



NETAJI SUBHAS OPEN UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF SCIENCES

H.Q.: DD-26, Salt Lake, Sector-I, Kolkata - 700 064

City Campus: K-2, Bidhannagar Fire Station, Sector- V, Salt Lake, Kolkata - 700 091

Kalyani Campus: First Floor, Academic Building, Kalyani Ghoshpara, Kalyani - 741235

Website: www.wbnsou.ac.in

Seminar Report

One-day International Seminar

On

“Major Issues in Studying Zoology in Distance Education: Today and Tomorrow”

Organized by

Department of Zoology, School of Sciences, Netaji Subhas Open University

Introduction

The seminar was organized as a part of the research project entitled “Virtual laboratory: in search of model based approach on a vertebrate (fish) model” sanctioned by the University vide Ref. No. Reg./1294 dated 22/11/2021 and subsequent approval of the Hon’ble Vice-Chancellor vide memo no. VC/16/910 dated 30/01/23.

With the above mentioned approval, the Department of Zoology, School of Sciences, Netaji Subhas Open University has organised the "One-Day International Seminar" on “Major Issues in Studying Zoology in Distance Education: Today and Tomorrow” in the Subhas Chandra Sabhaghar at the University Headquarters on 21st March, 2023. The program was conducted for an insightful discussion on major challenges experienced in conducting a laboratory based subject like Zoology in the periphery of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) and to have a clear discourse on the different aspects about the idea of virtual laboratory in zoological studies.

Objectives

The programme aimed to generate awareness and understanding among the participants about-

- (i) The challenges faced during conducting both UG & PG Zoology programmes in ODL mode.
- (ii) To accumulate suggestions regarding possible solutions to overcome the said challenges.
- (iii) Creating awareness about Virtual Laboratory.
- (iv) Using Virtual Labs for performing laboratory experimentations.
- (v) Integrating Virtual labs into teaching and learning practices.

Participants

Faculty members, research scholars, UG & PG learners of NSOU and other institutes participated in the seminar. Other stakeholders of the university and staffs also were



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present in this programme. Other than the insightful presentations by Prof. Neera Kapoor, Professor of Zoology, Indira Gandhi National Open University and Dr. Jayanta Kumar Das, Department of Health and Natural Sciences, Florida Memorial University, USA, several faculty members and research scholars of NSOU and other institutes had presented their work in presence of the august gathering.



Welcome address by Dr. Bibhas Guha



Presidential address by Prof. Anirban Ghosh



Prof. Neera Kapoor delivering her speech



Faculty members and Participants

Proceedings of the Programme

(i) Inauguration and welcome Address:

The programme started at 10:30 a.m. in the Subhaschandra Sabhghar of the NSOU headquarters in presence of distinguish guests, faculty members, learners of NSOU and participants from different institutions. Dr. Bibhas Guha, Officer-in-Charge, School of Sciences and HoD, Department of Zoology, NSOU inaugurated the seminar and welcomed the participants for taking an active part in this important programme. Dr. Guha briefly explained the importance of this seminar and from his vast experience of teaching zoology in ODL mode for almost two decades, he pointed out the major



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challenges of running a Zoology programme in distance education. Prof. Anirban Ghosh, Director, CIQA, NSOU presided over the first session of the programme.

(ii) Key-note Speech

Prof. Neera Kapoor, Professor of Zoology, Indira Gandhi National Open University delivered the insightful key-note speech on the concepts of Zoology as an ever evolving and intriguing subject. Prof. Kapoor in her delightful speech discussed about the different stream of zoology and its importance. The honourable guest then emphasized on the obstacles encountered while teaching practical based concepts in a ODL based set up. The presentation by Prof. Kapoor also helped to sensitize the participants about the different online open sources with available demonstration on laboratory base topics in zoology.

(iii) Presidential Address

In his presidential speech, Prof. Anirban Ghosh highlighted the major achievements of the University in recent years and the relevance of this seminar in this context. Prof. Ghosh also enlightened upon the major challenges and the possible solutions for smooth conduction of academic programmes in ODL mode.

(iv) Vote of thanks at the end of the first session

Mr. Ashif Ahamed, Assistant Professor of Zoology, NSOU expressed his gratitude, on behalf of the Department of Zoology, NSOU, to all the guests for sharing their valuable experiences in this one-day international seminar. He also thanked all the stakeholders of the university without whom this programme could not be possible and all the other participants for joining.

(v) Technical Session-I:

There were two presentations in this session. Prof. Neera Kapoor, Professor of Zoology, IGNOU chaired over the session. The first presentation was given by Dr. Anirban Ghosh, Associate Professor of Zoology on his work titled “Challenges and Requirements of Higher Education in Zoology in ODL System in the Light of NEP 2020 Mandate”. Dr. Debraj Biswal, delivered the second presentation of the session titled “Problems and Prospects of Teaching Zoology through the Distance Mode”.

(vi) Technical Session-II:

Dr. Anirban Ghosh, Associate Professor of Zoology, NSOU chaired this session. This session consisted of three presentations. The first presentation was delivered by Mr. Ashif Ahamed on “Understanding Molecules by In Silico Methods in Zoological Laboratories: Possibilities & Challenges”. Mr. Sujal Dutta & Mr. Bakul Biswas were presented another paper titled “Approaches to overcome the major issues in practical classes of zoology in distance education”. Mr. Nabajit Mondal presented the third paper



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of the session titled “Documentary Film: A Gigantic Source of Information & Knowledge to Study Conservation Biology in Distance Mode”.

(vii) Special Lecture:

Dr. Jayanta Kumar Das, Department of Health and Natural Sciences, Florida Memorial University, USA joined virtually and delivered the special lecture regarding the different available sources of virtual laboratories. The informative presentation by Dr. Das has immensely enlightened the august gathering.

(viii) Validictory Session:

The programme ended with the concluding remarks by Dr. Bibhas Guha, Officer-in-Charge, School of Sciences and also the Organizing Secretary of this One-day international seminar. Presentation and participation certificated were distributed among the participants in this session.

The whole programme was compered by Dr. Puspall Mukherjee, Assistant Professor of Chemistry, NSOU.

Concluding Remarks

Teaching-learning process of a laboratory based subject such as Zoology in ODL mode faces major challenges. The learned presentations by our honourable guests and paper presenters have addressed these issues. The insightful interaction among the participants and the resource person has definitely fulfilled the objective of organizing the seminar. The emerging importance of virtual laboratory and its proper implication has also been discussed in this programme. The programme ended with a satisfactory note.

Report prepared by:

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Netaji Subhas Open University

Bibhas Guha

Dr. Bibhas Guha
Officer-in-Charge
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