

# Ahmedabad University

## Minutes of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Board of Management held on 09<sup>th</sup> August 2024 at the Conference Room, University Office

Members Present:

1. Professor Pankaj Chandra, Chairperson
2. Colonel Sanjay Gokhale (Retd)
3. Mr Rajesh Gopinathan (*through zoom*)
4. Professor Kaumudi Joshipura
5. Professor Sunil Kale
6. Professor Darshini Mahadevia
7. Mr Naishadh Parikh
8. Professor Raghavan Rangarajan
9. Professor S Sadagopan
10. Professor Devanath Tirupati

Absent: Professor Shobha Das

The meeting started with Professor Pankaj Chandra welcoming Mr Rajesh Gopinathan and Professor S Sadagopan to the Board of Management of Ahmedabad University.

Professor Chandra made a presentation introducing Ahmedabad University for the benefit of the new members and took the members through the origin and journey of the University. The members were also given a brief about the culture, research activities, future plans of the University and the five principles behind the functioning of the University.

### 1. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the Board of Management held on May 10, 2024 were approved.  
Action Taken Report is attached as an addendum to the minutes in the end.

### 2. University Update

#### Faculty Hiring:

Professor Chandra gave a brief introduction of the 20 new faculty members who joined us in the last few months after the last meeting, including the Dean of Amrut Mody School of Management, Senior Associate Dean of Amrut Mody School of Management and Senior Associate Dean of School of Engineering and Applied Science. Out of the 20 faculty, eight would be affiliated with the Amrut Mody School of Management, four with the School of Engineering and Applied Science, six with the School of Arts and Sciences, and two with the School of Public Health. Five more faculty are expected to join in the coming months.

#### Activities at the University:

- Professor Chandra updated the members that the Board of Governors had approved the Climate Institute in the previous meeting held in March 2024.

- He also briefed that almost 35 of our existing faculty are doing various aspects of Climate like Ecology, Environment, Urban planning, Water Conservation, Energy, Economics etc. The Institute will be launched sometime in October/ November this year.
- The members were updated about student outcomes. Out of 60% of our undergraduate students going for post-graduation, some go to IIMs, IITs, IISc and other reputed institutions in India and some go to Universities outside India. Approximately 10% of our students go for family businesses or do startups while 30% look for jobs.
- Professor Chandra was happy to update the members that our proposal is one out of 8 proposals shortlisted for the International Fintech Institute to be established at the GIFT City. The mandate of the project is to build teaching and training in fintech. Ahmedabad University has partnered with UCSD and IIT Gandhinagar for the project. A few industry partners are also supporting us.
- Professor Chandra gave a brief about the changes in Programme Structure in line with the UGC guidelines and requirements of the Government of Gujarat. Here is the revised programme structure:
  - Undergraduate programmes - 173 credits
  - Integrated Masters programmes - at least 200 credits
  - Graduate programmes - 80 credits
  - PhD - 36 credits, comprehensive exam, proposal and thesis defense

To address the concern of the employability of our students, Mr Rajesh Gopinathan suggested offering a one-term course on AI aimed at bridging the gap between academia and industry. The members agreed on the need for feedback mechanisms, increased collaboration, and mutual understanding between educational institutions and industry.

### 3. Update on Admissions

Professor Devanath Tirupati briefed the members that we achieved the number of targeted undergraduate admissions. He also clarified that this year, the target was deliberately restricted to 800 across all disciplines, as compared to around 1000 in the past.

He highlighted an imbalance in the number of students admitted to different schools, the challenge in engaging with parents who are looking for liberal arts education for their children, and the university's low yield rate due to a lack of on-campus housing. Members also discussed the need to increase financial aid, improve the quality of incoming students through a holistic admission process, and expand the admissions team to increase visibility. Professor Tirupati further emphasized that the quality of students has improved though the number of students from within Ahmedabad and within Gujarat have gone down slightly.

In Graduate and PhD admissions, we achieved the targeted numbers, with the highest number of admissions in MBA and MTech respectively. Professor Tirupati mentioned that lack of quality application pool and poor outreach efforts could be attributed to poor enrollments in the PhD programme.

Professor Tirupati presented the resolution to increase the number of MTech CSE seats from 20 to 23, which was approved by the members.

The presentation is attached.

#### **4. Project update**

Colonel Sanjay Gokhale presented the project update on the student village. Unfortunately, the project of 2 hostel blocks, A and B has been delayed by a year and a half and is expected to be ready by February 2025. Each block can accommodate 576 students. The next blocks, C and D are in the planning stage.

The Faculty transit facility is still under planning stage. The plan for the underpass to connect all 4 sides of the campus was replaced by an over bridge. However, other options need to be explored as the over bridge would mean climbing of at least 60 stairs and cutting of a lot of trees.

The presentation is attached.

#### **5. Faculty Retention**

The members discussed the attrition rate of faculty members over the past two years, with 29 faculty leaving for various reasons in the last 2 years while 42 new faculty were hired during this period. Members discussed the attrition rate in their organizations, identifying that most losses occurred in the initial years due to a lack of cultural fit or poor assessment processes. They also acknowledged industry-specific challenges such as a lack of industry projects, insufficient PhD students, and inadequate recognition and credit for PhD teaching. The discussion further touched upon the compensation and promotion system, highlighting the need to maintain a culture that values contribution to the institution, and the struggle to retain top talent due to external factors.

#### **6. Improving Industry Engagement in Teaching & Research**

Members discussed the issue of faculty engagement with stakeholders, particularly in the fields of management and engineering. Professor Chandra expressed concerns about the faculty's focus on research over teaching and their reluctance to engage with industry. Mr Rajesh Gopinathan shared similar issues from IIT Bombay, highlighting a low yield of industry projects. Mr Gopinathan suggested following a programmatic approach to managing this process.

With this, the members thanked the Chairperson and the meeting was concluded.

Signature of the Chairman



## Ahmedabad University

53<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Board of Management held on August 9, 2024

### Action Taken Report

Sr No.	Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Action	Status
1	May 10, 2024 (52 <sup>nd</sup> meeting of Board of Management)	Project Update	Proposal with revised design of underpass submitted to Municipal Commissioner's office in June 2024.	Closed
2	May 10, 2024 (52 <sup>nd</sup> meeting of Board of Management)	New Courses by the School of Engineering and Applied Science	Programme on MTech to start in October 2024	Closed

Pankaj Chandra