

**ODISHA STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY, SAMBALPUR**

**MINUTES OF THE 3<sup>rd</sup> MEETING OF THE COORDINATORS HELD ON 2 SEPT. 2017**

**HELD AT BJB (A) COLLEGE AUDITORIUM, BHUBANESWAR**

A meeting of the Coordinators of the OSOU Study Centers in Odisha was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2017 at BJB Autonomous College, Bhubaneswar. The meeting was attended by 35 Coordinators and other representatives from study centers.

The deliberations began with the welcome address by Dr. Jayant Kar Sharma, Registrar of OSOU after which Vice-Chancellor, OSOU Dr. Srikant Mohapatra gave a brief account of the aims and objectives of the meeting. In his inaugural address he dealt on Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system and the role of Study Centers in providing student support services. He said that this system has opened the doors of education for the under-privileged and our aim is to reach the unreached at every nook and corner of the state by making full use of the modern technology. Study centers are the facilitators for the effective functioning of the ODL system and the Coordinators are the eyes and ears of any Open University.

Vice-Chancellor informed the very First Convocation of OSOU will be held during the 1<sup>st</sup> week of October this year at Sambalpur. The Governor of Odisha, who is also the Chancellor of the University has been requested to give date and time for holding the ceremony. Two batches have already passed out. Nearly 600 students have completed various courses. 90 of them undertook certificate courses and they will not be called to the convocation. Statute for conducting the convocation has been drafted and expected to be approved by the government soon. Coordinators are invited to attend the convocation. Coordinators were requested to forward pending assignment and project marks to the headquarters on priority so that no student is deprived of receiving diploma/certificate in the convocation.

VC also informed that MoU has been signed with IGNOU for sharing study materials and such materials will be printed with the logo of IGNOU and OSOU. IGNOU study materials can be translated into Odia and published by OSOU. MoU has been signed with OKCL that provides IT education. OSOU is responsible for examination and certification. Students admitted in OS-CIT course will come to OSOU study centers on the last Sunday of the month to appear in the OMR-based examination. Number of students appearing the examination will be communicated to study centres in due course of time.

- 1. Admission:** The deliberations were resumed after the tea break with the VC initiating discussion on admission. This year the admission has touched the 3000 figure whereas it

was only 1450 during the last session. However it was seen that 90% of the admissions took place during the last ten days. Opinion of the Coordinators was invited whether the time period for admission needs to be reduced. It was unanimously decided that **admissions will continue from 1<sup>st</sup> June to 31<sup>st</sup> July** without any further extension because preparation of students' identity cards, printing of study materials can be done only after getting the number of enrolment in various programmes.

- 2. Academic Counseling:** Vice- Chancellor informed that Counseling is to be done by approved Counselors only. SC will send the Bio-data of the prospective counselors to the HQ and such new counselors can take classes only after getting approval else problems will arise in making their payments which is subject to government audit.

OSOU will soon publish a **Manual for the Counselors** that will guide the counselors regarding their role as a counsellor and evaluator. **Programme Guide:** OSOU will also publish programme-guides for each programme that will guide the students regarding the method of their study, details of the SLMs; viz., all the blocks, units, learning objectives and outcome, methodology, number of classes to be held, submission of assignments, including the number of chances that can be availed by the student to clear the exams etcetera.

**Orientation Programme:** OSOU will soon organize course- specific Orientation Programme for academic counsellors.

On the day of induction meeting, a detailed counseling schedule should be given to the students so that they can plan their own activities accordingly.

Counselor will not deliver lectures but facilitate the students' learning process by encouraging debate, discussion and peer group interaction. Counseling differentiates Open and Distance Learning from the Correspondence Courses.

The Coordinators can take maximum 25% of the scheduled classes for any programme provided they have been empaneled as a Counselor by the HQ. S/he can also guide the project work.

The Coordinator should have a panel of good, qualified, experienced and approved counselors for each programme activated in the respective study centre. The counselors should be paid their remuneration immediately after taking the class. The Counselors should be informed about their specific counselling assignment at least three days earlier so that they can prepare for the same.

Number of classes corresponds to that of the credits in the programme; i.e., one counseling of 2 hours duration for 1 credit or 1 block. When the number of students in the class is less than 5 then conduct intense counseling (50% of the normal prescribed counselling sessions) covering 2 blocks in a single class. In case the teacher has turned up but no

students, then 50% of the remuneration is admissible. If it so happens consecutively twice, then the classes should be suspended until the students request in written to resume the same. Inform the students 2 days earlier if the classes are suspended due to some reason. Last moment suspension of classes is not desirable because it creates problems for the students coming from far off places.

Consecutive counselling sessions for the same programme and for same counsellor will not be given on the same day.

The Counsellors should make a WhatsApp group of the students to motivate them to attend counselling sessions..

