

## Academics and Research Cell

# End Term Report

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## Academics and Research Cell

Academics and Research Cell (ARC) as the name suggests acts as an interface between the Institute policy makers and the students for academic and research affairs. The major role of the Cell is to address the concerns of the students regarding their academics and research.

The cell has following five wings under it:

- 1) International Relations
- 2) Research
- 3) UG Academics
- 4) PG Academics
- 5) Creatives

## Initiatives:

### Academics

With the vision of bridging up the gap between various students' nominee to academic committees (At institute and department level) and these nominee and general body, following initiatives were taken:

- **The First UG Academics Wing Meeting**

The First UG Academics Wing Meeting was held on 5th October 2017 in the Senate Hall, New SAC. The vision of the wing and ARC was discussed in the meeting and people were

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explained their importance, responsibilities and significance in the academic legislature system of IIT Kanpur. Some items such as the updation of the course feedback form/structure was discussed in the first meeting. This was followed by discussions over mails over agendas like required changes in template, review of various ug programs and possibility of specialization in UG degree.

It was for the first time that a meeting of a student body such scale for the purpose of academics in the campus was conducted successfully.

- **Students' Senate Nominees to Academic Committees**

With more than 80 student representatives to the academic committees across departments and the institute, we at IITK have unparalleled student representation in matters related to academics. With such a privilege comes also the responsibility of managing and guiding these representatives and see that the knowledge is transferred well. The cell has been instrumental in the following ways:

- **Selection:** The cell has helped the nominations committee in recommending the names of the student representatives for various Academic Senate Subcommittees and Departmental Committees in place for academic legislature of IITK to the Students' Senate. **The wing has taken this responsibility on an ad-hoc basis.**
- **Regular updates and discussions:** The cell conducted brain storming sessions with the nominees whenever required and informed them of the procedures to be followed. The cell also took time to time updates from these nominees. The cell strived hard to create a uniform and informed opinion among various strata of the process.

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- **Formation of Independent Department of Economic Sciences**

The Cell played a pivotal role in getting the sanctions for introducing the one of its kind department. The cell was majorly involved in generating student opinion and disseminating the proposal to the junta in general for their views, inputs and feedback.

- **Appeals and Re-appeals Against Termination Agenda**

The cell has been instrumental in coordinating the meetings for the termination agenda. For the first time, we conducted an orientation for the representatives on how to handle the cases. The students filing for appeals were connected to the appropriate people for provision of proper and stringent guidance for appeal writing and help with the whole process in general. **The wing has been given this responsibility on an ad-hoc basis now.**

- **Development of Concise UG Manual**

Since the UG Manual in its current form has a lot of jargon which a layman especially freshmen may find difficult to fathom, we have developed a concise version of the UG Manual where all the important day-to-day rules are written in simple and legible sentences. This will not only make students more aware about the rules but makes information dissemination through a central Google Doc easier as well. Students can choose to be notified about any edits made to the Document.

- **Guidance of the Freshmen**

The ARC in collaboration with Counselling Service took part in academic guidance of the freshmen. The sessions on ESO/SO for the students going to second year were stringently monitored so that only the **correct and updated information** reaches the campus community. Furthering the same endeavour, UG wing meticulously monitored



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the content on Academic Structure of the institute which is given to the students by the Counselling Service during Freshers' Orientation.

- **Guidance to Students about Academic Life and Opportunities**

The wing advised and guided a number of students regarding matters like degree completion requirements, conversion of degree to double major or dual degree and template setting for completion of minors etc.

- **Summer Courses**

The wing has been instrumental in getting additional courses floated during the summer semester.

## International Relations

- **Hospitality**

Following initiatives were taken by the Cell for the hospitality of International Students:

- Hospitality booklet with detailed information for foreign students containing basic information like registration process, academic area, eateries, IITK map etc. was made.
- Campus Tour and Get together session were conducted for the exchange students.
- We also tried to provide a common residence to all international students(non-SAARC) in hall 12, with all basic amenities provided by the institute.
- Reduction of fee for SAARC student and easing of the fee payment for the foreign students.

