Report on the Activities Involved and Observations Made During the Online Student Induction Programme [e-SIP]

Course Title: Introduction to Engineering

Course Code: BCSE101N

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Programme: Bachelor of Technology in Computer Science

School: School of Computer Science

Declaration

I, Mr. Abhinav Dinesh Srivatsa (21BDS0340), hereby declare that the report submitted by me, as a partial fulfilment of the course on 'Introduction to Engineering (BCSE101N)' registered during Fall Semester 2021 – 22, is a record of the activities involved and the observations made by me during the induction programme during September 2021 – October 2021.

To the best of my knowledge, this document has been prepared by me keeping in mind the professional ethics and has not been copied either in part or in full.

Name: Abhinav Srivatsa

Date: 2/11/2021

Place: Bangalore

Contents

Details on the activities involved during the induction programme

The introduction started with us learning about the various courses, and their deans. VIT is an IOE (Institute of Eminence) and in the private universities, VIT is number 1. VIT boasts a wide variety of clubs, like dancing, singing, etc. I think that I will not be disappointed with the choices and would rather be confused of what clubs to take. We then learned about graVITas, the tech festival of VIT. We were then shown a video comparing winners vs losers, and how it is important to become a winner, and lead, rather than follow someone.

We then learned about VIT's milestones from its creation in 1984. From the various awards competitions won, VIT has come a long way into its 37-year journey. We then learned about the various high rankings VIT has made nationally and internationally. After this we learned about the various schools VIT hosts, its students and faculty strengths, and the various campuses.

We are then spoken to about contributing back to the country. We can do our undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD in a foreign country, but it very important to contribute to place of our origin. We should try to become and entrepreneur, trying to offer jobs instead of working for someone else.

VIT focuses on a complete activity-based learning. Not only do we get the plenty of opportunities to work on projects, but we also get to work on the experienced faculty, which would greatly help with our higher education and self-development. In today's world, having knowledge is not enough, but experience and knowing how to apply the knowledge is truly required to excel. VIT has a cosmopolitan atmosphere, meaning that we should look to others to understand, rather than just depend on ourselves.

Next, we were told about the CDC (Career Development Centre). We learned that that for placements, we require a CGPA of 6 and it starts in the 7th semester. We are having soft skills classes for this purpose, company placements. We also learned that to get into a very good company, my CGPA should be high, as it is directly related.

On campus, students are expected to report for an attendance within the time 9:00 pm and 10:30 pm. To go for places in Vellore, a certain procedure is required to stay out of campus for a time up to 6 hours. For a leave, we can apply from VTOP and with a parent approval, and from a proctorial consent, a leave can be issued. Regarding the welfare measures, there is health care, Wi-Fi, CCTV surveillance and wardens to ensure safety. Committee meetings occur twice a month, and the food committee meetings occur once a month. Silence is required to be followed between 9:00 pm and 6:00 am. No electrical appliances are allowed and be confiscated and fined. Various facilities exist like a gym, pool, sports facilities, shuttles, and photocopier facilities. There are extensive events to visit the community around us.

We then saw a digital tour of the VIT campus in the site campustour.vit.ac.in. We saw all the important sites in the campus, including the auditoriums, libraries, healthcare areas, etc. after this, we saw the people who made this event possible, the people and teams who were in the background.

At the start of the afternoon session, we learned how to use the VTOP app. We learned how to create an account, how to check our timetable, how to upload and download files, how to check our proctor, academic calendar and various other features that tell us all the information we need to know about classes and VIT. After a semester is over, we can also check our grades, grade history, and marks.

Lastly, we learned more things related to academics, like the mark's distribution per semester, requirements, and grading. The pass criteria are 50%. Minimum attendance is 75% to write the CAT exams, but in pandemic it is 50%. If CGPA is greater than 9, this requirement is not necessary.

Learnings during the general induction programme

The Dean of SCOPE (School of Computer Science and Engineering), Dr. Ramesh Babu K, started the programme by introducing us to the induction and explaining why we have it. He taught us that an ambitious student would make everyone proud, they're parents, the institute, and the world. Dr. R Saravanan, previous Dean of SCOPE, suggests that we interact with well achieved alumni and seniors that have extensively written reports in research. He says that we could find alumni throughout the world, which is very impressive. We also learned that we should involve myself as much as possible in the activities in the campus. He also tells us that any faculty member will be willing to support us, no matter which branch we are from. Dr. T Arun Kumar, another previous Dean of SCOPE, addressed us next. He tells us that the faculty is well experienced in their fields and would love to help us with our questions. The last former Dean to address us, Dr. S Margaret Anouncia, suggests we set our goals the day we start college, and next, we should make sure to plan how to achieve our goal. She also tells us to spend enough time studying and with my parents.