From the next session availability of programmes at a study centre shall be strictly regulated. If counsellors are in the panel and other programme specific infrastructure are available then only programmes shall be activated at any centre.

OSOU will provide one set of study material for all programmes to the Study Centre library. Another set of material will be provided for those activated programmes so that counsellors can make use of those materials. Extra set of material for any programme can be requisitioned if the number of learners exceeds 20.

One set pertaining to all programmes for the SC library. One set of the programmes activated in the SC for the use of the counselors in the SC. If the enrolment in any programme is 20 or more, one set will be sent extra.

There are 4 Post Graduate Diploma programmes. The students have been enrolled in two ways: Direct Entry and Lateral Entry. Lateral entry has been given to those who are already registered in Diploma programme in the previous sessions and they can appear the TEE after 6 months. Classes will be arranged separately for Lateral Entry students. Joint (combined) counselling sessions shall be conducted for Diploma and PG Diploma (Direct Entry) students.

- 3. Assignments:** Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) is an indispensable part of ODL. The objective is to engage the student in self-study and assignments facilitates two-way communication between learner and evaluator through feedback system. In OSOU the Assignments carry 25% weightage. The UGC prescribes that the number of assignments should be at least one for each two credit course. This means 2 credit course will have 1 assignment, 4 credit will have 2 assignments, 6 credits 3 assignments and 8 credit course will have 4 assignments. OSOU will follow the UGC guidelines w.e.f. July 2018. This implies that we have to prepare more Assignments.

In ODL assignment is a teaching-learning tool. The student cannot appear the examination without submitting the assignments. Similarly, they have a right to get evaluated assignments along with counsellor's feedback much before the start of the examination.

The dates for uploading, submission, evaluation and feedback on assignments are specified in the academic calendar.

SCs are requested to inform HQ in case they find any discrepancy/mistake in the assignments.

Proper evaluation of assignments is desired. The assignment is returned back to the students with the global/marginal comments. Signature of the evaluator on the award list is necessary. Each award list is to be countersigned by the coordinator. This is necessary in view of RTI/Court cases. The remarks made by the evaluator on the comment sheet should match the marks awarded. Any negligence may even invite legal complications. We should try to avoid complains from the students' side. Coordinators are requested to insist on the counselors to endorse their comments on the assessment sheet of each assignment.

Evaluated assignment is the property of the students. Study centers will retain only the award-list.

The Award List should be neatly written. Post only the marks, not grades. Grades will be calculated by the HQ. Original copy of the award list is to be sent to headquarters and second copy is to be retained by the Study Centre.

SCs has to send 2% of the assignments to OSOU for verification. This will be reviewed by our Consultants.

Four nodal centers are identified for evaluation of assignments in case no counsellors are available for a programme at any study centre. These centres are Bhubaneswar, Sambalpur, Berhampur and Jeypore.

- 4. Term- End Examination:** OSOU is conducting examination after every semester. Those who have joined certificate course they shall appear the term-end examination after six months. However, for diploma and PG diploma students their first examination after six months is end-semester examination.

OSOU will send a letter to the Coordinators ascertaining their consent to become the Centre Superintendent during the entire period of examination. In case s/he has any other essential engagement during that period, the name of any other senior teacher from the college may be recommended with the permission of the Principal.

In order to appear the exam the student should have in his possession the Hall ticket along with his i-card without which it will not be possible to identify the person that he is the same student who has taken admission for the said course.

All examination related stationary shall be dispatched to examination centres well in advance. Examination advance shall be sent through electronic transfer of funds (NEFT). Any shortcomings should be brought to the notice of the headquarters immediately.

Once examination starts answer scripts for each session along with all filled in documents should be sent to OSOU on the same day or else on the next day positively. In case no student turns up for examination nil report is to be submitted.

SC should chalk out the planning of dates etc regarding exams well in time because IGNOU and College exams are also held during the same period, so as to avoid date-clash of various exams. Necessary proposals/feedback should be sent to the HQ well in advance so that it can be taken into account while finalizing the date-sheet of exams. This problem may arise during our exams in December, not in June.

Examination result shall be declared within fifteen days after the last examination.

After the exams, the results are sent to all coordinators in the excel-sheet. We have a web-portal containing details of all exam results, result analysis etc. Coordinators may take the user-id and password to view this web-portal and get all the information.

- 5. Finance and Accounts:** New Study Centres are required to open S/B a/c in the name of OSOU. Imprest money to the tune of Rs.20, 000/-per month will be sent to the SC where 4 programmes have been activated. This amount can be more for the SCs having more than 4 activated programmes. Bills are to be sent regularly so that it can be recouped immediately when 50-60% of the amount is spent. If there is no expenditure during any month, then 'nil expenditure' statement is to be submitted.

