SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS

IITGN reinforces international relations, participates as advisors for the government and exercises the academic freedom that all the IITs have been given by the government. Many of the institute's activities and functions are linked with SDG 16, as it is interrelated with addressing other SDGs.

Research

The Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) discipline at the institute actively engages in research related to indigenous communities. Some of the research projects relating to SDG 16 are "Effects of reverse migration among the indigenous communities following India's Covid-19 induced lockdown" supported by the Social Science Research Council and another focuses on human-animal relations and community based conservation projects in Arunachal Pradesh, especially Dibang valley and the Idu Mishmi community.

Education

The institute offers courses that relate to SDG 16:

HS 327 (H) - Anthropology, Citizenship, and Human Rights

HS 414: Introduction to Politics

HS 507: Humanism, Anti-Humanism and Post-Humanism

HS 512: Political Thought

HS 644: Critical Perspectives on Sociology and Anthropology

HS 424 – Indian Systems of Ethics

A short course on 'Governance Structure in India' by Mr Jagdish Prasad Gupta, an Indian Administrative Services (IAS) Officer of 1991 batch of Gujarat Cadre, every week on Saturday during January 23 to March 6, 2021.

Community Outreach

Camp HSS: IITGN conducted a first-of-its-kind free online event - 'Camp HSS' - for school students of classes 8-12 to help them develop critical thinking, empathy and creativity in July 2021. The camp aimed at empowering participants with a global and interdisciplinary outlook, argumentative and communication skills to better express themselves. The Modules included Origin of Thinking, Human Decision Making, Gender and Body, Creative You, War and Peace, Protecting the Planet, Argumentation, and Prosperity, Poverty, and Inequality.

Panel discussion on Neuroscience, Technology and Education: At a time when the global pandemic has changed the dynamics of education and made us rethink the traditional teaching-learning processes, the Centre for Cognitive and Brain Sciences at IITGN hosted a pertinent panel discussion on March 19, 2021, as a part of the Brain Awareness Week. The panel discussion titled – "Neuroscience, Technology and Education – the new equilateral triangle in education?" –brought together two scientists and a teacher to discuss how neuroscience can be brought to classrooms through the aid of technology and how it can impact major aspects of education, such as pedagogy, curriculum and individual differences in learning.

Intellectual Property Clinics
With an aim to guide students, faculty and research staff on various aspects of Intellectual Property (IP), the IIT Gandhinagar Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center (IIEC) has started an initiative called 'Intellectual Property Clinic'. The first IP Clinic was organised on July 3, 2021, with Mr Nilesh Pandit, IPR Lead, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS). Dr Malathi Lakshmikumaran, Executive Director and Practice Head, Lakshmikumaran & Sridharan Attorneys conducted the second IP Clinic on July 10, 2021.

Operations

The institute has formed several groups/ committees in which students have elected representation. There are student volunteering groups as well. The counselling service of IITGN provides a variety of services to students which are aimed at fostering independent thinking and responsibility.

- Student groups and committees: There are several student bodies at the institute including Student Council, Student Senate, Senate Student Affairs Committee, Anti-ragging Committee, NYASA, and Green Office among others. IITGN holds technical and cultural activities at regular intervals, co-ordinated by the various clubs. https://iitgn.ac.in/student/lifeoncampus/clubs/. Different student volunteering groups at the institute include Control room, Special Volunteer Force, Hostel sub-group of Crisis Management Group, and Volunteers for Campus Animals (VCA).
- Counselling Centre: The institute has a dedicated Counselling Centre, consisting of faculty in charge of counselling services, counsellors, and student guides. The institute counsellor along with student volunteers and faculty counsellors offers free advice and assistance to students to address academic, personal, or interpersonal issues.

- Support groups during Covid-19: The institute established committees to provide critical support in the form of medical screening, supply of food items and cooked food, distribution of sanitary napkins, recharging mobile phones and others for the migrant construction workers involved in various campus development projects and the residents of nearby villages.
- Empathy Fund: The way in which COVID-19 pandemic has unexpectedly changed our lives is huge, and for some of us, it is drastic. In order to show empathy and support to numerous individuals attached to IITGN who have been adversely affected economically and psychologically, IITGN has created an Empathy Fund with strong support from the IITGN Foundation in the United States. This Fund is being utilised to provide financial support for online learning and subsistence to students undergoing difficulties due to their current family circumstances; to extend livelihood support for essential service staff, housekeeping personnel, daycare personnel, dining hall workers, and construction workers from challenging socioeconomic backgrounds; and to provide medical care to individuals affected by COVID-19. The IITGN Foundation, under the leadership of its president Mr Ruyintan Mehta, exceeded its own target of raising US $1,50,000 for the Empathy Fund.
- Collaborations with the government: The institute provides expert advice to the local, regional and national governments and conducts training and capacity building programmes for the government officials. The institute receives funding and is supported by government agencies to research on various areas related to sustainability. The institute undertakes policy-focused research in collaboration with government departments.
- Institute events: The institute provides outreach, general education, upskilling and capacity-building to policy and lawmakers on relevant topics including technology, social sciences, climate change, etc. Sustainability Fair organised by Dr Kiran C Patel Centre for Sustainable Development (KPCSD) is one of the examples of the institute events that aims at fostering collaborations between IITGN faculty and organisations in the area of sustainable development. The Fair serves as a platform for government bodies, NGOs, industries, and other organisations working in the area of sustainable development to share ideas and practices on water, pollution & waste management, energy, climate change, wildlife and ecosystems.
- Cultural spaces: IITGN's open-air theatre Rangmanch has a seating capacity of 2,000 to facilitate large events. Integrated with a garden, it has been designed for multiple purposes, including cultural performances, events, street plays, and other community programmes. Additionally, the seating space has trees as well as grass strips between each row of seats, making the space appropriate for morning walks and contemplation.
- Green Office and KPCSD: IITGN constituted a dedicated Green Office comprising faculty, staff and students, which has a pivotal role in monitoring and implementation of various efforts related to the green campus. It aids in steering sustainable development practices, inculcating behavioural changes and contributing to increased awareness amongst the community members of IITGN and nearby villages. The Kiran C Patel Centre for Sustainable Development, established in 2019, addresses major sustainability challenges and promotes collaboration among faculty and students on developing practical solutions through integration of advanced research, traditional knowledge and field understanding. Its principal focus areas are water, pollution and waste management, energy, climate change and natural resources, wildlife and ecosystems. It aims towards developing a strong outreach programme of training, education, awareness and community engagement on sustainable development and promoting networking and collaboration among

scholars, policymakers, industry, non-profit organisations and other stakeholders. Examples of some of the major initiatives by the Centre include financial support for sustainability-related projects/ theses, IITGN-CSD Young Alumni Fellowship, Student Sustainability Grant and KPCSD Covid-19 Research Award.