

Academics  
at  
Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur

Office of the Dean of Academic Affairs

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MARCH 9, 2019

# The Presentation

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- Contextualising Academics at IIT Kanpur
  - IIT Kanpur Governance Structure
  - Academic Governance at the Institute
- Conduct of Courses

# A Recommended Read

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History of the Institute:

**The Fourth IIT: The Saga of IIT Kanpur (1960–2010).** Editors: S.P. Mehrotra and P.P. Sah. Penguin India (2015).

An excerpt from the book is available in January 10, 2016 edition of Scroll :

<https://scroll.in/article/801621/how-the-iits-were-born-and-their-philosophies-determined>

# Governance Structure

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- Declared as an institute of national importance through an Act of Parliament, “The Institutes of Technology Act 1961”.
- Nomenclature:
- **Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur (as per the Act)**
- **Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur**
- The Statutes use both, and so does our official documentation.

# Governance Structure

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- The Institute is governed through provisions of **the Act and the Statutes**.
- All IITs share the Act, but they have different Statutes.
- The President of India is **the Visitor** of the Institute.
- The **IIT Council** with Minister, HRD as its Chairperson, is the overarching body that coordinates activities of the various IITs.
- **The Director** is the Principal Executive Officer of the Institute

# Governance Structure

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- **The Institute Authorities:**
- **Board of Governors:** deals primarily with administrative policy matters.
- **The Senate:** deals entirely with academic matters.
- A line drawn between the administrative and academic arms of the Institute.
  
- **The important point of convergence between the two is the Director, IIT Kanpur who is also the Chairperson, Senate.**

# Board of Governors (BoG)

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- **Chairperson, BoG** to be appointed by the Visitor
- **Director** to be appointed by the IIT Council with prior approval of the Visitor
- **Four nominees of the IIT Council** with expert knowledge or practical experience in the fields of education, engineering and/or science
- **One technologist or industrialist of repute** nominated by state government
- **Two professors of the Institute** nominated by the Senate (by a decision of the Senate, elected by ALL faculty)