Dr. R Bhaskaran, an alumnus of VIT who currently teaches at Anna University, talked about his time in VIT. He tells us that we must take care of our health, as we are spending a lot of time in front of screens. With the tremendous growth in the field of computer science, he tells us that it is very important to learn coding, and as much as possible, as the coding requirements when he graduated was much smaller. There are a lot of workshops and activities to help us learn programming and how to be ready for the real world. VIT offers a fully flexible credit system, which is a major advantage to students participating in it. He finally concludes by saying "It's certainly a place to learn, and you have a chance to learn."

Mrs. Mutharagi, another ambitious alumnus of VIT, addressed us next. She talked about getting used to the college environment was important, as the groups we had in school time were very limited. She next talked about enriching ourselves with knowledge with the world class equipment at VIT. College life is a big part of our lives, so we must enjoy our time at college. She next talks about investing in ourselves, how we should invest in soft skills like communication, teamwork, adaptability, problem solving and creativity.

She next talks about technical skills, functional skills, and to keep track of the current trends, which is why the specialisations were created. She also suggests that we keep a LinkedIn account, as we can keep in touch with our colleagues and seniors of VIT.

Dr. S Vairamuthu, HOD of Software Systems, talks to us about the communication hierarchy, to avoid delays as much as possible. He tells us that to get the degree, a total of 151 credits are required. We are assigned a few courses, which are part of the core requirements, and we can choose a few courses from the open courses. The last requirement is the specialisation itself. Skipping over to my selected course, specialisation in data science, Dr. H Parveen Sultana, HOD of Database Systems, talks to us about the course structure of the course. To help us understand data, we must convert it from its raw form to something organisable. We then were given an extensive introduction about how to use VTOP, how to keep track of our timetable and read it, how to keep track of our attendance and view courses. We then learned about the roles of our proctor, who is essentially our on-campus guardian. We were then briefed about how to access the EPT (English Proficiency Test), and how to submit it.
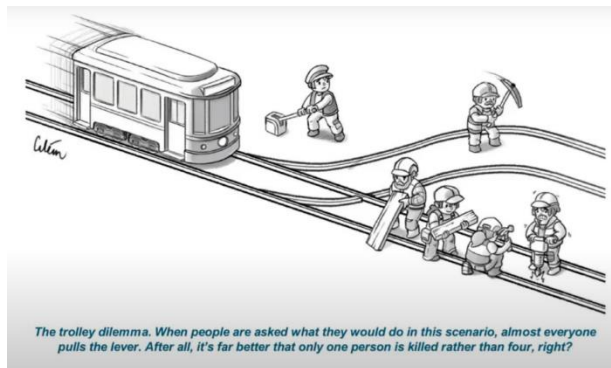
Learnings during the yoga programme

Yoga is to keep the mind and body calm. The first exercises we learned was head exercises, specifically, stretching our head left, right, up, and down. Next, we learned shoulder exercises and rotations. We then did squats, stretching our backs, and Surya Namaskar. We then rested lying down to relax. We then repeated the last two steps and then did some stretching exercises for the upper body. After this, we did a standing posture with one of our legs bend and rested on our other legs thigh (Vrikshasan), we stood like this for around 3 minutes. After this, we did a breathing exercise, to improve beathing and focus.
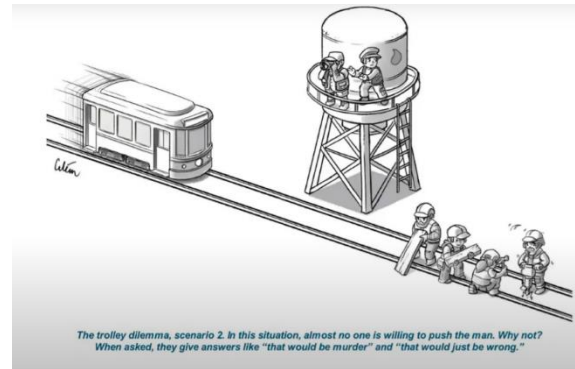
On the second day, we repeated the previous days yoga postures first. We then learned Bhadrasan, which is keeping the soles of our legs together and looking upwards. After this, we did Shashangasan, which requires one to sit in Vajrasan and bend forward. The next posture was lying face down and pushing our upper body upwards. Next, from the same lying down posture, we raised our legs upwards. We again repeated the breathing exercise from the previous day. The last things we learned was another breathing exercise that requires us to hold a fist at our waist and breathe looking slightly upwards and finally an eye exercise by keeping our fists ahead of us and moving it in all directions, while looking at it.

