



## Academic Initiatives

SNDT Women's University introduced many new academic initiatives from 2011-12. They started bearing fruits within a year. Some of them are presented below in two sections: Academic Initiatives for Students, Academic Initiatives for Teachers.

### A. Academic Initiatives for Students

#### 1. Internship

In the year 2012-13, SNDT Women's University introduced Internship as a component in the Curricula of all post graduate programmes. The students of 2012-14 batch did their Internship during the fourth semester of their Master programme (Jan-May 2014). This year the students from 28 departments and 8 conducted colleges on three campuses did their internship at 738 agencies/organizations. The classification of these agencies is presented in Appendix F.

Introduction of Internship under all Masters programmes have given an opportunity to students to observe the world of work closely and also introspect about her own skills and attitude as well as knowledge base required to work in an organization. Some students got the stipend for the internship, some students got offers and got absorbed in the organization after getting the degree. Many students did their internship in the same city where they live but some did it in another city and some more outside the country as well.

#### 2. Research at Master level

The new curriculum introduced in 2012-13 for all Master programmes introduced 'Research' as mandatory 8 credit course in addition to a research methodology course of 4-credits. This provided an opportunity to all Master students to get a first-hand experience in conducting research. The 2012-13 batch conducted Research in 2013-14 last semester of their two year programme.

During the year 2013-14, 1458 Master students conducted research. Out of these 566 Master students were from three campuses of the university and 892 were from affiliated colleges.

Conducting research study under a guide at the Master level has given confidence to students to apply their knowledge and skills developed through Research Methodology Course of 4-credits learner earlier in Semester II or III. Some students have published their papers based on their study. Some have registered for Ph. D. after getting motivated by the world of research.

Looking at the great enthusiasm of students in conducting research, the university introduced one more academic venture viz. Student lead conference from the year 2014-15.

#### 3. Vidyarthini Sahitya Sammelan (Student Literary Festival)

One of the special and innovative programme conceived and organised this year (2013-14) for the students was Vidyarthini Sahitya Sammelan (Student literary Festival). Maharashtra State has a tradition of conducting Sahitya Sammelan every year where great writers, authors, poets, critics share their thoughts and ideas for betterment of Literature. The same concept was used to celebrate student expression in the form of literature in a 3-day programme Vidyarthini Sahitya Sammelan. This was organised by 5 language departments on Churchgate campus.

The first Vidyarthini Sahitya Sammelan was organised on February 26-28, 2014 on Churchgate campus. 600 students and 100 teachers from three campuses and affiliated colleges participated in this unique programme. On three days three forms of literature viz. Play, Poetry and Novel and Short Story were celebrated. Students, teachers and experts invited for Sammelan appreciated this unique concept of Vidyarthini Sahitya Sammelan which is student centric and provides an opportunity to students for their creative expression.



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The second Vidyarthini Sahitya Sammelan is being planned for Mumbai and Pune campuses in February, 2015.

### 4. Intensive training in Business Communication and Soft Skills

Janki Devi Bajaj Institute of Management Studies (JDBIMS) introduced intensive training in Business Communication and Soft Skills, as a non-credit-compulsory course spread out during the first two semesters of various Masters programmes, comprising of written, oral communication and presentation skills, soft skills, grooming, health and wellness.

The rigorous training in business communication is geared towards strengthening the skills required and expected in the Industry from a woman professional. The programme seeks to groom students to develop the right mix of skills needed to manage people, crises and groups.

The objective of the programme is to enable the student to develop the skills through rigorous group discussions; assertiveness training; exposure to a variety of professional interview scenarios through mock interview rounds; basic training in voice modulation and body language; and enhancing report writing and presentation abilities through various practice modules.

The focus on developing effective reading skills through regular newspaper reading exercises enables the student to develop general awareness, confidence and the interest to keep abreast with the current affairs.

### 5. Mentorship Programme in JDBIMS (2012-2014)

University considers mentoring as both professional and personal (grooming) preparation for corporate life with the guidance of an elder and accomplished professional. The objective is to inculcate a winner's attitude and cultivate good personal and professional practices.

