

In a First, AICTE Gives Credits for New Tech Courses

Recruiters happy with move as it would give them access to a larger talent pool to hire from in areas like AI & IOT

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New Delhi: Artificial Intelligence has caught the attention of the government at the campuses. New technologies including AI, robotics, machine learning (ML), Internet of things (IoT) have been given up to 20 credits, as per the new curriculum prepared by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) for the first time. This new curriculum is likely to be followed by at least 80% of the 3,000 engineering and technical colleges in the country.

Recruiters are happy with this as it would give them access to a larger talent pool to hire from in new technologies. The much-talked-about new syllabus was launched last month which has also reduced the credits given to theory-based courses.

Universities such as Delhi Technical University, Punjab Tech University and YMCA Faridabad are looking forward to embracing the new curriculum that would make their students more industry-relevant, thus increasing their prospects during placement. This is an effort by the government to ensure India is talent pool proficient in AI and other emerging technologies.

"All IITs and NITs have a full semester course on AI at B-Tech level. AICTE, in its model syllabus for other engineering colleges, is focusing on emerging areas like AI. With this, all new grads coming out of IITs/NITs and standard engineering colleges would come with fair competence to work on AI," confirmed a senior official at the ministry of human resource development (MHRD).

To ensure that the faculty at these institutes are ready, AICTE is soon going to roll out e-courses for faculty on new emerging technologies. The new course would also include programmes on vedas, yoga, Indian traditional knowledge, universal human values, etc. Over 80% of the institutes (3,000) have agreed to implement the new syllabus, according to an AICTE official.

"In many colleges, the students are not getting jobs as the course followed is dated. The focus of the new syllabus on new emerging technologies will help colleges improve placements as teaching would get more industry relevant," said Dinesh Kumar, vice chancellor, YMCA Faridabad.

He said that average salaries may also go up at institutes as a result of this. The average salary at YMCA was about ₹4 lakh per annum until last year. In the

Course Correction

AI, robotics, machine learning (ML), Internet of things (IoT), data analytics will find their way into the new curriculum prepared by the AICTE

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Universities and institutes are also looking forward to the new curriculum in the hope that it would improve placements at their campuses

Credit given to theory-based courses will also come down

AICTE is rolling out e-courses to train faculty on new emerging technologies

coming months, YMCA has also lined up workshops for faculty of engineering colleges in Haryana to train on the new courses.

Starting the next academic session, DTU would offer students two credit elective course on yoga & meditation. "The new framework includes all essential elements for engineering like new technologies and soft skills apart from core engineering courses," said

Yogesh Singh, vice chancellor at DTU.

"Almost 80% of the institutes would be implementing the new curriculum," confirmed Rajive Kumar, advisor at AICTE.

IITs are already offering these courses on these new technologies since a couple of years now. Credit system in the existing UG programme is up to 220 credits followed by many institu-

tes which is now being eased and lowered to around 150-160 credits in a total four-year UG programme, according to AICTE. "This would avoid undue burden on the students," said Kumar.

The prevailing curriculum focuses only on core and elective subjects of the respective disciplines of engineering. AICTE's new curriculum includes non-engineering courses on subjects such as history of science and technology in India, psychological processes, gender culture and development, advance course in 'Peace Research'.

The existing curriculum followed at the colleges does not have industry requirements, market trends, employability and problem-solving approach. "New model curriculum encourages innovation and research with reduced total number of credits," said Kumar.

The new curriculum also suggests readings on Shankara (an early 8th century Indian philosopher and theologian who consolidated the doctrine of Advaita Vedanta). "There was a suggestion to maintain meta-level status of philosophy. Interestingly, this suggestion came from an engineering faculty," said an AICTE official.