Learnings on Universal Human Value (UHV)

Behavior is unlikely to sustain if the reason behind it is not known. We first see the example of the trolley dilemma, which lets a train run over either four people or one person. We also see a variation of the trolley problem, but this time by sacrificing a man, by putting him in harm's way instead of pulling a lever. Decisions are not solely formed by our logic, but with emotions too.

The trolley dilemma. When people are asked what they would do in this scenario, almost everyone pulls the lever. After all, it's far better that only one person is killed rather than four, right?

The Trolley Problem

The trolley dilemma, scenario 2. In this situation, almost no one is willing to push the man. Why not? When asked, they give answers like "that would be murder" and "that would just be wrong."

A Variation to the Trolley Problem

Next, we learned about how our brain perceives different types of external stimuli. First, we saw what parts of the brain activate when we feel pain, whether it be social or physical, from studies, it shows that the same areas get affected. Social pain, like exclusion or discrimination, can hurt as much as a bruise or something comparably physical. We also learned about the outgroup theory, and how exclusion can lead to devastating results. We next learned about dehumanization, and how certain groups don't consider other races or religious people as humans, and how this applied the Nazis especially. We then go over multiple examples of how dehumanization applied in the past, and what a horrific ideology it is.

We then learn about the new ten commandments, going over what each commandment means for modern society. Sir next talked about how respect is offered and gave an example of gaining respect only while wearing a certain tag. He then goes on to say that respect should be given to all life forms instead of just respecting people senior to us.

Learnings on Stress Management

Sir first tells us a story about a drowning man, and how he rejected every help he got by saying "God will help me." In the end he drowned and asked God why he didn't send any help, to which God replies that he sends multiple boats to help him, but he rejects their help. Sir then goes on to say that stress is like this, blinding us to all possibilities.

Sir then goes on to talk about how we should tackle tasks, specifically in the order of what we are going up against, and how the problem arises in the first place. Next, we must understand how the problem affects us and understand its consequences. Lastly, we must learn the impact it has on us. Next, we go over why "until now" matters as much as "now on". This is especially important to keep to commitments. We must also be aware of the end point for tasks we commit to. The third thing sir taught us was that we must not wish for a smile (results) without struggling. Nobody can reap rewards without having a struggle, it has never happened. The fourth point sir made was to not procrastinate. No matter how much experience and fun we have in college, a tomorrow can only be made by having taken care of our responsibilities. If we do tasks by procrastinating too much, we do it for the sake of completion only. Lastly, sir tells us "Do not pitch your tent on loose soil." This means that we should not commit to something before knowing exactly what that person requires or what an activity contains. This can also mean to choose my friends wisely.

Learnings on Time Management

Time management, or productivity, is not only for people who cannot manage their time well, but it is also for people who can manage it well, because you can always do it better. it is important that we answer three questions: What am I responsible for? Which tasks have the maximum impact? Finally, put a three-rank list a review the tasks.

Learnings on Transfer Programs

Dr. Vijayakumar C, director of IR (International Relations) office, addressed us about this topic. Internationalization is important as it gives us an opportunity to see ourselves from a different perspective and contribute to the world. For students, it helps us gain confidence and exposure to other countries, we are not going to be confined to our homes always. Students also gain different perspectives about religion and cultures abroad. With over 300+ university tie ups, we can choose from multiple colleges from the US, Europe, Australia, etc. VIT also recruits students from over 50 countries.

There are also many scholarships being offered, and with the fully flexible credit system VIT offers, we can learn the languages required to speak and study in the foreign country. We then discussed about the SAP (Semester Abroad Program). We are offered this program in the 7th or 8th semester. No fees are required to participate in this. This program offers 3 to 5 credits for a completion of a project in a foreign university. The conditions for this are a CGPA of & or above, and the second is that we must not have any disciplinary action against us during our time at VIT. VIT doesn't only encourage us to apply to universities they are affiliated with but encourages any university. SAP gives scholarships, which can cover travel costs.

Learnings on Proctor Introduction

In my proctor introduction session, I met my proctor, Dr. Parveen Sultana H. We discussed about the opening of the offline campus, our vaccination history and got to know our proctor a bit better.

Learnings on Course Allocation Confirmation

We met our proctor again today and verified our course, specifically Computer Science with Specialisation in Data Science.

Learnings on Library Access

We learned how to access the resources of the online library at VIT. Though the offline library has a much wider variety of books, not everything is online, and because of the pandemic, offline access is not available right now. We are allowed to issue 4 books with a maximum of 28 days with 1 renewal. We then learned how to register ourselves with the page vit.ac.in/academics/library. Once we have created our account in the library page, we can access the library through egateway.vit.ac.in. In this site we can access the various resources of the online library. We can also access the books by downloading the app from the app store. We were also shown how to format the books to our preference.

