. Describing India as a symphony where different instruments combined to interpret one single score, he underlined that the country had never adopted inquisitional methods: 'A nation does not depend on identity of race, or sentiment, or on ancestral memories, but it depends on a persistent and continuous way of life that has come down to us. Such a way of life, belongs to the very soil of this land.'



The great Enlightenment philosopher Voltaire characterized Hindus with most ancient form of worship: 'As India supplies the wants of all the world but is herself dependent for nothing, she must for that reason have been the most early civilized of any country, and by a like consequence necessarily have had the most ancient form of worship.'

M. Monier-Williams in his *Hinduism* published in 1877 concluded that the founding principle of Hinduism was the often-quoted Sanskrit shloka- *ekam eva advitīyam*, i.e. there is but one Being, without a second.

Mahatma Gandhi, while writing in *Young India* on 20 October 1927, declared that he found Hinduism to be the most tolerant of all religions known to him, and in particular its freedom from dogma held special appeal for him, because it provided largest scope for self-expression: 'Hinduism believes in the oneness not of merely all human life but in the oneness of all that lives.'

Gandhi found in the first verse of *Ishopanishad*, the ultimate pearl of wisdom one, which even if used alone, could characterize the very essence of Hinduism: 'if all the Hindu scriptures were turned to ashes and only this one verse remained, there would be no loss':

Īśāvāsyamidam sarvaṃ yatkiṃca jagatyāṃ jagata

Tena tyaktena bhūṃjīthāḥ mā gṛdaḥ kasyasvidghanam

[All this— whatsoever exists in the universe— should be covered by the Lord. Having renounced (the unreal), protect (your Self) through that detachment, and enjoy (the Real). Do not covet anybody's wealth.]

Development in social sciences and literature in India post-Independence have largely been afflicted with a Euro-centric consciousness, and consequently the terms of reference as well as the use of terminologies and their interpretations not only fall short of offering nuanced interpretations of the Hindu society and



culture, they at times invert the original ideas, and thereby offer explanations that work to show the Hindu civilization and its values in conflict with modern and enlightened ideas.

The academic endeavour through structured teaching-learning and research in the knowledge domain of Hindu civilization alongwith its history, literature and philosophy has largely remained dormant in the Universities and Research Institutions across the country and such initiatives are at a nascent stage in most of the University departments and centres. However, recently University Grants Commission (UGC) has introduced Hindu Studies as a subject for the National Eligibility Test (NET).

University of Delhi on glorious completion of its century long journey is at the cusp of a celebrated history. It is high time, that Hindu Studies gets unveiled as a discipline of its own in this University and a centre is established accordingly to further this intellectual pursuit of knowledge. Therefore, it is befitting that the University set up a Centre for Hindu Studies to encourage profound active intellectual engagement with Hindu civilization, culture and philosophy.

The major objectives of the proposed centre, inter alia, may include the following:

- (i) To initially offer Postgraduate and Doctoral programmes in Hindu Studies followed by certificate, diploma and other such programmes depending upon operational feasibility of the Centre.
- (ii) To offer, as part of the Postgraduate programme, Minor courses with Hindu Studies as Major in the knowledge domains of Computer Science, Data Analytics, Artificial Intelligence, Graphic Design & Animation, Management and Commerce.

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- (iii) To involve all the stakeholders including the enrolled students to think critically as well as analytically and evolve a Bharat centric perspective beyond theoretical explanation.
- (iv) To create a dedicated rich repository of ancient and contemporary reference materials concerned with enhancing the values and knowledge of the Hindu way of life, culture, traditions and worldview.
- (v) To engage in comparative study with other belief systems, spiritual values and cultural traditions with a focus on Hindu spirit and ethos.
- (vi) To study inter-connectedness existing among different Hindu sects, philosophical practices, historical issues, statecraft, law, arts, architecture, literature, musical and dance traditions.
- (vii) To trace the evolution of reformist movements and practices, evolving nationalist ideas, and study their multiple dynamics.
- (viii) To publish in due course of time a journal dedicated to deep research on topics related to Hindu Studies.
- (ix) To coordinate with institutions in the same knowledge domain for better academic enrichment and research propagation.



**University of Delhi**

**Ordinance XX (...)**

**Centre for Hindu Studies (CHS)**

The Centre for Hindu Studies (CHS) shall be constituted under Ordinance XX (....) of the Ordinances of the University, as a multi-disciplinary centre, to focus on various facets of the Hindu civilization, its multiple dynamics, history, philosophy, worldview, and emerge as a major resource and reference centre in due course of time.