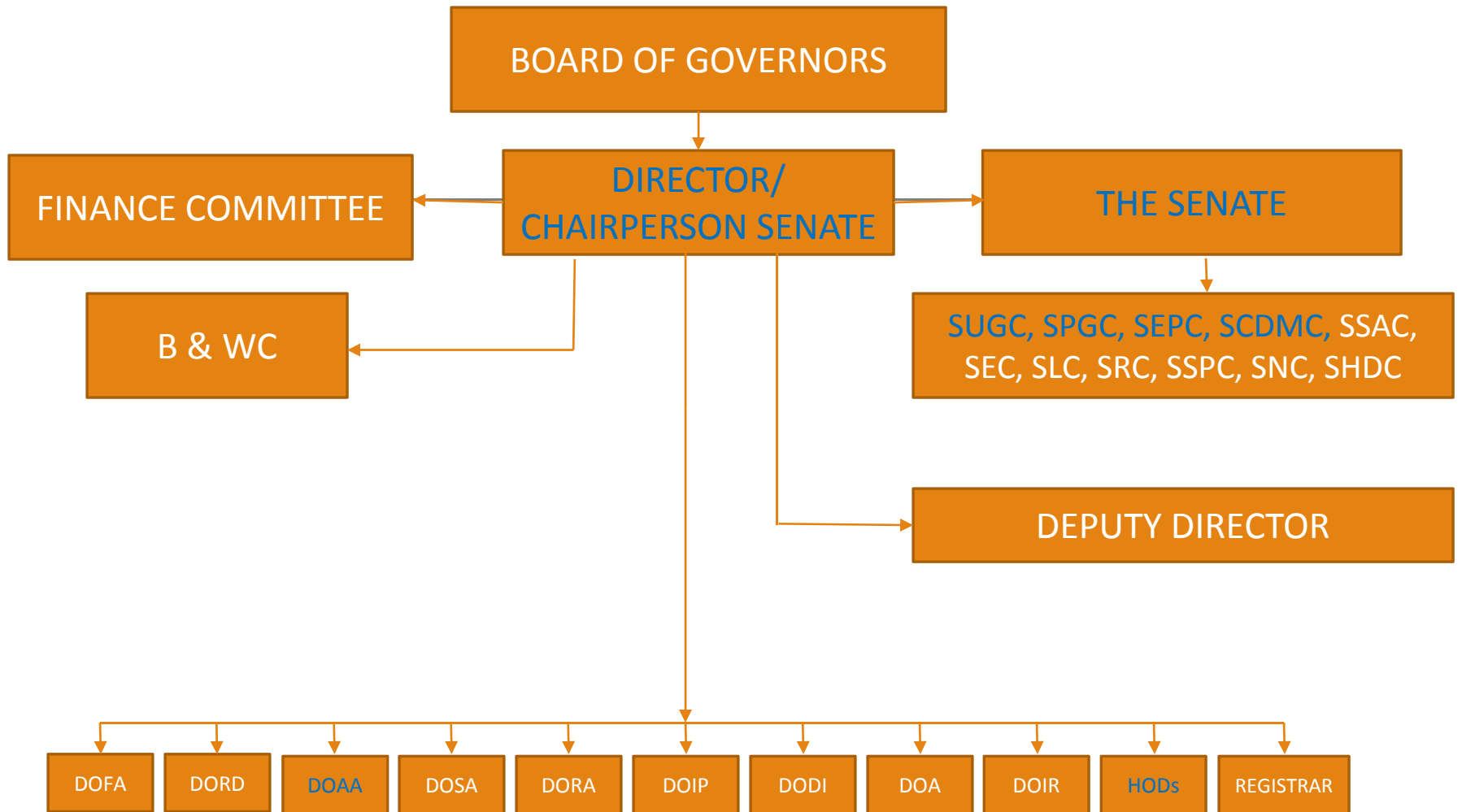
# Senate: the Apex Academic Body

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## Members:

- Director (ex officio Chairperson)
- Registrar is the (non-member) Secretary
- Deputy Director
- All the Professors of the Institute
- HoDs other than professors
- Librarian
- One Warden by rotation
- Up to six other members of the faculty for their expert knowledge appointed by Chairperson, BoG in consultation with the Director
- Three persons (from among educationists of repute, one each from the fields of Science, Engineering and Humanities (not institute faculty) appointed by Chairperson, BoG.





# The Senate

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- The Senate of the Institute is responsible for the maintenance of standards of instruction and examinations and exercises all authority in academic matters as vested in it by the Statutes.
- The Senate meets as often as necessary but not less than four times during a calendar year (Senate Manual).
- Generally meets about 8-10 times in a year.
- Works primarily through its Standing Committees.

# Standing Committees of the Senate

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**Senate Under-Graduate Committee (SUGC)**

**Senate Post-Graduate Committee (SPGC)**

Senate Scholarships and Prizes Committee (SSPC)

Senate Students Affairs Committee (SSAC)

Senate Library Committee (SLC)

**Senate Education Policy Committee (SEPC)**

Senate Nominations Committee (SNC)

Senate Elections Committee (SEC)

Senate Rules Committee (SRC)

Senate Honorary Degree Committee (SHDC)

**Senate Curriculum Development and Monitoring Committee (SCDMC)**

# Senate Undergraduate Committee (SUGC)

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Responsible for general policy determination, coordination and review in matters concerning undergraduate programs/students

M.Sc. (2 year) and all dual-degree programs where one degree is UG (including the Masters part of M.Sc.-Ph.D. dual degree) are administered by SUGC.

