

# EDUCATIONPLUS

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Complex issues and phenomena such as global warming and climate change, poverty, migration and displacement cannot be addressed by a single discipline. They need to be studied from an interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary perspective so that we can grapple with them comprehensively and meaningfully. Global warming and climate change, for instance, need to be addressed by experts drawn from different disciplines such as Glaciology, Hydrology, Oceanography, Geology, Geography, Geoinformatics, and Engineering and Technology. Similarly, migration and displacement need to be discussed by experts from Political Science, Geopolitics, Economics, Sociology, Ecology, Human Rights, and Literature.

Unfortunately, academia is subtly biased in favour of “academic tribes and territories” (Becher and Trowler 2001). Against this backdrop, we need to highlight the ongoing debate between ‘generalists’ and ‘specialists’. While the generalists, even as they are grounded in their respective disciplines, strive to strike a conversation with their counterparts in other departments to promote interdisciplinary thinking and collaboration, the specialists prefer to confine themselves to their respective areas and



## Cross those borders

Academicians should move beyond their silos and promote the crossing of disciplinary boundaries to make the pursuit of knowledge innovative and holistic

guard their territory. Disciplinary boundary crossing is an anathema to them.

In *Academic Tribes and Territories*, Becher and Trowler address the issue and point out that “the tribes of academe ... define their own identities and defend their own patches of intellectual ground by employing a variety of devices geared to

the exclusion of illegal immigrants.” But academicians should shed their silos syndrome as a fragmented and piecemeal approach to the pursuit of knowledge will not produce tangible results.

### Subtle differences

At this juncture, we need clarity about what exactly is meant by interdisciplinarity and the reasons to

embrace it. We also need to distinguish it from its cognate: multidisciplinary. There are subtle but crucial differences between the two. Both call for the presence of various disciplines but the level of integration between them is differential. While the integration of different disciplines is quite high in interdisciplinary programmes and

projects, it is limited in the case of multidisciplinary endeavours. The former aims at amalgamation and synthesis of ideas and theories and the latter is rather reluctant to shed its disciplinary character. In short, while interdisciplinarity insists on integration of ideas, multidisciplinary focuses on juxtaposition with limited space for integration. In

*Interdisciplinarity: History, Theory and Practice*, Klein points out that the coming together of different disciplines in multidisciplinary endeavours is “essentially additive, not integrative”.

Why are academicians reluctant to undertake interdisciplinary projects? There are five major reasons. First, the epistemological clash, sometimes incompatible, between different disciplinary perspectives is a hurdle and a challenge. Second, getting to know a new discipline involves time and energy, and many prefer to expend their energies in their own disciplines and territories where they already have a foothold. Third, there is hardly any incentive for undertaking innovative interdisciplinary projects. Fourth, when it comes to research projects and publications, editors are inclined towards papers in conventional disciplines. As a result, interdisciplinary projects get sidelined. Finally, interpersonal issues crop up while undertaking interdisciplinary projects with issues relating to seniority and ownership of the project occasionally rearing their heads.

### Fostering interdisciplinarity

What should be done to shed academic tribalism and foster interdisciplinarity? First, higher educational institutions should, under the Choice-Based Credit System, offer interdisciplinary courses in domains such as AI, Na-

notechnology, and Digital Humanities. Teaching pedagogy too could be interdisciplinary. A course like Philosophy and Literature could be co-taught by faculty from the two departments. Second, allied departments could come together and organise interdisciplinary seminars and conferences. For instance, Chemistry and Life Sciences could come together and explore common topics such as enzyme catalysis, kinetics, energy and metabolism. English and Political Science could organise a conference on a topic like language and ideology. Language departments such as Tamil, Hindi, French, and English can pool their resources and explore themes in comparative literature and translation. Third, research scholars and postgraduate students should be motivated to explore interdisciplinary topics for their projects. Finally, border-crossing leading to inter-departmental networking. So interdisciplinary collaboration should be recognised and incentivised.

Academic tribalism breeds a culture of hierarchy, insularity and traditionalism. Therefore, academia should ensure that the curriculum is innovative, interdisciplinary and holistic and encourage and help shape our students into multifaceted individuals.

