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Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

EMPOWERING HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN TECHNOLOGY ENABLED AND BLENDED LEARNING

By

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A FIVE-DAY FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Organised by

Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (COL-CEMCA), New Delhi
in collaboration with The NorthCap University, Gurugram, Haryana

6-10 January, 2025
10 AM to 12 Noon IST

Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA)

7/8 Sarva Priya Vihar,
New Delhi, 110016
India



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Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am pleased to be a part of the first of the many programmes jointly undertaken by the Association of Indian Universities and the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), a regional centre of Commonwealth of Learning (COL). AIU and COL-CEMCA have collaborated in a variety of initiatives, starting with that of drafting the National Blended Learning Policy (NBLP) which was released last year at the National Conference of Vice Chancellors in Hyderabad in April 2024. AIU and COL-CEMCA have agreed to collaborate in two distinct projects among which this particular one features as a flagship initiative. They are committed to empower higher education institutions, specially the capacity of its faculty and non-faculty members in Technology-enabled learning and blended learning.

You may wonder why the AIU and COL-CEMCA should focus on these two major areas. There is a context to it. The context is the educational reforms happening in India! This is well spelt out in the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) and the various directions thereof, by various regulators, be it AICTE, the UGC or the NCVET. Together, these organisations, at the level of tertiary education, have brought out numerous initiatives to realise the goal of NEP 2020, which is, transformation in the education landscape. We are also witnessing similar directions provided by various regulators and authorities at the school level and in the domain of teacher education as well as vocational and technical education in India. However, all these converge into a singular transformative effort at the national level.

What are the major reforms in NEP 2020 that we should be aware of, as educators at the tertiary level?

The first and foremost is the Multidisciplinary Education and Flexibility promoted by NEP 2020. It encourages institutions to offer flexible curricula that allow students to choose subjects across different streams. The aim is to benefit graduates from holistic and well-rounded education. The policy encourages the establishment of large multidisciplinary universities and colleges, with at least one in or near every district by 2030. This aims to provide students with a broad-based education and multiple entry and exit options with appropriate certification.



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Secondly, the NEP 2020 emphasises upon Increased Focus on Research and in the importance of research and innovation. Through the National Research Foundation (NRF), there will be a strong research culture in Indian HEIs.

Thirdly, the NEP 2020 encourages us to leverage technology for education, through online and digital platforms that would enhance learning opportunity for our students, especially those in rural, remote and underserved areas. We may witness the establishment of virtual labs, digital repositories and Open Educational Resources. There will be a multimodal approach to education and training where multimedia resources will be at the helm.

Finally, there will be greater autonomy for higher education institutions that perform. The proposed graded autonomy systems will allow institutions such as yours to innovate and deliver education and skills to learners to help them become employable with skills and competencies necessary for the 21st Century. This would result in HEIs determining the mode of education delivery, assessment and awards to their learners.

Keeping the above reforms in mind, the AIU and COL-CEMCA have agreed to build the capacity of the faculty and non-teaching staff in HEIs to capitalise on the autonomy being provided to them, with a rider. Autonomy to only those who perform! And AIU and COL-CEMCA wish to see you perform, innovate, and enhance your research capabilities, engage in multi-disciplinary education that offers flexibility, and above, achieve all these by leveraging technology for education. When it comes to technology, it is inevitable that we also deal with blended learning.

We believe that the five day programme will introduce you to various components of technology-enabled learning and blended learning, thus, making you capable of exploiting technologies, including the latest avatar in the form of Artificial Intelligence and to strengthen your educational institution as one that performs and benefits from greater autonomy!

I am thankful to each one of you for the time spared, and to the authorities of NorthCap University for your partnership with the AIU and COL-CEMCA. Special thanks to all those who are coordinating this effort from the three institutions – NCU, AIU and COL-CEMCA.