- Approval of new courses, and revision/modification of courses already approved
- Credit valuation of courses
- Recommending formal approval of admission of first year students to Senate Chair
- Recommending to Senate for grant of degrees to students
- Evaluation of academic performance (Warning, Academic Probation status of students and Termination of programs)

# Senate Undergraduate Committee (SUGC)

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- De-registration from a course
- Semester Drop
- Late registration
- Pre-requisite waiver
- Branch change
- Leave of absence
- Changes in templates of various departments
- Management of minor, double major, dual-degree programs
- Matters related to changes introduced by UG APRC
- The list is not exhaustive, and may include any matter referred to it by the Senate

**Assisted by DUGCs**



# SUGC Membership

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- One representative from each of the departments and IDPs (DUGC/PUGC Convenors)
- 4 undergraduate students including at last one woman student (nominated by Students' Senate)
- The outgoing Chairperson
- A nominee of the Senate
- Two subcommittees CCC (Core Curriculum Committee) and APEC (Academic Performance Evaluation Committee)
- Meets about 12 times in a year.

# Senate Postgraduate Committee (SPGC)

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Responsible for general policy determination, coordination and review in matters concerning postgraduate programs/students.

SPGC manages Ph.D. (including Ph.D. part of M.Sc.-Ph.D. dual degree), M.Tech (except dual-degree), MS (By Research), MBA, M.Des

- Approval of new courses; revisions/modifications of courses
- Credit valuation of courses
- Recommending formal approval of admission of postgraduate students to the Senate Chair
- Admission of qualified students to candidacy for degrees
- Overseeing Comprehensive examinations, State of art seminars
- Rules governing the form of presentation and disposal of thesis

# SPGC

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- Recommending conferment of degrees to the Senate
- Evaluation of academic performance Warning and Termination status
- Leave of absence
- Semester drop
- Late registration
- De-registration
- Extensions beyond the maximum duration of programs
- Matters related to changes introduced by PG APRC



# SPGC Membership

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- One representative from each of the departments and IDPs (DPGC/PPGC Conveners of all departments/IDPs)
- 4 Student members (nominated by Students' Senate)
- The outgoing Chairperson
- A nominee of the Senate

Meets about 12 times in a year

# Senate Curriculum Development and Monitoring Committee (SCDMC)

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- Two years in the system as a Standing Committee of the Senate
- Reviewing, monitoring, and revising the curriculum periodically
- Collecting information, collating feedback and reporting major observations on content and conduct of the courses to the Senate periodically
- Carrying out discussion on teaching and learning methods adopted in various courses
- Reviewing the content or conduct of any specific course referred to it by the Senate
- Providing feedback to the APRCs

# Dean of Academic Affairs (DOAA)

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- Provides administrative support to SUGC, SPGC, SCDMC, UGARC, and PGARC
- Implements decisions of these bodies and those of the Senate
- Dean's Office handles the following activities:
  - Pre-registration
  - Registration
  - Course Add-Drop
  - De-registration
  - Scheduling of core courses and departmental courses and allocation of venue to courses
  - Scheduling and conduct of exams
  - Receiving and processing of grades at the end of the Semester
  - Maintaining student records

# Dean, Academic Affairs (DOAA)

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- Receiving applications for Branch Change, Double Major, Minor, Dual-degree etc.
- Managing Student Reaction Surveys (course feedback)
- Grant and Extension (if required) of financial support to PG students
- Travel support to PG students for conferences in and outside India
- Administering PhD thesis evaluation
- Recommending Academic Calendar to the Senate
- Infrastructure management – LHC, and other venues
- Hub for all academic communications
- Convocation

# Academic Programs (UG)

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- B.Tech (AE, BSBE, ChE, CE, CSE, EE, MSE, ME) - Admission through Joint Entrance Examination (Advanced) (JEE (Advanced))
- BS (Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Economics, Mathematics & Scientific Computing, Physics,) - Admission through Joint Entrance Examination (Advanced) (JEE (Advanced))
- M.Sc (Two-Year Program): Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics, Statistics – Admission through Joint Admission Test (JAM)
- M.Sc.-PhD (Dual Degree): Physics - Admission through JAM
- Various Dual Degree programs (BS-MS, BT-MT, BS-MT, BT-MS, BS-MBA, BT-MBA, BS-MDes, BT-MDes etc.), double major programs, and minor programs

