

AICTE: Engineering colleges can offer BSc, BA courses

Engineering Enrolments On Decline

Ardhra.Nair
@timesgroup.com

Pune: The All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has decided to allow engineering colleges to run arts and science degree courses on their premises in view of the decline in the number of students opting for engineering courses every year.

"Many engineering colleges are not able to fill up their seats every year. Hence, we have decided to let them start BSc or BA courses on their premises," AICTE chairman Anil D Sahasrabudhe told TOI.



AICTE chairman Anil D Sahasrabudhe said colleges must have necessary infrastructure to support the new courses

He said while the playground and other such infrastructure could be common, the colleges must have other necessary infrastructure in place, including laboratories, to support the new courses. "Moreover, AICTE approval to start such a course doesn't mean that the colleges don't need other permissions, such as consent from the affiliating university or direc-

torate of higher education, among others," he said.

The director of Vishwakarma Institute of Technology, R M Jalnekar, said he was yet to receive a circular in this regard. "We would be happy to include such courses," he said, adding that it would be nice to start a course in robotics where there was an element of the arts.

B B Ahuja, director of College of Engineering, Pune, said starting an arts or science course at a professional college would complement each other. "While we have a liberal learning course where students can opt for subjects in music or literature, we do not have a formal course. With a proper arts or science department, the engineering students will benefit a lot," he said.

The move will ensure that individual course teachers, such as those teaching psychology or music, at engineering colleges get proper infrastructure for research work. "We have a psychology professor qualified to become a research guide but she cannot do so as there is no arts or science department. With a department in place, her skills would be completely utilised," Ahuja added.

BVP College of Engineering director A Bhale-
rao said it was better to permit engineering colleges to start autonomous certificate, short-term diploma programmes related to technical fields for better utilisation of infrastructure. "Laboratories and classroom size required for science and arts programmes are different," Bhalerao said.