

25 Indian students 'fail to meet admission standards', asked to leave US university

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New York: At least 25 of a total 60 Indian graduate students at Western Kentucky University have been asked to leave their computer science programme after the first semester as they do not meet its admission standards, a media report said today.

The move will force the students to return to India or find placement in another university or programme in the US, less than six months since their enrollment in January after an aggressive recruitment campaign in India last summer and fall lured them with tuition discounts and "spot admission".

The university used international recruiters, who had run advertisements, to find the students and compensated them based on how many students they enrolled.

James Gary, the chairman of the university's computer science programme, said yesterday that "almost 40" of the students did not meet the requirements of their admissions, even though they were offered remedial help by the university.

While some students will be allowed to remain, at least 25 of the nearly 60 students in the programme must leave, he was quoted as saying by The New York Times.

Allowing the students to continue in the programme would "be throwing good money after bad," he said, because they were unable to write computer programmes, a necessary part of the curriculum and a skill that American schools teach to undergraduates.

"If they come out of here without the ability to write programmes, that's embarrassing to my department," Gary said, explaining why the university could not permit them to continue.

The chairman of the Indian Student Association at Western Kentucky University, Aditya Sharma, expressed concern for the students.

"I definitely feel bad for these students," said Sharma, a graduate student in public health administration. "They've come so far. They've invested money into it."

But he said some of the students had adopted a "casual" approach to their studies. "They could not meet their G.P.A., so the university had to take this decision," Sharma said, adding that some of the students are seeking placement in graduate schools in Missouri and Tennessee while others are considering applying to less rigorous programmes than the one at Western Kentucky.

Those who are not able to find placement will be forced to leave the country under the terms of their visas, the report said.

When faculty members at the university learned last fall that some of the students did not meet admissions standards, the university Senate endorsed a resolution expressing concern about the recruitment campaign, part of the university's efforts to lift enrollment and revenue in the face of deep state budget cuts, it added.

The university said in a statement yesterday that it had altered its international recruitment efforts in India. In addition to

reviewing its advertising, the school is sending members of the computer science faculty to India to meet with students before offers of admission are made.

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