

Vallue Education - Goals, Guidelines, Process

A Case Study of an Academic Institution

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1 March 2014

3rd Intl. Conf. on
Human Values in Higher Education
28 Feb. to 2 March 2014, PTU Jalandhar

Outline

- I **Context**
- II **Human Values course - Goals, approach, pedagogy**
- III **Impact on individual student**
- IV **Impact on institution**
- V **Conclusions**

IIIT Hyderabad: A Research University

IIIT-H started in 1998.

Goal:

- To do research in selected areas of IT and beyond, and
- To produce holistic and responsible human being

Student Dimension

- Institute might strive for research
 - But students might aim at only routine jobs
- Excellence might require hard work
 - But students might not be willing

Student Issues

Student issues which started coming up within 3 years of IIT-H's starting:

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Ultimately, action must come from inside.

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 - *How?*

II. Human Values Course: Goals, Approach, and Pedagogy

Human Values Course in Education

For something to be a *course in academic curriculum*,

- **Must allow for *open discussion in class***
- **Must not be based on *Do's and Dont's!***

... HV Course in Education

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But what should be the criteria for the design of the course?

Criteria for Design of Human Values Course

Course content should be:

Logical: Possible to discuss and ask questions in class

Verifiable: Verify in one's experience. Non-mystical

Universal: Non-sectarian. Applicable to all individuals, for all time, for all place. Ex. Respect.

Human: Good of humanity

Breadth: Encompassing all aspects of life

Human Values Course: Goals

Goals:

- To help students *discriminate* between valuable and "superficial" in life
- To develop *sensitivity* and *awareness*. Leading to:
 - Commitment, and
 - Courage to act on their own beliefs.
- Not to give values, but allow the students to *discover* values within themselves!

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*Became a required academic course
for all first year undergraduate students at IIIT-H in 2005.
Unanimous decision of faculty.*

Human Values Course: Method of Conduct at IIT-H

Form small groups of 12-15 students mentored by a faculty member.

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Faculty come forward to conduct it from all disciplines/ departments.

It is everybody's responsibility! It is the core of education!

Four aspects of human goals. At the level of:

1 Self:

2 Family:

3 Society:

4 Nature:

Content

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- 1 Self: **Samaadhan (Clarity, harmony in self)**
- 2 Family:
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- 4 **Nature:** **Co-existence (Mutually enriching cycle)**

III. Impact on Individual

Impact on Individual

- **Slow and steady**
- **Different parts appeal to different students**

Practise at Individual Level

- **Self awareness**
 - Ex. Watch when one gets angry
- **One's relationships in family**
 - In nuclear family, extended family
 - Friends in classroom, work place, hostel
- **Relationship in society**
- **Relationship with nature**
 - Avoiding waste, and
 - Right utilization of natural resources

Impact 1: Better Relationships

- **Better relationship among students**
 - Dealing with irritation, anger towards others – gone down
- **Greater reflection in relationship with family**
 - Ex. Son of JNTU Director(Academics) at IIT-H
- **Better relationship between staff and students**
 - Home assignment: Sweeping of friend's room
- **Faculty and students - Sense of opposition not there or reduced**
 - Even when differences on views regarding governance or student life

Impact 2: Attention to Nature

- **More aware of waste of electricity and water**
 - Practise comes more slowly
- **No plastic**
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*Remember students are not one homogenous class!
Some affected more, some affected less.*

Less Impact

- **Peer pressure**
 - Still, a lot of pressure of branded clothes, friendship with opposite sex
- **Placement**
 - Still, salary "package" in placement very important.
 - But after working for 3-4 years in a job, more students say
 - We did not believe you then, but now we know that there is more to a job than package
 - Many more are going for higher study – but abroad
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Like planting of a seed. First germination has started.

Summary so Far

- **Education must shape the society of future**
 - Not a mirror of present society
- **Do what is right, and if also done rightly, spreads**
 - Slowly at first, but faster than imagined later
 - Of course, newer challenges come
- **Environment of openness and discussion necessary**
 - Environment of Empowerment within the university community
 - True education takes place only in such an environment

Reflective course as a foundation is most important!