The Centre for Hindu Studies shall be a constituent of the Faculty of Arts in order to facilitate the curriculum design and implementation of the academic programmes as well as enrolment of the students for the doctoral studies.

**1. Objectives**

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**2. Governing Structure:** The governance of the Centre shall be carried out through the following bodies which shall function under the overall control of the Executive Council of the University.

(i) Governing Body

(ii) Research Committee



**2.1. Governing Body:** There shall be a Governing Body which shall function under the overall control of the Executive Council of the University, and in accordance with the Act, Statutes and Ordinances of the University.

**Composition:**

- (i) Vice-Chancellor or his Nominee - Chairperson
- (ii) Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Ex-officio member)
- (iii) Director, South Delhi Campus (Ex-officio member)
- (iv) Dean of Colleges (Ex-officio member)
- (v) Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences (Ex-officio member)
- (vi) Dean, Faculty of Arts (Ex-officio member)
- (vii) Two External Expert members to be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor
- (viii) Three distinguished academicians from the University and its colleges to be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor
- (ix) The Director of the Centre - Member Secretary

2.1.1 Except for the ex-officio members, all other members of the Governing Body shall have a term of three years.

2.1.2 The Governing Body shall meet at least twice in one academic year. The quorum in such meetings shall be half of the total approved strength of the Governing Body.



**2.1.3 Powers of the Governing Body:** The Governing Body shall exercise the following powers:

- (i) Provide overall supervision and guidance to the Centre.
- (ii) Make all the appointments of the Centre except those to be done by the University.
- (iii) Consider academic proposals, programmes and courses leading to certificates, diplomas and degrees.
- (iv) Consider proposals of staff requirements and approve them.
- (v) Consider major requirements related to infrastructure of the Centre.
- (vi) Consider and approve annual report of the Centre.
- (vii) Consider budgetary and additional financial requirement and forward them to the University for approval.
- (viii) Consider and approve annual financial statement of the Centre.
- (ix) Consider and approve the recommendations of the Research Committee for major and long-term collaborations with other institutions and/or bodies to facilitate the objectives of the Centre.

**2.2 Research Committee:** There shall be a Research Committee, functioning under the overall control of the Governing Body of the centre, to guide research and other academic activities of the Centre.

**Composition:**

- (i) Director of the Centre - Chairperson
- (ii) Three distinguished academicians who shall be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor from among the teachers of the University and its colleges.



(iii) Three members who are experts in the field to be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor.

(iv) Two representatives from among the Fellows associated with the Centre to be decided by the Research Committee.

(v) Joint Director - Secretary

2.2.1 Except for the ex-officio members, all other members of the Research Committee shall have a term of three years.

2.2.2 The Research Committee should meet as and when required, but not less than twice in one academic year. The quorum in such meetings should be half of the total approved strength of the Research Committee.

**2.2.3 Functions of the Research Committee:** Subject to the overall control of the Governing Body of the Centre, the Research Committee shall exercise the following functions:

(i) Periodically monitor and assess various academic and research activities in operation and consider fresh proposals.

(ii) Consider proposals for starting new academic and research programmes and courses, for approval of the Governing Body of the Centre.

(iii) Formulate guidelines for further consideration of the Governing Body regarding involving faculty members and students of the University and its colleges for association with the Centre in various capacities like Fellows, Interns, Associates, Visiting Faculty, Adjunct Faculty etc.

(iv) Evaluate the performance of Fellows/Interns and other academic members/faculties and research scholars associated with the Centre.

(v) Consider and approve proposals for holding major seminars and conferences.

(vi) Formulate major guidelines for further consideration of the Governing Body regarding creation of repositories and such other significant research and academic activities of the Centre.

(vii) Consider proposals from departments, colleges and other centres of the University, as well as from academic/research/strategic institutions from outside, for collaboration or starting sub-units. It may also consider reaching out to such departments, colleges, centres and outside institutions for furthering the objectives of the Centre. Proposals with major financial implications, or those with the outside institutions, shall be forwarded to the Governing Body for its approval.

(viii) It shall exercise such other functions which the Vice-Chancellor or the Governing Body of the Centre may decide from time to time.

### **3 Office bearers**

#### **3.1 Director**

(i) There shall be a Director of the Centre to be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor from among the Professors of the University for a term of three years or till he/she attains the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier. This assignment would be in addition to his/her existing responsibilities in the Department. He/she shall be eligible for re-appointment for another term of three years.

(ii) He/she shall be responsible for efficient management and supervision of the Centre including diligent handling of its finances, in accordance with the Act, Statutes, Ordinances, rules and regulations of the University.

(iii) The Director shall coordinate various academic and research activities of the Centre.

