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UGC set to okay inter-university credit system

SUMI SUKANYA DUTTA @ New Delhi

INDIA'S university regulator is set to approve a radical plan to allow students to earn their degrees by collecting 30-35 per cent of their course credits in universities or institutes other than their parent university and in subjects radically different than their core subjects.

To begin with, the scheme of National Academic Credit Bank (NACB) will be started for post-graduate students in some central universities and if successful, will later be expanded in other universities and for under-graduate courses too.

The concept, though practised by institutes of higher education in top foreign universities, is unheard of in India so far.

The proposal is set to be taken up in the next meeting of the University Grants Commission (UGC).

"This initiative is in line with the draft national education policy which emphasises on inter-disciplinary approach and multiple entry-exit points in higher education," said University Grants Commission vice-chairman **Bhushan Patwardhan**.

"In the beginning, students will have the option to either chose the credit-portability

system or pursue their degrees the conventional way," he said.

The National Academic Credit Bank (NACB) will enable students to record and report accumulated institutional credits from various sources onto a single document.

At present, Choice-Based Credit System is followed in some of the top universities in the country, through which students need to earn a certain number of credits to complete a course.

Academic credits summarise and describe an amount of learning; it can help to identify 'how much' learning was involved and 'how hard' it was.

Students are awarded credits after they have successfully completed a "block of learning"; that 'block' might be called a module, a unit or a qualification.

The plan proposes that institutions make arrangements that can allow their students to transfer the credits they have been awarded.

Students may be able to transfer the credits they have been awarded as part of one study programme to another, offered by the same institution, and/or transfer credit when moving from one institution to another.



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Bhushan Patwardhan, UGC vice-chairman