# Academic Programs (PG)

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- MS by Research (AE, ChE, CE, CGS, CSE, EE, ME, PSE, EEM)
- M.Tech (AE, BSBE, ChE, CE, CSE, EE, IME, MSE, ME, ES, EEM, MSP, NET, PSE)
- M.Des (Design Inter-Disciplinary Program (IDP))
- MBA (IME)
- Ph.D. (AE, BSBE, ChE, CE, CGS, CSE, EE, IME, MSE, ME, ES, EEM, MSP, NET, PSE, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Statistics, HSS (Literature, Linguistics, ELT, Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology, Fine Arts))

# Important Documents

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- **The Act**
- **Statutes**
- **Ordinances** contain general information on various academic policies as decided by the Senate, and approved by the BoG.
- **The Senate Manual** details out the procedures and requirements relevant to the functioning of the Senate.
- **The UG Manual** details out procedures and requirements pertaining to the UG programs.
- **The PG Manual** details out procedures and requirements pertaining to the PG programs.


# Conduct of Courses

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- The academic ambience at IIT Kanpur is defined in terms of student participation and critical engagement in class.

**“What we want is to see the child in pursuit of knowledge, and not knowledge in pursuit of the child.”**

*George Bernard Shaw*

- Freedom in terms of the choice of courses: the undergraduate student makes his/her own course template.
  - The same sense of freedom informs our postgraduate programmes by way of choice of research topic and the thesis supervisor.
  - Practical limitations
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# Course Types

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- **UG/PG**

- UG:**

- **Institute CORE**
- **ESO/SO**
- **HSS I and II**
- **Department CORE**
- **Department Elective**
- **Open Elective**
- **UGPs**

- PG:**

- **Department CORE**
- **Department Elective**
- **Open Elective**
- **Thesis**

- **The distinction between UG/PG gets blurred at the level of the Open Electives.**

# Conduct of Courses

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- Conduct of courses is a serious business at IITK.
- **Teaching load** is assigned by the Head of the Department, and ranges from three to Five Hours per week, and may vary from department to department.
- Each course floated by a faculty member has to be **approved by SUGC/SPGC** before it can be offered.
- Quite irrespective of the procedures, the course is 'owned' by the proposing faculty member.
- On a cautionary note: Courses not offered for 5 years are deleted from the list of courses.

# Conduct of Courses

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- The SPGC/SUGC approved course content gives your course a credit structure which defines the number of contact hours per week with 4 parameters (L-T-P-D)
- The Senate approved Academic Calendar gives you a requisite number of contact hours in terms of which the course content is to be covered.

# Make-up Classes

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- Missing classes due to meetings, travel etc. is kept at bare minimum.
- In case missing a class becomes unavoidable, we may request a colleague to go for our lecture as a substitute.
- Any missed class has to be compensated by a **make-up class arranged in consultation with students.**
- However, such rescheduling of lectures must be done sparingly because it can become a drain on students' resources.

# Extra Classes

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- **Extra classes** to hold a quiz or a laboratory test may also be done in consultation with students.
- No make-up/extra class/examination/quiz should be scheduled on gazetted holidays.
- LHC is not available for extra classes on Sundays and gazetted holidays.

# First Course Handout (FCH)

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- It is important and useful to announce all course related policies in the first/second lecture of the course:
  - The structure of the course, purpose of the course, and its proposed outcomes,
  - Attendance Policy
  - Evaluation Components (Exams, Quizzes, In-Class Assignments, Take-Home Assignments, Labs etc.)
  - Evaluation Policy (general guidelines such as weights for different components of evaluation)
  - Make-up policy for exams
  - Policy on the use of unfair means
  - Text books and other reference material

**Students must be notified about subsequent changes, if any.**



# Class Schedule

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- The classes for a course must be held in the time slot given in the Institute time table.
- Office hours during which you will be available for consultation by students in your offices must be announced at the beginning of the course.
- Faculty and student tutors in core courses are expected to attend lectures of the course.
- **Punctuality is something we all respect – not just because it is a right thing to do but also because it is a value we are handing down to our students who are watching us.**

# Course Evaluation Policy

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- **Continuous evaluation is the defining feature of course evaluation at IIT Kanpur.**
- Apart from the mandatory Mid-Semester and End-Semester examinations, at least two quizzes/assignments are desirable in every UG course.
- The core course instructors must hold at least one quiz before the mid-semester examination and at least one quiz between mid-semester and end-semester examination.
- If you intend to give surprise quizzes in a UG course, it should be specified in the FCH (UG Manual Chapter 7.2).
- For PG courses, modes of continuous evaluation may vary – reading assignments, presentations etc.
- Modes of thesis credit evaluation may be evolved in consultation with the DMC.



