

PROFILE-2013

Contents

FOREWORD	4
THE UNIVERSITY	6
Introduction	6
Organisational Structure of IGNOU	8
Authorities of the University	9
Officers of the University	9
Schools of Study	9
Divisions	10
Academic Programmes	10
Flexibility	10
Instructional System	10
Admissions	11
Evaluation System	11
Student Support Services	12
Networking	13
National Unique Identification Numbers Project	13
SCHOOLS OF STUDIES	14
School of Agriculture	14
School of Computer and Information Sciences	18
School of Continuing Education	19
School of Education	22
School of Engineering and Technology	24
School of Extension and Development Studies	26
School of Foreign Languages	27
School of Gender and Development Studies	28
School of Health Sciences	30
School of Humanities	35
School of Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Studies	36
School of Journalism and New Media Studies	37
School of Law	38
School of Management Studies	41
School of Performing and Visual Arts	45
School of Sciences	46
School of Social Sciences	49
School of Social Work	52
School of Translation Studies and Training	54
School of Tourism and Hospitality Service Sectoral Management	55
School of Vocational Education and Training	56
CHAIRS OF STUDY	58
CBCI-IGNOU Chair	58
Chair for Sustainable Development	59
Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Chair on Social Change and Development	61
Mother Teresa Chair	61
Sir C.V. Raman Chair for Science Education	62
Tagore Chair	62

CENTRES/COUNCILS/CONSORTIA/INSTITUTES	63
Advanced Centre for Informatics and Innovative Learning (ACIIL)	63
Centre for Bhojpuri Language, Literature and Culture (CBLLC)	64
Centre for Corporate Education, Training & Consultancy (CCETC)	64
Centre for Extension Education (CEE)	64
Centre for Gandhi and Peace Studies	65
Centre for Paramedical Sciences (CPMS)	66
Centre for Traditional Knowledge Systems (CTKS)	67
Centre for Tibetan Studies (CTS)	68
Distance Education Council (DEC)	68
Electronic Media Production Centre (EMPC)	71
IGNOU Centre for ODL in Research and Training in Agriculture	74
IGNOU Institute for Vocational Education and Training (IIVET)	75
Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC)	75
Indira Gandhi Centre for Freedom Struggle Studies (IGCFSS)	76
Institute for Competency Advancement of Teachers (i-CAT), Guwahati	77
Inter-University Consortium for Technology-enabled Flexible Education and Development (IUC-TEFED)	77
Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education and Development (MGIED)	78
National Centre for Disability Studies (NCDS)	78
National Centre for Innovation in Distance Education (NCIDE)	81
National ODL Centre for Local Governance (NOCLG)	84
North East Centre for Research and Development (NECRD)	84
Regional Institute of Vocational Education and Training (RIVET)	85
Staff Training and Research Institute in Distance Education (STRIDE)	85
DIVISIONS	88
Academic Coordination Division	88
Administration Division	88
Computer Division	90
Construction and Maintenance Division	92
Finance and Accounts Division	93
International Division	93
Library and Documentation Division	94
Material Production and Distribution Division	95
Planning and Development Division	96
Regional Services Division	96
Student Evaluation Division	98
Student Registration Division	99
OTHER UNITS	100
Campus Placement Cell	100
Committees Against Sexual Harassment	100
Defence Unit	100
Distance Education Programme under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan	101
Educational Development of the North East Region Unit	103
e-Gyankosh	104
Horticulture Cell	104
Public Information Unit	105
Research Unit	105
Student Services Centre	106
City Centre	107
Vigilance Cell	107
EVENTS	115
Appendix 1 : MEMBERS OF THE AUTHORITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY	121
Appendix 2 : SENIOR STAFF OF THE UNIVERSITY	121
Appendix 3 : REGIONAL CENTRES AND SENIOR STAFF	132
Appendix 4 : PARTNER INSTITUTIONS OUTSIDE INDIA	148

FOREWORD



IGNOU, the largest Open University in the world, is widely acknowledged as a system leader. Enshrined in the University's mandate is its commitment to increasing access, promoting equity, prioritizing inclusiveness and strengthening quality. The University has responded to critical challenges, reshaping itself in tune with social, economic and cultural transformations in India and across the globe. It can be envisaged that the

University would play a key role in enhancing gross enrollment ratio in higher education while also emphasizing measures to prevent learner attrition.

Registering impressive vertical and horizontal growth, IGNOU has enrolled over 3 million students through an expansive network of 67 Regional Centres and over 3380 Study Centres across the country. In addition, the University has significant international presence in 43 countries with a network of 80 Partner Institutions. With 477 academic programmes being offered, learners have the option to choose from a wide range of choices.

IGNOU has played a key role in spearheading the use of state-of-art information and communication technologies (ICTs) and media applications. With one Gbps internet connectivity provided by the Government of India under the National Knowledge Network (NKN) Plan, IGNOU has joined the NKN Virtual Private Network (VPN) linking premier academic institutions across the country. This enables interaction and sharing of digital applications, access to NPTEL courses and other services falling under the NMEICT Plan of the Government. IGNOU has become an active participant in the open access and open educational resources (OER) movement with the adoption of an OER policy pledging the University's commitment to widen access to high quality material to all. FlexiLearn and eGyankosh offer 27 online programmes. In fact, eGyankosh has emerged as one of the largest educational repositories in the world.

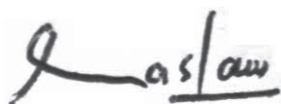
The University's Electronic Media Production Centre (EMPC) serves as the nodal point for a consortium of content providers and coordinates broadcast of a bouquet of Gyan Darshan TV channels and 37 Gyan Vani FM radio stations. The university has effectively implemented mobile services by introducing SMS facility to send important notifications to students and staff. In another initiative in

collaboration with Vigyan Prasar (Department of Science and Technology), Government of India, has started 'Science@Mobile' - an innovative scheme for science popularization.

Capacity building of faculty and staff has been a major area of emphasis. This is crucial in these changing times, giving a meaningful edge to their efforts to strengthen IGNOU's interventions and initiatives. The Staff Training and Research Institute of Distance Education (STRIDE) and Inter-University Consortium (IUC) have been at the forefront in offering training programmes on a regular basis covering areas such as design and development of course material, academic counseling, e-content development, multimedia development and effective management of learner support centres.

The University has launched several initiatives in strengthening its research base. Basic, applied and interdisciplinary research programmes have attracted scholars. With the provision of awarding fellowships to registered students from the University's own resources, IGNOU can be envisaged to become a major, dynamic research hub.

During the 12th Plan period, the University proposes to break new ground with a focus on: increasing access, equity and quality of open and distance learning; providing support for affordable education with provision for lateral integration in higher education through the PPP model; developing human resources through vocational and need-based programmes in niche areas; supporting quality blended education for research, training and continuing education of faculty and supporting ICT-enabled initiatives for reaching out to all disadvantaged sections including women and minorities.



(Prof. M. Aslam)
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