



In the heart of Andhra Pradesh, where dreams dared to soar, our visionary leader, the Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri. YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, set sail on a transformative odyssey to reshape the higher education. He recognized the shortcomings of our conventional education system, dominated by theoretical knowledge that often leaves graduates lacking the confidence to navigate the challenges of their career. It's been decades that the knowledge is flowing only from the teachers and it became apparent that degrees were being handed over to the students, but majority of them are not able to develop the creative mind-set or not gained confidence to take up employment. The desire to transform this scenario led to a visionary plan to instil practical knowledge and confidence in students in producing globally accepted graduates, breaking away from the traditional classroom model.

The Chief Minister's vision was clear – students should not only acquire theoretical knowledge but also gain hands-on experience through participation and observation. In light of this, the proposal to introduce a one-year mandatory internship program aimed at providing students with real-world exposure and breaking the monotony of mundane courses. Introducing this one year mandatory internship would obviously enhance the duration of the programme. The journey towards implementing this vision was not without hurdles, I went to central statutory bodies; UGC and AICTE to get an approval for the enhancement of programme duration to implement one year mandatory internships. The statutory bodies were reluctant to allow the policy exclusively for the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Knowing about the reluctance from statutory bodies, the Honourable Chief Minister (HCM) has ordered the Andhra Pradesh State Council of Higher Education (APSCHE) in November 2019, to identify alternative approaches to facilitate the compulsory integration of internships and skill development. In accordance with the Chief Minister's directions, APSCHE formulated a comprehensive strategy to incorporate internships into the existing curriculum, delineated into 3 distinct phases: a two-month community service project, a two-month short-term internship, and a six-month long-term internship. Recognizing the importance of adapting to the evolving landscape, APSCHE decided to revise the curriculum to replace mundane courses with skill development programs and introduce lifelong learning through online education and introduced 10 months mandatory internships for the first time in the country became a key element of the revamped education system.

The groundwork for this transformative plan had begun well before the National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020 was rolled out by the Government of India. In the midst of a global pandemic, when the world was in lockdown, the Andhra Pradesh State Council of Higher Education (APSCHE) seized the opportunity for extensive consultations to bring life to the vision of Hon'ble Chief Minister. APSCHE was fully ready to roll out the newly designed curriculum with the salient features community engagement, mandatory internships, online education, 30% skill courses, flexible courses, multiple entry and exit to implement from the A.Y 2020-21.

The government of India unfolded National Education Policy (NEP) on the 29th of July, 2020. APSCHE has rolled out its newly designed curriculum in August 2020. Contrary to popular belief that our curriculum rollout in August 2020 was hastily executed within a month, it is crucial to dispel such misconceptions. The design of our curriculum was a thoughtful process, a deliberate endeavor as a result of extensive consultations for more than 10 months.

Rather than aligning our efforts solely with the NEP, our primary commitment was directed toward the realization of the Hon'ble Chief Minister's objective of inculcating practical knowledge to the students. The curriculum's genesis was not a reactionary response but a purposeful initiative to redefine the educational paradigm of Andhra Pradesh. What sets our curriculum apart is, in the process of realizing the vision of HCM, we are happy that the newly designed curriculum aligned with NEP 2020. It's a strange coincidence that our newly designed curriculum contained 80% the components of NEP 2020. The only addition from

NEP 2020 to our newly designed curriculum was 4 year honours degree programme and that's how Andhra Pradesh became the 1<sup>st</sup> state in the country to implement NEP 2020. With this approach, gone are the days where students agonize over educational choices, spending years on paths that don't align with their passions. Now, students do not have restrictions on exploring subjects from different disciplines, allowing an arts student to delve into science and vice versa.

Guided by the visionary aspirations of our Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri. YS Jagan Mohan Reddy garu, Andhra Pradesh has undertaken a transformative journey to cultivate a pool of skilled professionals and globally accepted graduates, revitalizing the landscape of quality education. The success of our state's pioneering initiatives has undoubtedly become a beacon for other regions, with eager anticipation directed toward Andhra Pradesh's progressive strides. In consonance with this vision, we took a momentous step in 2023 by revising our curriculum to align with the National Education Policy 2020. Today, Andhra Pradesh stands as a paragon in education, distinguished for its ability to produce graduates not only armed with knowledge but also equipped with practical skills that render them readily employable. A testament to this success is the achievement of our students, who have completed 14 lakh internships across various Higher Education Institutions, solidifying our commitment to fostering excellence in education and shaping a workforce prepared for the challenges of the future.