

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:405  
ANSWERED ON:25.02.2015  
ADDITIONAL DEGREE  
Nayak Shri B.V.

**Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:**

- (a) the concept of open education as well as distance education;
- (b) whether the University Grants Commission (UGC) has recommended that students enrolled in a regular degree course can now pursue an additional degree simultaneously under open or distance education mode from the same or different university;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether UGC has sought opinion of Vice- Chancellors of all universities in the country before implementation of the same; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the response received by UGC therefrom, university-wise?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SMT. SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a): Open education and distance education are synonymous terms and are generally referred to the mode of imparting education, through any means of communication such as broadcasting, telecasting, correspondence courses, seminars, contact programmes or the combination of any two or more of such means. Such education is open in the sense that it removes constraints existing in face-to-face conventional classroom method of teaching and learning. Distance learning arises due to the teachers and learners being separated by distance and time.

(b) & (c): Yes, Madam. The University Grants Commission (UGC), in its 494th meeting held on 31st July, 2014, allowed students enrolled in a degree programme to pursue a maximum of one additional degree programme simultaneously under open/ distance mode from the same or different university. The UGC Expert Committee, on the request of the UGC has reviewed the position and made following recommendations:

1. Pursuing two degrees simultaneously shall be allowed only for such courses which do not come under the purview of any statutory council prohibiting such arrangement;
2. There shall be no dilution in the standards laid down under the UGC Regulations on minimum standards of instructions for the award of First degree (through formal and non formal mode) and Master's degree.
3. Degree programmes to be pursued simultaneously shall be of the same level or a level below the programme being pursued in the regular mode;
4. The degree course through distance mode shall be pursued only from such universities which are eligible to offer courses in the distance mode under UGC regulations and have obtained approval from the Distance Education Bureau of the UGC;
5. The status of the course under distance mode shall be explicitly stated on the degree as "through distance education mode".

(d) & (e): Yes, Madam. The UGC had on 28th December, 2012, while forwarding the minutes of the UGC Expert Committee, sought opinion of Vice-Chancellors of all universities in the country on the issue of pursuing two degrees simultaneously from the same university or from different universities. A summary of the responses received from various universities is at Annexure.