IV. Impact on Institution

Humanistic Practices: Impact on Institution

- **Putting humanistic practices in some facets of running the institution**
- **Slow and sweeping – Slow at first, but sweeping later!**

Impact on Institution

Impact on the institution in the following:

- 1 Seriousness towards studies - Better grades**
- 2 Better relationships - Less ragging towards zero ragging**
- 3 Cultural/youth festivals - More inclusive festival**
- 4 Yuktahar mess**
- 5 Value of work with one's own hand**
- 6 Running department/centre based on relationship**

...Impact on Institution

- 1 Human values for housekeeping staff**
- 2 Humanities projects – academic credits**
- 3 Social internships – during the vacations**

1. Seriousness Towards Studies

- For some students who were doing very badly, dramatic improvement (from SGPA of 5 to 9.8)
- Students have become more serious towards their studies
- More are going for higher studies

2. Punishment to Praayaschit

Example: Case of ragging in 2006 – 3 students sent to Mussoorie NGO

- **Punishment was suspension for a semester**
- **Appeals process. Asked them to go to an NGO – but with a sense of praayaschit**
- **They did what punishment would have required anyway, but with a changed feeling.**
- **The Head of NGO (graduate of IITD, 1976), had daily discussions with them**

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When the students came back, they were changed in a major way.

... 2. Punishment to Praayaschit

Ex. Case of ragging in 2010 - Disciplinary committee gave punishment to 16 students

- **Later 9 other students came forward and confessed (Senior students got involved)**
- **Punishment converted to Praayashchit. Farm work for 1 or 2 semesters depending on the punishment. Tough but did with joy in 1st semester (Dr Shyam Sundar Reddy)**
 - **Praayashchit does not mean feeling bad !**
 - **It means self purification in action and thought**

Feeling of Justice

How do the different categories of people perceive the action taken?

- **Victim**
- **Ragger/Harrasser**
- **By-standers**
- **Far-standers**

Should feel satisfied.

Feeling of Justice

How do the different categories of people perceive the action taken?

- **Victim** – *Wanted punishment reduced*
- **Ragger/Harrasser** – *Did not want to be suspended*
- **By-standers** – *Were given lesser punishment*
- **Far-standers** – *Cleaned their hostel rooms for a semester*

Should feel satisfied.

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Case of drinking in hostel in March 2008. Students lied to wardens. Wardens understood

- **Senior students (Pranav) got involved and helped them to speak the truth. Pranav helped them draft an interesting letter**
- **The guilty students said ready to pay fine, but requested *not to inform their parents***

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- **We asked them to write a letter to their parents, Institute would mail it.**

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- **The guilty students said ready to pay fine, but requested *not to inform their parents***
- **We asked them to write a letter to their parents, Institute would mail it.**
- * **They did themselves what they most wanted to avoid!**
 - **Next day some students came and cried:**
They had called their parents and informed them, what they had hidden from them. Felt free of the guilt!

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 - **Not an issue of music, rock or otherwise, but an issue of**
 - **Show off vs. simplicity**
 - **Consumption of alcohol etc.**
- **Quality of program started changing on its own**
- **Change in thought process is slow, but sure**

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However need to be pursued continuously, new students every year

4. Yuktahar Mess

- **Earlier, problem with extremely spicy and oily food**
 - **Bad menu, with cooks who did not reduce spices**
 - **Conflict between students and contractors – Menu with "costly" items**
 - **Problem could not be solved even after 2 years of effort!**
 - **Yuktahar mess started by institute effort (Vinayakji) in Jan. 2006, for those who cannot eat spicy food**
 - **Thought that no more than 50 will ever eat in it – Virtually no infra-structure**
 - **Numbers swelled to 400. An extremely popular mess today.**
 - **Simple food**
 - **Students wash their own dishes**
 - **Sit on the ground and eat**
- Lesson in simplicity, humbleness!**

Our day to day practices are an important training ground!

... 4. Yuktahar Mess

- **Ex. Conjunctivitis spread among all the workers (Apr 2007)**
 - **Students came forward to cook chapaatis**
 - * **There was a queue of students waiting to cook!**
 - * **Sense of ownership**
- **Yuktahar mess led to the starting of another mess (NBH mess, July 2007)**

Dignity of labour!

5. Human Values for Housekeeping Staff

Workshops conducted for Institute housekeeping staff (Shanthi, Nisha)

- **Staff have become more conscious of their families**
- **More time and care to their children**
- **Reduction in alcohol intake**

6. Studies and Research in Human Values

After the foundation course in Human Values which makes students think

- **Elective courses on HV are offered**
- **Optional "Humanities Project" for UGs**
- **Social internships**
- **Research program started**
 - **PhD dissertation work underway on HV**

7. Department/Centre based on Relationship

- **Students as well as staff involved in running a centre (Earthquake Engineering Research Center)**
- **Based on relationship rather than command and control**

Much easier to run and manage the centre

Conclusions

Impact of running the Human Values course that is *reflective* about the self has been immense

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Humanistic practices at the institution

- **Less ragging to zero ragging**
- **Youth/cultural festivals**
- **Yuktahar mess**
- **Seriousness towards studies**
- **Human values for house-keeping staff**
- **Research in human values**
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Thank you