



Students' Senate (2016-17)
Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur
Vedant Goenka | Chairperson



End-Term Report

- Vedant Goenka
Chairperson, Students' Senate

Major New Items

The following new proposals were taken up by the Students' Senate:

- An additional appendix, Appendix D: Cells, Clubs and Hobby Groups, for incorporation into the Gymkhana Constitution
- Change in Gymkhana Blues Award
- A Gymkhana Award for Faculty
- Issue of increase in Tuition Fees of students as proposed by the IIT Council
- Changes in the HSS Lottery System
- Expansion in the Academics & Research Cell: adding an International Relations wing
- Formation of Centralized Mess Committee, a standing sub-committee of the COSHA
- Common HEC elections timeline
- Re-organisation in the Election Council
- Change in ratification procedure for members of the Election Council
- Facebook campaigning and Video manifestos for Gymkhana Elections
- Male student representative in Women's Cell
- Cycle pool proposal
- Change in pattern of convocation gowns, on request by the Dean of Academic Affairs
- A Bachelor of Science (BS) Programme in the Department of Biological Sciences and Biological Engineering
- A café in the Students' Lounge
- Naming the Students' Lounge after Dr. Kalam
- a proposal for combining the courses TA201A and TA202A
- Policy for Gymkhana Sponsorship
- Increasing/Re-distributing the cap on external participants for Gymkhana festivals
- Issue of poor street lighting in few areas of the campus



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- Issue of Poor condition of Campus Maps
- First Aid boxes in halls of residence
- A critical survey of the PhD community
- Re-structuring of the SSAC
- Increase in student representation in the SUGC
- Increase in number of Convocation prizes
- Introduction of a Driving School
- Health Insurance Policy for IIT Kanpur students
- Semester Leave for research/internships/entrepreneurship activities
- a proposal for a new Gymkhana Award for event conduction
- Introduction of an Outreach Cell

Some proposals that we could not take up but were itemised are:

- a proposal regarding availability of guest rooms for students on a priority basis
- a proposal regarding Minors
- a proposal to repeal the decision of the Senate to cease Gymkhana funding to pools for GC Events
- A proposal to for a new ESO
- A proposal to restructure COM200A

Council and Committees

The following is the convener of the Standing Council:

- COSHA: Rutuj Jugade

The President, Students' Gymkhana is the Chairman, COSHA.

The following are the conveners of the Standing Committees:

- Finance Committee: Shyam Sihotia
- Rules and Procedures Committee: Ayushya Agarwal (Parliamentarian)



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Office of the Students' Senate and the Steering Committee

- Regular Attendance record has been maintained by the office.
- 8 show-cause notices (excluding today's) have been issued to various members of the Senate and 3 Senators have been removed for not complying with the Attendance policy.
- Up-to-date list of all positions ratified by the Senate during this Gymkhana year as well as last Gymkhana year has been compiled and updated.
- Agenda booklets (including all the supporting documents) are not being published for Senate meetings, at the request of Senators.
- A uniform online portal for calling nominations

Issues faced:

- The circulation of agenda items often gets delayed with most of the documents not getting submitted even before 24 hours.
- There is a lack of uniformity in the way nominations are called for various ratified positions. In most of the cases eligibility criteria and the work description is not mentioned properly. Further, many a times the interview schedule is not shared on the Senate list. New issues would be come up now that the set of ratified positions has been significantly reduced. All this further introduces a lot of randomization in the way agenda items concerning various ratifications are itemized.
- Some Senators tend to leave rather early after the start of the Senate meeting or arrive quite late due to various commitments, which results in a reduced strength of the Senate during the meeting.

Recommendations

1. Senate meetings should be tried to be accommodated on weekends as much as possible. There is not enough time on weekdays to complete the agenda as circulated.
2. The archives of the Students' Senate need to be regularly maintained on the Students' Senate website, to enable easy access to records.
3. Hard copies of the all records of the Students' Senate should be kept in the Office of the Students' Senate.
4. The Action Taken Report is a very dynamic document and in order to cope up with its dynamic nature, we should try to incorporate it in an online portal that will be much more easy to maintain, access and issue reminders for pending actions. It can be implemented if some Senators volunteer for it or else find volunteers from their electorate.
5. The Action Taken Report should be included as a fixed item in the order of business, as is already the practice.



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6. Institute functionaries should be regularly invited to Senate meetings, to address the student representatives on various issues concerning the student community and to address the lack of interaction between students and faculty.
7. In the last few years, the scope of work of the Finance Committee has greatly reduced and is being carried out solely by its Convener. The Senate needs to take active steps to re-strengthen this institution, including but not restricted to drafting the last remaining appendix of the Constitution i.e. Appendix B: The Finance Manual.
8. A mechanism to ensure that the students appointed at various ratified positions satisfy the eligibility criteria throughout their tenure has been devised and the office shall be responsible for ensuring the same at the start of every semester.
As a preliminary measure, the Senators are encouraged to closely follow the various calls for nominations and ensure that the names of the positions, eligibility criteria etc. are properly mentioned. The Senators can further raise issues in the Senate if they come across the ratification of a position for which the due procedure for calling nominations was not followed.
9. Cells were recently incorporated as a new entity under the Students' Gymkhana and have not been able to completely emerge from the shadow of the President. In order to ensure that the desired functioning is well established, I propose that a Senate sub-committee be constituted to directly oversee the functioning of the cells, with the following composition:
 - a. President, Students' Gymkhana (Convener)
 - b. Chairperson, Students' Senate
 - c. One SenatorThe committee (say Cells' Executive Oversight Committee) shall act as an oversight body for cells and accord approvals to them, wherever an elected functionary was required. Its mandate shall be to remain in close contact with the Overall Coordinators of the various cells, to ensure that the procedures laid down are communicated and properly implemented, to present a review to the Senate on the working of the Cells and recommend changes in the procedures, if any. The committee shall operate for the full term, like Standing Committees, and recommend in its final report whether there is a need for a permanent standing committee or whether the working of the cells has been duly established and they may now continue to work on their own.
10. We, as the Students' Senate, need to work extensively on increasing the PG students' involvement in the Senate. Their declining participation is creating issues for both the Senate and for PG students in general.
11. Unlike some other IITs, we do not have an Academic Affairs Council and at present the work is carried out by President and Chairperson. I feel that as a consequence of this, many things related to academics that need to be carried out are under prioritised amongst the load of other time-bound activities. Though, I see merits in continuing with



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the present system, I also believe we need some institutional changes in order to make the handling of academic affairs better:

- a. The Academics and Research Cell needs to be strengthened as a body, with elected representatives. We need to formulate the exact nature of these elections, with the idea that accountability increases with elected functionaries. On the same lines, I feel that at some point in the near future, we would want to introduce Joint Secretaries, UG and PG for Academics and Research.
- b. They should expand the scope of their work through things like organising sessions for academic awareness. An example of a session that could be conducted for 1st and 2nd year UG students is to educate them about the course work involved and options available through a particular branch. This way, the student may make a much more informed decision while applying for branch change.