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- **Information Dissemination**

An interactive Facebook page was made to update the students about the programs, scholarships, sessions, etc. which was beforehand informed only through mails. The content in mails by OIR was thoroughly revised to remove misleading and undesirable information.

- **Publicity**

- Video for the OIR website was made, highlighting the uniqueness of institute from academics to the different student activities to attract students from abroad.
- Interactive videos with foreign students was created taking their reviews about the life at IITK.
- The OIR website was updated with basic changes like registration process, calendar, updated programs, etc.
- New programs were floated to attract foreign students.

- **Collaborations**

Following initiatives were taken to improve upon foreign collaboration

- **Targeted Collaborations:** A target list of universities where our students was prepared and provided to OIR staff to approach them for MoU.
  - **Department Specific Collaborations:** With assistance of DUGC nominees surveys were floated in departments and the list was formulated. Possibility of MoUs are under consideration.
  - **Invited Visits of the Delegates:** Professors and students across the globe were invited to visit the institute through various government and non-government schemes.
  - **International Industry Collaborations:** Under the guidance of DoIR the cell tried to get in touch with foreign industry to collaborate with IIT Kanpur. The work is still in progress.
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- **Campus:**

- **Sessions:** Proper sessions with OIR were conducted-helping them schedule campus students on appropriate days, channelizing it to students through the page and adding interaction slot in each session.
- **Personal Discussions:** Personal level discussions with the students planning to visit abroad, to help them out with planning and selecting best suited options.
- **Data Collection:** Foreign Internship Form was revised to make data/information collection easier for the office. PVF by SPO were used to get data crosschecked.

## Research

- **PoWER(Promotion of Work Experience & Research):**

The team tried to find out the problem faced and reason to terminate the program earlier. The team had several discussion sessions with faculty and students. Team also contacted our former partner industries and former teams (now alumni).

The present projects by the offered by the new team will help us to shape the rule/laws. We will soon be there with a staunch platform. The project has legal complexities hence it needs to reviewed by legal experts before implementing.

- **Students' Research Convention (SRC):**

Students' Research Convention 2018 was conducted successfully by the Cell from 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

**Kindly find the full report:** <https://goo.gl/GgY3Qh>

- **Research Portal:**

A basic structure of the Research portal was drafted taking inspiration from successful models from Institutes such as IIT Guwahati and IIT Bombay. The flow of information, the design and the basic and advanced features that should be made available was decided upon.

Additional work was done during summers based on the same lines and after due testing the new team will be able to come up with the same.



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- **Guidance:**

Guidance was provided on a personal level to the students regarding how to kick start research, finding topic they are interested in, approaching professors etc. Team also tried to connect these students to the seniors/ faculty in the same field. Many of these students are now in doing full time projects with professors in/outside campus.

## Challenges:

Following challenges were faced by the team:

- **Recognition by Institute Authorities:** The cell being new cell is not recognized by various institute authorities. This leads to lot of obstructions in the way which take some time very long to resolve and hence hamper the efficiency.
- **Data Availability:** Data availability and proper analysis is a major front at which IIT Kanpur lags. It inhibits our growth and capacity to review our failures. This is also the main reason because of which our institute is underrated at several forums.
- **PG reach and DPGC student nominees:** Even after immense efforts put by the team we were not able to find nominees to all the DPGC's. PG participation is one of the major challenges that the cell faced.
- **Unorganized IR structure:** There are various bodies at institute level which deal with our foreign relations. There is evident lack of coordination between these bodies. This act as a major hindrance in reaching a combined goal.
- **Cell's structure:** The cell need to be restructured with more approachable but ambitious work structure. The present structure on papers though is a well thought of but not very practical at times. Moreover, the name of post followed now(coordiators) creates confusion while dealing with the institute authority.

## Recommendations

- **Heading towards a single structure for all IR activities**
  - **A senate committee to look into NIRF**
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- **Restructuring and formalizing the process for nomination of DPGC/DUGC**
  - **Restructuring Cell:**
    - **Dissolving core committees**
    - **Creating formal platform for meeting of UG/ PG academic team with in the cell, can be referred to as advisory committees**
    - **Adding an additional post for Industrial collaborations**
    - **Using Head instead of coordinators in the team structure**