When a student leaves University, she should feel confident and equipped enough to meet the various challenges that may come her way as she moves on in life no matter what background she comes from when she enters university. The time in university should become an enabler.

In view of this the JDBIMS identified fifteen distinguished experts from various areas as mentors and started the mentorship programme on Feb. 1, 2013. Every student of JDBIMS presently has a mentor. Students have been regularly interacting with their respective mentors and have found the experience very enriching.

The first batch of 15 distinguished experts was identified as mentors for the batch (2012-14) admitted in Academic year 2012-2013. The mentor continues for two years with a student.

### 6. Monday Seminar

Department of Continuing and Adult Education and Extension Works, Mumbai and Sub-centre Pune as well as Department of Social Work jointly introduced a novel concept of "Monday Seminar" through which the Master students are helped to keep abreast of new initiatives, research areas, as well as extension areas in respective fields. During the year 2013-14 several Monday Seminars were organized. Experts from the field are invited to interact with students and teachers and these fruitful interactions make the process of learning for the students more enjoyable.

### 7. Online Course for Ph. D. Scholars in Research Methodology

Admission to Ph.D. programmes is offered in January and July every year. As a part of Ph. D. Programme, Course work is essential component. Each Ph. D. scholar is expected to study a 4-credit course in Research Methodology and the respective departments are expected to organize classes for the same.



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The university has taken an initiative in designing and offering this 4-credit course in Research Methodology through online mode. Department of Educational Technology, which has developed expertise in this field, coordinates this online course. This is a 15-week course which is offered using MOODLE Learning Management System (LMS). Many learning resources such as presentations, self learning material, visuals, videos are used, discussion forum for collaborative work, assignments, quizzes for evaluation are used profitably. Synchronous session of 1 hour by the experts from India and abroad provides valuable learning experience.

Feedback from the Ph. D. scholars is very encouraging. University therefore wishes to continue offering Online Course in Research Methodology for Ph. D. Scholars.

Many other student centric activities are planned for the Pre-Centennial Year (2014-15) such as establishing Subject Associations, organization of Student Led Conferences on three campuses, use of digital technology for learning etc.

### 8. Digital Archive of JDBIMS

Janki Devi Bajaj Institute of Management Studies (JDBIMS) started collating all important documents, communication, and statistics both academic and administrative from early 2013. However, by August 2013 idea of a digital archive of JDBIMS emerged. An email id was created and the faculty and students could send email with documents attached for the archive. One faculty was entrusted the responsibility of as curator who would download the documents and put in appropriate folders. Eventually the data has grown to be of several Giga bytes. The access to the database resources is tested from Churchgate and Pune campuses as well. Therefore, this works as a proof of concept for how rich all departments and Institutions on the three campuses can become using the Inter-Campus network resources the University has deployed on all campuses.

The motto of the Digital archive of JDBIMS is, 'THE SEARCH ENDS HERE'. That speaks for itself, what it does and how search time can be reduced. In the last two years this effort has considerably helped JDBIMS to produce certain reports that are required fairly frequently. The current effort is to go back as much as possible to the early years of the Institute and get whatever can be digitized and put into the archive. Resources of this kind would require a lot of discipline from all users. Regular back up of the archive is a necessity. However, the rewards are several orders of magnitude.

## B. Academic Initiatives for Teachers

### Teacher Professional Development (TPD) in integration of ICT in teaching learning process

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are changing the classroom culture. The classroom environment is becoming more student-centric. Teachers must be aware about integrating ICTs in their day-to-day teaching to make the class interactive, students actively engaged and involved. The University signed an MOU with Commonwealth of Learning, Canada for TPD in Integrating ICTs in teaching-learning process. Department of Educational Technology coordinated this programme and teachers from post graduate departments as well as conducted institutions and colleges were trained. The training was also extended to teachers for affiliated colleges.

In the month of March 2014, University signed an MOU with British Council, India for creating a platform for Educational Technology, creating linkages with Educational Technologists from UK. As a part of this project, the teachers will be trained as Master Trainers in creating Open Educational Resources, in conducting research in use of ICT and basic skills of using ICT in teaching-learning process.