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## SCHOLARSHIPS

### TSDPL Silver Jubilee Scholarship Programme

**Eligibility:** Open to students domiciled in Jamshedpur, Kalinganagar, Pantnagar, Faridabad, Pune, Chennai, Tada, or Kolkata in ITI or diploma programme from a government-recognised institute and have scored at least 50% in Class 10 exam. Annual family income must not be more than ₹5,00,000.  
**Rewards:** ₹50,000  
**Application:** Online  
**Deadline:** December 3  
www.b4s.in/edge/TSDPL4

### Shri Tulsi Tanti Scholarship

**Eligibility:** Open to girls in Class 9 or in the first year of a B.E./B.Tech. degree or diploma in Engineering and have scored at least 50% in Class 10 and 12; Annual family income must be less than or equal to ₹600,000.  
**Rewards:** Variable  
**Application:** Online  
**Deadline:** December 10  
www.b4s.in/edge/SZSP1

### Federal Bank Hormis Memorial Foundation Scholarship

**Eligibility:** Open to students in Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, and Tamil Nadu enrolled in MBBS, B.E./B.Tech., MBA, B.Sc. Nursing, B.Sc. Agriculture, B.Sc (Hons) Co-operation and Banking. Annual family income must be less than ₹300,000.  
**Rewards:** 100% tuition fee  
**Application:** Online  
**Deadline:** December 12  
www.b4s.in/edge/FHMF1

Courtesy: buddy4study.com

## Stay mindful

Uncertain about your career options? Low on self-confidence? This column may help



OFF THE EDGE  
Nandini Raman

**After Class 12, I attempted the NEET but my scores were not good. I have decided to go in for B.A. LL.B (Hons.) but people around me say it's risky. What other course can I opt for? Laura**

Dear Laura,  
B.A. LL.B (Hons.) is good if you have an interest in Law and related fields. The degree will provide you with critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and communication skills. The legal field offers diverse and potentially rewarding careers like being a lawyer, legal advisor, judge, legal consultant, or across corporate law, civil services, and more. It is an intensive programme that requires strong commitment, sustained interest and academic challenges. Meet a career counsellor and do a personality and aptitude assessment to understand your inherent strengths and choose a path that aligns with your long-term goals and personal interests. Discuss your options with mentors, teachers, or career advisors who can provide personalised advice. There are many options including BBA, B.Com, Design Courses, Hospitality and Tourism Management, Communication and Media Studies and so on.

**I have done a B.A. in History and Psychology. Unfortunately, I have a backlog to be cleared next year. I am interested in both subjects. What can I do in this one year for my educational growth? Pradhan**

Dear Pradhan,  
Use your time productively to enhance your skills and knowledge by taking online

courses and earning certifications in specialised areas on Coursera, edX, and Udemy. Look for internships, volunteering opportunities and research projects so that you et experiential and practical knowledge across areas of your interest. Meet a career counsellor and discuss your goals and explore potential pathways based on your likes, aptitude, passion and personality. Consider doing a Master's. Prepare for entrance exams and research colleges and courses available. Join online forums and discussions, engage in debates to enhance your understanding and keep yourself informed. Finally, network with professional organisations related to History or Psychology, as they often provide resources, opportunities, and access to industry events.

**My daughter is in the IGCSE stream and has chosen Arts and Business as her majors in high school. Which undergraduate courses would be suitable for her? Vidya**

Dear Vidya,  
Choosing the right undergraduate course depends on your daughter's interests, strengths, and long-term career goals. What does she wants to do? What are her core interests? Seek guidance from a career counsellor. She can choose any of the following courses: BBA with specialisations in International Business and Entrepreneurship, B.Com., B.A. in Media Studies, Marketing and Communications, Innovation and Design, Liberal Arts, Fine Arts, Literature, History, Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology or International Relations, B.Design, or a B.FA. A career assessment will help narrow down suitable courses and career paths. Research specific programmes and universities to find courses that align with her interests and

career goals. Shortlist those with strong industry connections, internship opportunities, and a good track record of graduate success.

**I am doing my undergraduate studies in Artificial Intelligence and Data Science. I have done a few projects in my own domain as well as in general CS. I am from a middle-class family. Should I opt for a government job in my area or pursue a career in the private sector? My priority is job security. Sarvesh**

Dear Sarvesh,  
A government job has advantages such as high job security, stable employment and protection against lay-offs and additional benefits such as health insurance, pension plans, and other allowances. The roles and work are more predictable and there is better work-life balance compared to the private sector. On the other hand, the salaries may be lower than that in the private sector with increments being fixed and based on seniority and tenure. Career advancement may also be slow. The private sector offers higher starting salaries and performance-based bonuses, with more opportunities for rapid advancement, skill development, and promotions based on performance. They can provide an innovative work environment with exposure to cutting-edge technologies and projects allowing one to build professional networks and gain diverse experiences. The work-life balance is a challenge and lay-offs are also common keeping employees under constant stress. Conduct a cost-benefit analysis and evaluate your priorities. Research opportunities in both sectors, and consider where you see yourself thriving in the long-term. Stay mindful and balance your personal preferences with your career goals.

