

UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA
Department of Journalism and Mass Communication
Under the
Faculty Council for Postgraduate Studies in Education, Journalism & Library Science

The University of Calcutta is among the pioneers of Journalism and media education in this part of the world.

With the growth of Media industry, journalism began to be recognised as a formal profession, and the need for a proper academic curriculum on journalism was felt.

Mr. Joseph Pulitzer, American press baron, introduced a journalism course at Columbia University, USA in 1910. It was a path-breaking move that inspired the press people even in India.

In 1920, Mrs. Annie Besant, an Irish by birth and Indian National Congress President (1917) launched the first academic programme on journalism in India at her National University, Adiyar, Chennai. Great poet Rabindranath Tagore was the Chancellor of Besant's university.

In 1926, famous Irish journalist and editor of the magazine 'Commerce', Pat Lovett, had urged for the introduction of a postgraduate journalism course at Calcutta University in his endowment lecture (Adhar Chandra Mukherjee Lecture), titled *Journalism in India*. Citing the example of the Columbia University School of Journalism, Lovett pointed out that with the increase in the power and prestige of the Indian press, journalism would be a better option as a profession and raising the dignity of journalism as an academic career would serve the cause of Indian nationalism.

Indian Journalists' Association's move

The proposal for a formal academic course in Journalism in the University of Calcutta was mooted by the Indian Journalists' Association (IJA) in 1934. But ultimately it took sixteen more years to take a concrete shape in 1950.

A two-year Postgraduate Diploma course in Journalism was formally inaugurated in Calcutta University on 7 October 1950 by the then Chief Minister of West Bengal, Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy (1882-1962). Mr. Justice Sambhunath Banerjee was Vice Chancellor then.

Renowned journalist and the then editor of *Anandabazar Patrika* Mr. Chapala Kanta Bhattacharjee (1901-1989) steered the course for more than a decade since its inception. He was initially appointed Secretary of the Standing Committee, which had been formed to look after the Diploma programme.

The introduction of the academic course in journalism at the University of Calcutta was a historic step. It was the first major seat of higher learning to institute a formal course in journalism. It inspired growth and spread of the academic curriculum of journalism as a part of higher education across the subcontinent. Vice Chancellor N K Sidhanta in his 1956 Convocation Address (22 January) appreciated the 'progress' of the Journalism Course and mentioned acceptance of the proposal for a separate Faculty of Journalism with its own statutes. Mr Chapalakanta Bhattacharjee was appointed first Dean of the Faculty of Journalism.

The First Press Commission of India in its report in 1954 spoke highly of the programme: "The Calcutta University is the only University whose post-graduate course for diploma in journalism extends over a period of two years. There is a standing Committee for Journalism formed by the Syndicate of the University which looks after the Department of Journalism. There are six part-time professors and lecturers,

all veteran journalists...The number of students admitted every year is dependent upon the possibility of giving them practical training.’’ (*Report of the Press Commission, 1954; pp. 198-199*)

From the very beginning, the Calcutta University course enjoyed the support of the best professionals in the media industry. Apart from Chapalakanta Bhattacharya, stalwarts such as, Hemendraprasad Ghosh, Vivekananda Mukhopadhyay, Mrinalkanti Basu, Bidhubhusan Sengupta, Dhirendranath Sen, Makhnallal Sen, Amal Hom, Satyendranath Majumder, Mohit Maitra, Kedar Chattopadhyay, Dakshinaranjan Basu, Bidhubhushan Sengupta, Sudhanshu Kumar Basu joined as guest teachers.

MA and PhD Programme

Over the years the Department has grown in strength. The MA course in Journalism was instituted from the academic session 1971-73. Subsequently, the Ph.D. programme was also introduced. The Department of Journalism gradually emerged as a full-fledged academic department.

Mr. Chapalakanta Bhattacharya was succeeded in 1973 by Mr. Sudhanshu Kumar Basu (1901-1979) and took the charge as the Dean Faculty of Journalism and the Head of the Department of Journalism. Basu was the editor of the now defunct English language daily, *Hindusthan Standard* (Kolkata). He started his professional life as a teacher of Economics at Vidyasagar College, Kolkata.

Professor Sunit Kumar Mukherjee (1926-2012), an alumnus of the University of Missouri, USA, joined the Department first as a Guest Teacher and then became Head of the Department in 1979. Mr. Mukherjee had become a full time Lecturer in subsequent years. Himself an eminent journalist also, Prof. Mukherjee had a long stint as departmental head before retiring in 1992.

Mr. Jitendranath Basu, Lecturer of the Department authored a new book titled ‘Romance of Indian Journalism’, which had been posthumously published by the University of Calcutta in 1979.

In the new Calcutta University Act 1979, Journalism was clubbed with two other subjects, such as, Education and Library Science to form a new Faculty Council for P G Studies in Education, Journalism and Library Science in place of the Faculty of Journalism.