A proper Cash book should be maintained and updated at least once a week countersigned by the coordinator. As a rule it should actually be written daily. So also the bank pass book should also be updated regularly. All financial records like cheque issue register, bank pass book cash book and imprest register along with original vouchers are to be kept in safe custody.

Income of the SC includes money sent by HQ, advances and recoupment from the HQ, interest credited in the account by the bank, sale of old newspapers and scraps etc. All such income should be reflected in the cash book on the same date.

A cheque-issue register should also be maintained properly. All cheques issued should be crossed. However, NEFT/ Bank transfer should always be preferred for every payment.

Cash in hand should not exceed more than Rs.500/-. Priority should be given to counsellors' payment.

A Photostat copy of the Bank Pass book should accompany the statement of accounts sent to OSOU by 7<sup>th</sup> of every month.

Stock registers has to be maintained to keep separate record of consumable and non-consumable items available/used in the SC. Every receipt and expenditure of any item is to be entered therein and a certificate on the bill should also be endorsed on the body of the bill with the page number of such entry in the stock register.

Purchase of non-consumable items is not permitted without the prior approval of the HQ; whereas that of the consumable items should be reasonable.

Counsellor's bills are to be prepared for every individual class. If the same counsellor takes two classes on a given day, he can claim only one conveyance in any one of the two separate bills. S/he should reflect in brief what s/he discussed in the corresponding class.

Bill for evaluation should be accompanied by the award list of the evaluated courses.

All the bills/vouchers being sent to the HQ should be arranged neatly and a copy of the consolidated account be retained in the SC.

The accounts are subject to audit any time. CAG approved auditors will be empaneled for internal audit of the accounts. Half of the audit is done in the SC and half at the HQ. Audit will be done according to the coordinators' manual.

OSOU office will send SMS for each recoupment indicating the head against which it has been released.

- 6. Administrative Matters:** Every Study Centre should have a sign board and a notice board. Code of the centre, name of the college and Study Centre timings should be prominently displayed on the sign board. The coordinators/Asst. coordinator should spend 20 hours per week including full time (8 hours) on Sundays. On other days counseling of prospective learners, assignment submission, evaluation and feedback to learners, project supervision etc shall be handled. Attendance of part-time staff engaged in Study Centre should be recorded on each working day. Any deviation in the time table or working of the SC should be intimated to the students lest it should cause inconvenience to them because many of them come from far off places.

Printed copies of various forms and formats like counsellors' bills, award lists, monthly statements, counsellors' biodata and other formats will be supplied to the SCs from the HQ to reduce the expenditure.

7. **Status of SLMs:** OSOU has engaged course writers and within this short span of time 300 self-instructional materials (Blocks) have been developed. There is a big challenge for the university to start Masters Degree programmes; the coordinators can supplement the university by referring learned authors, translators and editors etc for various programmes.

According to new UGC ODL Regulation 2017 it is mandatory to provide printed study material to the students. During 2016 OSOU could supply only 20% hard copies whereas this year it was 80% and in some programmes 100 per cent SLM has been supplied to learners.. It is expected that printing and distribution of remaining SLMs will be completed within 14<sup>th</sup> Sept.

Distribution of study materials in the induction meeting increased the attendance of the new students. SCs to take care of the proper distribution of the remaining study materials sent to them. However, every SLM is uploaded in the website immediately after preparation and before sending it to the press for printing. If any student makes specific request for sending the books by post, then the SC can do so and the cost will be reimbursed.

OSOU has accorded priority to preparation of Odia study materials in Journalism and Rural Development. However 80% of the students have opted for English as medium of instruction.

Regarding confusion in identification of books for various programmes, OSOU will send a specific list to the SCs.

Creating a library in the SC is not viable because the office opens only for a short time during which hectic business goes on. OSOU therefore has created an e-library that can be used with the user id and password.

Prints of the e-lessons cannot be given to the students; it can however be done in case we have failed in providing them the printed books.

8. **Project Evaluation:** The SCs have been informed about the programme that have project components.. A project report is not a Ph.D thesis. However, it should help learners in developing reading/writing skills along with analytical skills. SCs can help them in identifying the project supervisor. Counselors will be the project supervisors. SCs should have a panel of supervisors. Two counselling sessions could be arranged for providing necessary inputs on the parameters to be used in preparation of Project synopsis and project reports.

Project will be there in every Diploma programme and above. The Project Supervisor cannot be the project evaluator. Mutual arrangements of the supervisor and evaluator in

such projects should also be avoided. SCs to take care that the originality of the project and its evaluation is not diluted.

Project work will be carried out only after the approval of the synopsis. SC will do the approval for a 2 credit course; above 2 credits, HQ will approve it. Approval in SC will be given by the counselor.

SCs shall identify appropriate places/institutions for field study during the process of project work.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks by the Registrar.