**Disclaimer: This column is merely a guiding voice and provides advice and suggestions on education and careers.**

The writer is a practising counsellor and a trainer. Send your questions to eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com with the subject line Off the Edge

Shadab Alam

Though Canada is one of the top choices for Indian students who want to study abroad, the ongoing diplomatic tensions have sparked worries about possible restrictions. Recent reports indicate delays in visa processing times, stricter application reviews, and growing anxiety among students about their future in Canada. So let's look at the other alternatives open to students.

### The U.K.

A prime alternative for Indian students, the U.K. offers favourable post-study work policies. The Graduate Visa allows stay in the country for at least 2-3 years depending on the course (undergraduate, postgraduate, or other). Moreover, top British universities like Oxford, Imperial College of London, Cambridge and so on are globally recognised for academic excellence. Numerous scholarships such as the Chevening, GREAT, Commonwealth and others are available as are part-time work opportunities to help with expenses.

### Australia

Known for its student-friendly environment and high-quality education, institutions such as the University of Mel-



## Going beyond Canada

With the diplomatic unrest creating restrictions for students, here are other countries that students aiming to study abroad can consider

bourne, the University of Sydney, the Australian National University, Monash University, and others offer globally recognised programmes including three- and four-year Bachelor's degrees, Master's degrees ranging from one to two years, and doctoral programmes. The post-study work visa ranges from two to four years, depending on the qualification. The government and universities offer various scholarships, including the Australia Awards, Australia for ASEAN, and

the Australian Government Research Training Programme and regional scholarships such as scholarships in Adelaide, Canberra, and Tasmania, to attract students to study in the smaller cities.

### Germany

Slowly gaining popularity as a study-abroad destination among Indian students, many German public universities offer tuition fee waivers and demand minimal administrative charges per semester. Some of the popular institutions include Lud-

wig Maximilian, University of Munich, Technical University of Munich, Heidelberg University, and Freie University of Berlin. The affordability of fees combined with an emphasis on STEM fields makes Germany a great choice. The 18-month job-seeker visa allows graduates to explore employment opportunities in the country.

### Singapore

Asia's premier business hub is also a great higher education destination. Institutions like the Singapore Universi-

ty of Technology and Design, LASALLE College of Arts, the National University of Singapore, Singapore Management University, and others offer world-class education with many also having transfer programmes partnering with top universities in the U.S., the U.K. and Australia. Graduates can apply for a one-year pass for job-seeking.

### France

Another attractive educational destination, institutions such as the University of Paris, Sorbonne University, University of Paris-Saclay, and University of Strasbourg have strong academic reputations. One of the best features of a French public university is that the tuition fees are generally lower than in other Western countries. Additionally, many universities have started offering English-taught programmes. The French government allows for a two-year post-study work permit to allow graduates to explore career opportunities within France.

While Canada has long been a favoured destination for many Indian students, it is time to re-evaluate one's options in the current circumstances.

The writer is Head-Higher Education and Study Abroad at Internshala.com

## SAVE THE DATE

### Admissions

Shiv Nadar University, Delhi-NCR, has opened admissions for the 2025-26 academic year for undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programmes across its schools of Engineering, Natural

Sciences, Management and Entrepreneurship, and Humanities and Social Sciences. It has also launched dual degree UG programmes in Computer Science and Business Data Analytics in collaboration with Arizona State University, the U.S. https://t.ly/ZVt2u

### KL Deemed-to-be

University has introduced a suite of entrance examinations for 2025 admissions. For degrees in Engineering, students have to take KLEEE-2025, while for diploma courses aspirants have to take KLECET-2025. KL-MAT-2025 is for Management, KLSAT-2025 for Science and KLHAT-2025 for

Humanities courses. **Deadline:** December 4  
www.kluniversity.in

**Alliance University** has opened applications for its full-time, two-year MBA programme with specialisations in Business Analytics, Marketing, Finance, Human Resource Management, Operations

Management, and International Business. **Eligibility:** 50% in Bachelor's degree from a recognised university and valid scores in CAT, XAT, NMAT, MAT, CMAT, KMAT, or the Alliance Management Aptitude Test (AMAT). **Deadline:** November 30  
https://www.alliance.edu.in/programme/mba



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