# Feedback

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- All feedback to the student should be timely and in accordance with the Academic Calendar.
- Mid Semester examination copies should be shown as early as possible but not later than fourteen days after the last date of Mid-Semester Examination.
- All marks have to be made available to respective students in the last week of classes.
- End Semester examination copies to be shown before grades are submitted.

# Attendance Policy

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An explicit statement on:

- Whether you are going to take attendance
  - If yes, how you will use it, and
  - If a student fails to fulfil the requirements, what action you would take.
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- Although the attendance policy is left to the instructor's discretion, you may note that you can have:
  - Biometric Attendance for large class sizes
  - Manual attendance for smaller classes
  - No attendance is also an available option though we do not recommend it for large classes.

# Attendance Policy

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- In case you decide to record attendance for your course, you also have the option of assigning a certain **weightage for attendance** (may vary between 5%-10%).
- If an instructor finds that a registered student has missed quite a few lectures (usually ten or more) in the course without sanctioned leave, then he/she may recommend de-registration of the student from the course as per the announced attendance policy.
- The request for de-registration must reach SUGC at least 4 weeks ahead of the last class.
- Students should be given an opportunity to explain themselves before de-registration option is exercised.

# Grading

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- A course may be either pass-fail or assign grades with a numerical value.
- Grades with numerical values:
  - A\*:10 (Outstanding), A:10 (Excellent), B:8 (Good), C:6 (Fair), D:4 (Pass), E:2 (Fail with Exposure), F:0 (Fail).
- Pass/Fail grades: S (satisfactory or pass) and X (fail).
- SPI: Weighted average of all numerical grades in a semester.
- CPI: Cumulative weighted average of all numerical grades at a given time.
- Other grades: I (incomplete), W(waiver - given by SUGC).
- **Grading is left entirely to the instructor – no grade moderation.**

# Grading

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- Given the proverbial freedom of the instructor, it is all the more important that we grade with care and transparency.
- Errors in calculations may go unnoticed unless the student is alert.
- If the student points out an error, you have no option but to revisit your spread sheet.
- Apply for grade change as soon as you detect an error (prescribed format).
- Informal grade change requests from students is viewed as a code of conduct violation.
- The student has recourse to the Ombuds Group against alleged unfair or inconsistent grading.

# Deadlines

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- Mid Semester exam answer scripts must be shown on the date indicated in the Academic calendar.
- This is important for all but particularly for underperforming students who may wish to drop the course.
- The students should be shown all the marks and the weighted total of all grading components other than the end-semester exam in the last week of classes.
- The End Semester exam answer scripts must be shown to the students prior to submission of grades.
- These are Senate requirements, and must be complied with.

# Deadlines

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- **The grades for the course are to be submitted within 72 hours of the exam for a class size of up to 60 students, within 96 hours for a class size from 61 to 150, and within 120 hours for a class size greater than 150.**
- A margin for re-evaluation after showing the copies to students is a must so that you can still submit grades in time. Typically, we tend to show copies about 24 hours before the grade submission deadline.

# Floating New Courses

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- A new course may be floated by a faculty member by submitting the course content and other details in the appropriate format (available from the DOAA website) to the DUGC/DPGC.
- The DUGC/DPGC will circulate the course details among the entire Institute faculty for their feedback.
- After a three-week period, the instructor will suitably modify the course proposal based on the feedback received, and the DUGC/DPGC will then forward it to the SUGC/SPGC for approval.



