

Resolution, Centre for West Asian Studies

Dated: 24.01.2018

We, the students of the Centre for West Asian Studies, School of International Studies, JNU, unanimously reject any form of attendance whatsoever under the dictates of the JNU administration. The whole idea of compulsory attendance is not only detrimental to the visions, ideas and project of higher education but also it put students under surveillance, disciplinary regime, and other sorts of measures which puts the entire idea of research, work, labour and freedom under threat. At any point of time in JNU we do not want the system of everyday surveillance on students and researchers.

We the students of the centre find it problematic for the reason that the system of compulsory attendance is sexist, patriarchal and contains the seeds of exclusion for many women research scholars. If the compulsory attendance becomes the norm, many of us who carry additional responsibilities, would be forced to drop out from the program.

Many of us who do not reside in the university would find it difficult and absurd to come to the university on everyday basis as it would incur additional costs and we would lose our valuable time of fieldwork, visiting other libraries and resource depositories. Since the university does not provide the necessary research funds to scholars, many of us are forced to take additional jobs and work to sustain our research work. Compulsory attendance would mean: idea of research work and higher education would be beyond our reach.

Since the value of academic labour remains largely unpaid, putting compulsory attendance for students would entail enormous theft of time, labour and money. Most of the students and research scholars are not even provided with necessities of research and stipends, attendance system would obviously curtail their academic freedom, and would take away from them their necessary instruments of criticism as the idea of learning for us is precisely based on the essence of employing critical faculty of mind without authority and control. Attendance as we research scholars think is another mechanism of controlling and disciplining our bodies and thoughts.

We as students and research scholars of the Centre for West Asian Studies would like to appeal to the Chairperson of the Centre to call for an emergency meeting of students, faculty members and SFC of the centre to resolve this crisis once and for all. The meeting is requested by the house at the earliest working day. Further, we would like to emphasize that attendance is just a formal process of employing more stringent measures of disciplining students and stealing their academic labour, time and value. Also we would oppose any measures of compulsory attendance in future if it comes to implementing biometrics, surveillance cameras and other forms of control.