Learnings on Entrepreneurial Support

We are introduced the three types of people, those who make things happen, those who watch things happen and those who wonder what happened. Indian youth was often tied to an invisible rope to take something safe, rather than fail at something risky. We then learn that it is extremely important to create, invent and innovate. Start-ups are the perfect constructs to help us put forth our creative ideas and display them to the world. We then were shown FAANG (Facebook, Apple, Amazon, Netflix, and Google), the big 5 companies in the world, and saw how simple yet well-constructed ideas can do extremely well in the real world. Having a good skill set is as important as having the right idea.

In a world as rapidly developing as ours, it is important to keep upgrading yourself, otherwise technology will take over your role. We then see a table of the job market and how it is evolving over time. We then saw multiple different start-up projects a few VIT senior have worked on, not all having succeeded, which is a big takeaway, not every project will succeed.

Learning on What Makes Me Special

We start off by learning how to guard our thoughts. Our thoughts are what guide us over a certain path, so keeping these uninfluenced is important. Our thoughts are unique, just like us. In the social media driven world we are in today; we are chasing other people's dream by following the people we think are doing better than us. We are demoting our own understanding of our uniqueness by comparing ourselves to other people. On a smaller scale, we should also not compare ourselves to other peers and colleagues. This will affect how special we are. The best ways to not do these are by committing to dreams, cutting free from social media and people who drag you down and by managing your days, do the things that matter to you.

Next, we learned about how our words are very powerful, and how words can be constructive and destructive. Even when we don't say anything, it can mean a lot of things we may not mean, so it is important to express ourselves. It is always better to speak rather than not saying anything, no matter how the receivers of your words will think of you, as long it is not spiteful. When we are too angry or spiteful, that time it is better to remain silent. Rather than speaking out of obligation, we could rather speak when we have something to contribute, instead of trying to look better than we are. Empty promises are one of the worst things to do, make sure you do something when you say it.

Next, we addressed the actions that disrupts our progress. A few examples are when we act to be merely recognized, when we act with disinterest, when we act in a rude manner and when we act to solely gain attention. We must always act with a goal in mind, or while with people we can relax around, we must be true to ourselves and not portray someone we are not. We should be conscious of how we act and not randomly do whatever we feel, not matter how compelling it is.

Lastly, we discussed whether habit building is overrated. We lose interest and tend to become lazy when not following the right habit or schedule. Committing to a lifestyle would be better than doing anything at any point in time. We should not start a bunch of

habits immediately but build up on habits slowly. It is also recommended to surround ourselves with people who can guide us in the right path.

Learning from the Zumba Session

We started off by doing some basic stretching exercises, in preparation for the Zumba session. We then were shown a demonstration with around 6 to 7 songs. We also learned about the social media sites they have and how to join the clubs.

Learning from Creativity Club

The session was hosted by Pravar, the chairperson for the creativity club at VIT. He starts by asking the audience of what we think of creativity. I answered by saying it is something new or innovative that is not the norm to most people. He first shows us about the sink and urinal example, two simple objects that we use daily. A creative solution that was brought up was a urinal-sink, where the sink is above the urinal and uses its water to flush the sink. This solution saves money, water, and time. A simple formula that Pravar came up with was idea = p (k + i). Where p is people, k is knowledge, and I is information. He then goes on to say that creativity is not necessarily only for a certain set of people, but it is for everyone. And in the "cut-throat" we live in, it is a necessity now. Creativity occurs at the most random times, but never at work, showing that our mind must be free to be creative. To be more creative we must not multitask, rather than tackle multiple tasks at once. We must give our full attention to one activity. Pravar went on to go over famous examples of creative people in the past – Einstein, Archimedes, Michael Crichton. We also get inspiration and motivation when we get creative while we are stuck on a problem.

Learning from The Fine Arts Club

We required water colour paper, pains, brushes. Shreya, a member of the club, showed us how to use water colours and showed us the various colours. She showed us how to make leaves pressing the brush in different ways. She went on to show us how to make flowers. She then made a beautiful painting of a garden type scene. The next presenter, Saisha, showed us a few of her paintings. She then shows us how she made

a drawing of a tree near a lake.

In the following session we saw about circle art and human expression while drawing. The mouth mainly affects how a person looks and how the feel at any moment.

Learning from Cultural Competition

The cultural competition featured many students from my batch, people who joined VIT in 2021. The morning session featured many dances, while the afternoon was filled by people singing and playing instruments. Personally, my favourite performance was by Jayanth, who played an electric guitar.