# Academic Responsibilities

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- Pre-registration and registration
- During the online pre-registration period, it is desirable to clear the student requests for courses at the earliest possible.
- If for some reasons you are not available during pre-registration, you may designate one of your colleagues to take care of pre-registration in your course.
- The Online pre-registration module, Pingala, has a provision of transfer of responsibilities.
- For manual registration, you may again request one of your colleague to take care of registration of your course and intimate the students (through a notice on the door of your office and notice boards in the department) and the HoD.

# Important

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- The **medium of instruction** is English.
- The exact dates for the important academic events scheduled during the Academic Session are specified in the **Academic Calendar**.
- Orientation for New Students, Registration, Late Registration, Commencement of Classes, Adding and Dropping of Courses, Submission of Documents, Examinations (including make-up examinations), Submission of Grades; Conversion of "I" Grades, Mid-Semester Recess Etc.
- The Academic Calendar, or any change therein during the session, requires prior approval of the Senate.

# Important

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- **Quizzes in Core Courses:** The core course instructors must hold at least one quiz before the mid-semester exam and at least one quiz between the mid-semester and the end-semester examination.
- **Continuous Performance Report:** It is of utmost importance that the graded copies of the examinations and quizzes be shown to the students as soon as possible.
- **Examination Copies:** The mid-semester examination and quiz copies should be returned to the students. Mid-Semester examination copies are to be shown to students as early as possible but not later than fourteen days after the last date of Mid-Semester Examination. The end-semester examination copies should be taken back after showing them to the students.
- **Submission of Grades:** The instructor in charge must submit the final grades of End-Semester Examination after 72 hours if the class has up to 50 students, 90 hours if the class size is greater than 50 but no more than 150, 120 hours if the class size is greater than 150.

# Rights of Students

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Students must be informed about all the course related policies at the beginning of the course (FCH).

- Attendance Policy
- Evaluation Policy (Announced or Surprise Quizzes, Assignments, weightages for different components of evaluation etc.)
- Grading Policy (A combination of absolute and relative grading)
- Make-up Policy
- Text books and other reference material

Grade cut offs may be disclosed on request but only after the grades have been sent to the students by OARS.

Policies for DAP for a more inclusive education are centralized but an announcement early on in the course is helpful.

# Rights of Students

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- Students can drop a course till about 4 weeks prior to the last class in the semester.
- A course can be dropped with permission from the instructor and DUGC/DPGC Convener.
- It is expected that unless there is a serious reason not to allow this, instructors would normally allow course-drop.
- If you intend to disallow course-drop under certain circumstances, it would be good to announce this in the beginning of the course.
- The students must be given timely feedback on their performance in the course - answer scripts of Quizzes, Mid Semester and End Semester Examinations.

# Rights of Students

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- End Semester Student Reaction Survey (SRS) is mandatory.
- Mid Semester Reaction Survey - desirable
- Continuous evaluation (Quizzes, Assignments etc.)
- Lectures are to be held as scheduled in the Time Table.
- Rescheduling of lectures is done very sparingly and in consultation with the class.
- A friendly ambience that contributes to learning
- Respect for diversity

**Ombuds Group is the appellate body for students.**

# The Instructor's prerogatives

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- Each one of us gets to teach what we know best.
- Evaluation policy is determined by the instructor and shared with the class.
- No grade moderation
- Deregistering students from the course (UG) for failing to adhere to the attendance policy of the course **after due warning**.
- Make-up policy: important to provide for unforeseen eventualities

# The Instructor's prerogatives

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- You may deal firmly with students violating the code of conduct including reporting them to SSAC (UG Manual, Chapter 13).
- Disciplinary action by SSAC on reported violations of code of conduct by students
- **The line between decorum and its absence can at times be hazy. To decide to act is a privilege you have.**



# The Instructor's prerogatives

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- **Being there is itself a prerogative – you never know whom you will influence and inspire and how.**
- And if you do, it is a relationship you are investing in for life.
- Your engagement with your students will be defined by you and moderated by you depending on the perceived needs of a student.
- Reach out by all means possible. We promise you all administrative help in the conduct of your course.

# Thanks!

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