

Engg students to study Indian constitution and humanities

NEW CODE Model curriculum mandates study of social sciences, environment for credits

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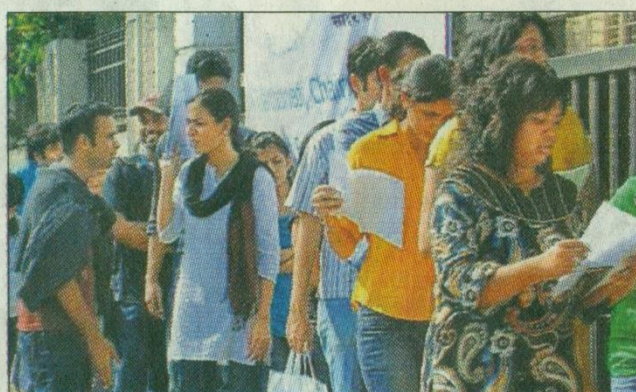
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NEW DELHI: From the next academic session, engineering students, except those at IITs and NITs, will have to study humanities, social sciences including management, environmental sciences, Indian Constitution and "essence of Indian traditional knowledge".

These additions are part of the model curriculum the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), the regulatory body for technical education in the country, has notified for undergraduate courses in engineering.

The Union human resource development ministry has approved it, official sources said. This curriculum will have to be adopted by over 3,000 engineering institutions in the country.

"This is absolutely necessary as engineering is all about creating something, which has societal benefits. Unless you know the society and its challenges, how will you produce something that's required? The overall objective of engineering will not be met if engineering students are not taught psychology, aesthet-



■ According to the curriculum, it will be mandatory for students to earn 12 credits from humanities and social sciences.

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ics, well-being of the human society and the ethical issues related to what they create. In IITs almost one-third to one-fifth of the total credits are dedicated to humanities, social sciences, economics and management in various forms. Engineers need to produce applications which have societal benefits," said Indranil Manna, professor, IIT Kharagpur.

According to the model curriculum, it will be mandatory for students to earn 12 credits over the four years of the undergraduate programme — with total 150-160 credits — from humanities

and social sciences including management. Students will also have to mandatorily opt for a course on environment and have to do papers on either the Indian Constitution or Essence of Indian Traditional Knowledge. Though these courses are mandatory, students will not get any credits for them.

"Right now some institutes offer humanities and other similar courses but it is not mandatory. Universities can decide whether they want to offer English literature, psychology, political science or economics but

they have to comply with it. Engineering students need to follow a holistic approach and the programmes will have an inter-disciplinary approach. This will help in their overall growth and development," said an AICTE official.

"Under the environment paper, students can be taught about air and water pollution, and global warming, among others, he said. "Under the traditional knowledge category, they will learn about the culture and the knowledge system that was followed..." said the official.

The model engineering curriculum has been prepared by the AICTE as per the recommendations of 11 subject committees it had set up for engineering and technical institutes, excluding the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and National Institutes of Technology (NITs). The AICTE has a model curriculum that is used by affiliated universities as a base for preparing their own syllabi. Theoretical classes will be brought down from 30 to 20 every week. Officials said the new curriculum will ensure final-semester students are free to pursue project work to understand industry requirements.