

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GANDHINAGAR

EXPECTATION FROM HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES FACULTY AT IIT GANDHINAGAR

(As approved by the BoG in its 29th meeting held on 20 August 2020)

Introduction

The Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) program is one of the central pillars of IITGN's academic agenda. Over the years, HSS has emerged as a truly interdisciplinary enterprise that promotes new epistemological paradigms in the Institute. The advancement of this enterprise and the achievement of its full potential requires focused efforts. The HSS has tremendous potential to evolve further and cohere with the other disciplines and institutional goals. This document is meant to guide the faculty in this process and further embed HSS into the aspirations of the Institute.

The advancement of HSS necessitates adopting cross-disciplinary interaction and collaboration. The current composition of HSS with expertise in various domains is very conducive to its further progress. This opportunity is to be exploited to enhance the scholarship, impact, and social outreach of HSS in the Institute and beyond.

A primary objective of the HSS program is to provide the IITGN student the intellectual tools to understand, analyze, and critique their social, cultural, and political contexts of new knowledge systems and frameworks. This would ensure their personal growth and professional impact. This is no ordinary task when the vast majority (currently 95 percent) of IITGN students are in the engineering and science disciplines and have little or no exposure to the humanities or social sciences disciplines. This opens up a unique opportunity for HSS discipline to directly contribute to students' intellectual demand across disciplines.

To ensure the comprehensive and rounded educational experience, the Institute has implemented several program innovations. The most important of these is the inclusion of several mandatory liberal arts courses in the academic curriculum. Nearly a fifth of the course work of undergraduate students is in HSS. The objective of this curricular requirement is to train students in critical thinking and analysis, social responsibility, and in the techniques of effective communication, both oral and written. Importantly, the incorporation of the liberal arts courses in the engineering and sciences curricula is to instill in our students an appreciation of the complex social forces that inform the development of solutions to the grand challenges of our times.

IITGN celebrates interdisciplinarity, and its HSS discipline is multidisciplinary and eclectic. While HSS faculty members may be unlikely to find many colleagues in their own specializations at IITGN, they may discover stimulating opportunities for interdisciplinary and collaborative scholarship and teaching with other HSS faculty and with colleagues in engineering and science that are often unavailable at traditional university programs.

Faculty Roles and Responsibilities

Faculty performance at IITGN is assessed according to the following criteria: teaching (30% weight), research (50% weight), and service (20%). Performance expectations in each category are summarized below:

Teaching: The HSS faculty are expected to be enthusiastic about developing and teaching undergraduate courses contextualized for needs of students in the engineering and science disciplines. They should strive to develop courses with broad appeal and seek to make them relevant and salient to engineering students by helping them draw curricular connections with their life situations. In their teaching strategies, the HSS faculty are called upon to introduce inspiring courses and pedagogical techniques to motivate the Institute's unique and diverse student body. Innovative teaching strategies can include but are not limited to infusing course content with creative and real-world examples, adopting experiential learning techniques, and introducing comparative approaches that draw on connections between the disciplines. HSS faculty are also encouraged to develop pedagogical partnerships that cross disciplinary boundaries and that promote new ways of thinking and learning.

The following are some of the criteria considered in the evaluation of faculty teaching: quality of teaching (e.g., student feedback), range and type of courses taught, innovations in pedagogical methods, number of students taught, mentoring of students at different levels, etc.

Research: IITGN expects its HSS faculty to pursue their primary research interests in any domain and specialization they desire and evolve as eminent scholars. The research leading to the scholarship of national and international reputation is imperative. IITGN also expects HSS faculty to be excited and enthusiastic about the multidisciplinary scholarship.

Considering the faculty composition at IITGN, research collaborations with colleagues in diverse areas provide a unique opportunity for the pursuit of excellence. The Institute recommends that HSS faculty take advantage of the intellectual diversity available on the campus and pursue research collaboration opportunities with colleagues across disciplines. Engaging engineering undergraduate students in their research is one strategy by which HSS faculty can extend the disciplinary boundaries of their scholarship.

HSS faculty are more likely to succeed at IITGN if they are actively pursuing research funding, either individually or in partnerships with other scholars, both within and outside the institution. IITGN has a generous policy of providing support to its faculty who wish to invite visiting scholars to the campus, organize conferences or travel to academic meetings in other locations. Faculty are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities.

Faculty research evaluation considers scholarly publications, sponsored research funding, student research guidance, and the success of their Ph.D. graduates.

Service: Strong and effective faculty involvement and leadership in the management of the Institute is a defining characteristic of IITGN. All faculty members are expected to participate in various committees and administrative roles enthusiastically and to volunteer to take up new responsibilities when these would advance the Institute's mission. Unlike many traditional universities, IITGN expects its faculty not to see "service" as a burden, but as an opportunity to build their leadership and bring a sense of fulfillment to their work.

They are expected to lead or contribute to extracurricular programs and to participate generally in the intellectual and cultural life of the campus. Such service not only benefits the entire campus community but also provides faculty the opportunity to build their leadership skills, expand their network, and interact with the student body. In so doing, they also deepen their connection to the IITGN family.

Service is evaluated based on, but not limited to, the effectiveness and impact of the service engagement, and the strength of peer recommendations and evaluation.