(iv) The Director shall act as ex-officio Member Secretary of the Governing Body, and ex-officio Chairman of the Research Committee.

### **3.2 Joint Director**

(i) There shall be a Joint Director of the Centre to be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor from among the Professors/Associate Professors of the University and its Colleges, for a term of three years, or till he/she attains the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier. He/she be eligible for re-appointment for another term of three years. This assignment would be in addition to his/her existing responsibilities in the University/College.

(ii) He/she would generally assist the Director in all his academic and administrative responsibilities, and in the absence of the Director perform all such functions and discharge all such responsibilities which are vested with the Director under this Ordinance.

(iii) The Joint Director shall act as ex-officio Secretary of the Research Committee.

### **4. Faculty**

All Fellows and Associates would constitute the Faculty of the Centre.

(i) **Visiting and Adjunct Professors:** Scholars with proven academic credentials and relevant work in the field can be associated with the Centre as Visiting/Adjunct Professors on the recommendation of the Research Committee and with the approval of the Governing Body or the Vice-Chancellor. The terms and conditions of such association can be decided by the Research Committee generally and in individual cases with the approval of the Vice-Chancellor.

(ii) **Fellows and Associates:** Full time faculty members of the University and its Colleges with relevant experience and research interest may be





appointed as Fellows for a period of three years. Research Scholars of the University can be appointed as Associates on similar terms and conditions. This engagement would run concurrently with the Fellow's existing responsibilities in the University or its Colleges. Appointment of Fellows and other terms and conditions necessary for the smooth operation of Fellowship may be decided by the Research Committee with the approval of Governing Body or the Vice-Chancellor.

(iii) **Post-Doctoral Fellows:** In specific cases, the Research Committee of the Centre may consider the request of individual scholars for carrying out their Post-Doctoral Fellowships at the Centre with financial assistance from government/non-government sponsoring agencies. This research should be of relevance to the specified objectives of the Centre.

## **5. Conduct of Teaching-Learning and Research**

(i) Arrangement for teaching-learning and research facilities shall be made, as far as possible, by pooling the internal human resources of the University and its colleges. In special cases and subject to the availability of financial resources, the Governing Body with the approval of the Vice-Chancellor may, on the recommendation of the Research Committee, appoint scholars from outside the University system for a fixed tenure and on such terms and conditions as may be decided in specific cases.

(ii) Faculty members of the departments and colleges of the University, with proven credentials in the field, may be invited to be associated with the Centre as Adjunct Faculty. In such cases, their workload at the Centre shall count towards their overall workload in the parent department/college.

(iii) Fellows of the Centre may also be engaged in teaching. In such cases, their direct teaching hours shall count towards their overall workload in the parent department/college.

(iv) Fellows, Associates, Post-Doctoral Fellows, Research Scholars and others, associated with the Centre shall also assist in various works connected with smooth conduct of the academic and research programmes of the Centre.

(v) The University will make efforts to have sanctioned posts of Professor, Associate Professor and Assistant Professor for sustained teaching-learning and research in the Centre. Efforts will be made to maintain the ratio of 1:2:4 while requesting for these posts by the University.

#### **6. Sanctioned strength of students**

The centre will enrol sixty (60) students for Postgraduate studies with choice of various Minor courses alongwith Hindu Studies which will be the Major course as part of the Postgraduate programme in the centre. However, atleast 10 students will be required for running Minor courses under the Centre.

#### **7. Participating Departments**

Following Departments from the Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Social Sciences shall be the participating departments in the teaching-learning and research activities of the Centre for Hindu Studies.

Departments under the Faculty of Arts:

- Department of Sanskrit
- Department of Philosophy
- Department of Hindi

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- Department of English

Departments under the Faculty of Social Sciences:

- Department of History
- Department of Political Science
- Department of Sociology

**Note:** Other Departments may also be co-opted by the Centre for teaching-learning and research in relevant areas of knowledge pertaining to the respective departments under various faculties of the University.

#### **8. Finance:**

- (i) All expenditures of the Centre such as those on the conduct of seminars, research projects, teaching, publications, administration, equipment and other support activities shall be made in accordance with the allocation, and in accordance with GFR and other rules and regulations as applicable from time to time.
- (ii) Additional financial support can be sought from various government agencies, or through collaborations with national and international agencies as per the requirements from time to time.

#### **9. General Conditions:**

- (i) Subject to the provisions of the Act and Statutes, the issues not covered in this Ordinance, or in the event of requirement of interpretation, the decision of the Vice-Chancellor shall be final.
- (ii) No administrative and/or financial responsibility in the Centre shall be given to any one beyond the age of 65 years.

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