Prof. Dr. Tapati Basu and Prof. Dr. Bishnupriya Dutta joined as full time Lecturers in 1989. Prof. Dr. Saumendranath Bera joined as full time Lecturer in 1998.

The Department was awarded Departmental Special Assistance (DSA) in 1993 by the University Grants Commission of the Government of India in recognition of its pivotal role in media education. Prof. Dr. Tapati Basu, the then Head of the Department, was in charge of the DSA. Prof. Basu served as Head of the Department for several terms, and also as Dean of the P G Faculty Council. Prof. Dr. Pijushkanti Panigrahi, then Dean of the Faculty, took charge as the Head of the Department in 2016.

Journalism and Mass Communication

The 1990s saw the entry of electronic journalism in a big way in the curriculum. In 1998, the Department was given a new nomenclature and came to be known as the ‘Department of Journalism and Mass Communication’ instead of ‘Department of Journalism’. The syllabus was also thoroughly revised and upgraded.

The content of the journalism curriculum has evolved with astonishing speed. From print media to today's digital communication--our students are at the cutting edge of every field of media and communication

practice with admirable competence. The pass outs of the Department are engaged in almost all major media and allied organizations across the country. Former students of the Department are also appointed as teachers in various colleges and universities in India and abroad.

New Diploma Courses

The Department has conducted one year self-financed post-graduate Diploma courses in various subjects. Many diploma holders in 'Media Studies: Film and Television', 'Mass Communication', 'Sports and Mass Communication Management' are working successfully.

CBCS Curriculum

The 4-semester course with a Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) curriculum in Journalism and Mass Communication has been introduced from the academic session 2017-18. The Core Objectives of the course are to equip students with a critical understanding of the media and communication milieu for the dynamic digital and convergent media environment and to acquaint them with the updated developments in Media and Communication Theory and Research.

Distinctive Features of the Course

The Choice Based Credit System M.A. curriculum in Journalism and Mass Communication has been designed consulting the updated curriculum of the major universities in India and deliberations with industry professionals.

The curriculum has tried to strike an optimum balance between the theoretical and practical aspects of Media and Communication practice and research. We expect to help train students to meet the ever-changing challenges of the media and communication industry and to equip them with the critical skills required to sustain themselves in the Information Society.

Apart from the traditional career opportunities in Print, Electronic and Digital Media, Public Relations and Advertising, students completing the course have diverse career opportunities in content creation, research, integrated marketing communication and social communication initiatives. Students also have the option of a career in various government departments.

With its emphasis on innovative pedagogy and criticality, the Department hopes to equip students with the necessary skills and attitudes required to become efficient communication researchers.

Facilities

The University Central Library located at the College Street campus has a huge collection of books covering all aspects of journalism and mass communication. The Department has a smart class room and a well-furnished auditorium, Ritwik Hall (Hardinge Building, Top Floor).

Celebrating the 75th Anniversary

The Journalism Course at Calcutta University has entered its 75th year on 7 October 2024. The celebration was inaugurated formally on the day by the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Santa Dutta (De) in a programme held at the Senate Hall (Darbhanga Building, First Floor). The inaugural programme was conducted by the Head of the Department, Prof. Dr. Pijushkanti Panigrahi.

Undergraduate Course

The University also offers B.A. General and Honours courses in Journalism & Mass Communication through a number of affiliated undergraduate colleges. The University for the first time extended affiliation to Netaji Nagar College to introduce Journalism as a pass subject in 1982.

The University introduced B.A. Honours in Journalism from the Academic Session 1995-96, first in two affiliated colleges, Netaji Nagar College and Muralidhar Girls' College. A list is given below of the Calcutta University affiliated colleges offering B.A. General and/or Honours courses in Journalism & Mass Communication:

Asutosh College
Baruipur College
Behala College
Bhangar Mahavidyalaya
Bijoy Krishna Girls' College
Charu Chandra College
Dr. Kanailal Bhattacharyya College
Gour Moham Sachin Mondal Mahavidyalaya
Gurudas College
Jogesh Chandra Chaudhuri College
Khudiram Bose Central College
Kidderpore College
Loreto College
Maharaja Manindra Chandra College
Maheshtala College
Muralidhar Girls' College
Netaji Nagar College
New Alipore College
Ramsaday College, Amta
Rani Birla Girls' College
Serampore College
Seth Anandram Jaipuria College
Shri Shikshayatan College
South Calcutta Girls' College
Surendranath College
Surendranath College for Women
Taradevi Harakhchand Kankaria Jain College
The Bhawanipur Education Society College
Victoria Institution (College)
Vidyasagar College
Vidyasagar College for Women
Vijaygarh Jyotish Ray College
Vivekananda College, Thakurpukur
Women's Christian College
Women's College, Calcutta