Queries :

1.How important is CPI for apping ?

It is important and it always helps to have a higher CPI.

2.Does having a CPI<9 drastically reduce our chances of higher studies in a good institute?

If good means only the top 3 university for you then you have less chances. If you are happy with any of the top 15 US university then you could hope for good offers.

3.How often do people go for an M.S after a dual degree at IIT?

Some universities allow this some don’t. Mostly DDs go to Stanford University for MS. University of Michigan is one university which does not allow this. Please go over the FAQ section of the respective departments you are applying to.

4.What combination of recommendations are preferable?

Recommendations from professors with you have completed a research project is more beneficial than a course performance recommendation.

5.How significant are research papers ? Can they overshadow CPI ? Any examples of such case?

CPI is like the base of the cake and research paper is like an icing on the cake. It cannot overshadow the cake completely.

6.How long is a TOEFL score valid for?

2 years

7.How to select universities for apping based on our profile and interest? Also importance of gre score in admissions? Which universities are funded?

GRE score could play a role in awarding fellowships. So if your score is around 336/340 with all other factors favourable you could end up with a fellowship. GRE score is generally used as a cutoff criteria to sort out applications in the initial stages.

Generally public universities have more funded opportunities than private ones.

8.What is the format in which we have to write an SOP?

SOP is like a story where you write about your qualities, justifying your areas of interest and why you have to that specific university.

9.How feasible is a change in stream after getting selected into a PhD programme ? Also, is it possible to switch from a PhD programme to, say, an MS programme ? How would that affect my funding options?

If you worked on fluids in your undergrad and now want to shift to controls, it is very much possible. This happens in most cases where people do divert either because of funding or out of interest.

10.What is a good time to start writing my apping resume? And SOP?

Start it with your placement resume. Resume should be complete before your midsems. Start with SOP after midsem and complete it by October end.

11. Should my SOP be university specific? How so? What should the content be?

Yes it should be university specific. Let them know why you want to join them.

12.Which are the best univs for mechanical engg?

Depends on the area you are looking at. General ones who are good in almost every domain are UC Berkeley, U of Michigan, Stanford

13.What are the job opportunities after the Phd?

Ample opportunities in US - National Labs, R & D centres of Companies - GE, GM etc, academic positions. I do not have much idea about the stud positions for PhDs in India.

14.Scope of Research & development after M.Tech/PhD in mechanical engineering

You will be leading teams to develop new things.