Minutes of the 10th meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) held on February 10, 2021 at 03.00 pm through Google meet

Following were present:

1. Dr. Anuradha Sharma   - Chairperson
2. Prof. Pushpendra Singh   - DoAA
3. Dr. M S Hashmi   - Chair-PG Affairs
4. Dr. Sumit Darak   - Chair-UG Affairs
5. Dr. Rahul Purandare
6. Dr. Sonia Baloni Ray
7. Dr. Debika Banerjee
8. Dr. Sujay Deb
9. Dr. Debajyoti Bera
10. Dr. Jaspreet Kaur Dhanjal
11. Mr. K P Singh   –Academic In-Charge
12. Ms. Sheetu Ahuja   – Manager(Academics)
13. Ms. Priti Patel   – Assistant Manager (Academics)
14. Mr. Ashutosh Brahma   - Assistant Manager (Academics)
15. Mr. Yash Gupta   – President (Student Senate)
16. Mr. Jay Rawal   - Vice-President (Student Senate)

At the outset, Dr. Anuradha Sharma (Chairperson-AAC) welcomed all members to the AAC meeting. Thereafter, the agenda items were taken up for discussion and the following decisions/recommendations were made:

Item 1 To confirm the minutes of the 9th AAC meeting held on December 23, 2020.

Since there were no comments, the minutes of the 9th meeting were confirmed as circulated.

The following items were discussed over email and concluded as below:

   i.   **To discuss the present lecture hour duration.**
AAC discussed the matter over email (reference email dated 20th Jan 2021) and noted that there are instances (during offline classes) where students rush from one classroom to the other to attend lectures when the instructor does not finish the lecture on time, which unnecessarily creates a lot of anxiety among students.

AAC members are of the view that changing lecture hour duration will not solve the issue. And hence some other ideas may be explored in this regard. Also, it is the responsibility of the instructor to start and end the lecture on time.

Action: No action is due.

ii.   **AAC approved the following courses recommended by CAI faculty for addition to the Regular AI Elective bucket of the M. Tech. CSAI program.**

1. Semantic Web, offered by Raghava
2. Trustworthy AI Systems, offered by C. Anantaram
3. Theories of Deep Learning, offered by Vinayak Abrol
4. Mining Large Networks (offered by Tanmoy).
[Reference email dated 10th Jan 2021]

Action: To update the course on the Institute website on relevant pages.

iii.   **AAC approved course descriptions of the following courses:**
   i.   Theories of Deep Learning [Reference email dated 10th Jan 2021].
   ii.   Intro to HCI course [Reference email dated 10th Jan 2021].
   iii.   Next Generation Optical Networks [Reference email dated 25th Dec 2020].

Action: To update the courses on TechTree.

iv.   **AAC approved the cross listing of the Convex Optimization course with 5xx Number.**

Action: To update the courses on TechTree.No action is due.

v.   **AAC approved adding MLN in the list of electives for the M.Tech. DE specialization.**
 [Reference email dated 2nd Feb 2021].

Action: To update the course on the Institute website on relevant pages.

vi.   **To discuss the change in M.Tech. defense dates and dates in award guidelines.**
AAC approved the guidelines as placed at Appendix I.

Action: Academic Section to implement.

Item 2   **To consider a fee waiver request of a sponsored Ph.D. student, Niti Gupta.**

AAC was briefed about the fee waiver request of the sponsored Ph.D. student, Niti Gupta. The AAC also looked into the justification submitted by the student stating that she is planning to take study leave from her employer to focus towards her Ph.D. and that during study leave, she will not draw any salary and hence is requesting for the fee waiver.

The AAC was also informed that her PhD advisors, Dr Anuj Grover and Dr Sneh Sourabh, have also supported her request for fee waiver.

After detailed discussion, the AAC recommended that the student will be considered for fee waiver only for her study leave duration without salary, upon submission of the certified document from her employer confirming her study leave duration and non-payment of salary, if any. In case, the study leave duration will be less than a year, then the fee waiver will be applicable on a pro-rata basis.

Action: To communicate the AAC's recommendation to the concerned student and finance office.

Item 4   **To discuss the rules for doing TAship by M.Tech. students having low CGPA.**

AAC noted that the current PG regulations are not clear whether the student who is under academic warning should be allowed to do TA duty or not.

The AAC looked into the AICTE guidelines which state that "The Scholarship will be granted to the student on a monthly basis subject to satisfactory academic performance and adherence to University/Institute norms/rules and regulations as applicable from time to time, certified by the Head of the Institute and obligatory work."

After detailed discussion, the AAC recommended that in view of the above AICTE guidelines, the students who are issued academic warning, due to unsatisfactory performance, should not be allowed to continue their TAship, hence they will not be eligible for stipend. However, in order to help these students, their performance will be reviewed after 6 weeks of the semester start date. The feedback regarding student's performance (on the basis of quiz, assignment or whatever assessment components are used by faculty) will be taken from the course instructors in the form of Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory performance. In case of satisfactory performance, their stipend will be resumed after 2 months of the start of the semester. And such students will then be allowed TAship of courses like SG/ CW, online courses, etc.

Action: Academic Section to implement.

Item 5   **To consider the following observations related to the conduct of Ph.D. Thesis evaluation process.**

   i.   **Currently, the Ph.D. advisor of the student is assigned as one of the examiners (internal examiner) which as per HOD CB is a conflict of interest. How a Ph.D. guide can write an evaluation report for his/her student, this needs to be fixed. Normally a guide is considered as an internal examiner but a guide is not supposed to write an evaluation report.**

AAC noted that as per present Ph.D. Thesis Evaluation Guidelines, the advisor(s) of the student act as an internal examiner(s) and is required to submit the evaluation form along with an evaluation report.

After detailed discussion, the AAC is of the view that
(i)   The Ph.D. advisor(s) of the student is advising the Ph.D. student towards his/ her research problem and hence the advisor(s) may have close observations towards the thesis, which is written by the Ph.D. student.
(ii)   For scenarios where only 2 reports from external examiners are received and the defense is to be scheduled on the basis of 2 reports, the 3rd report from the internal examiner (i.e. Advisor) plays an important role.

In view of above points, the AAC recommended to continue the practice of seeking the evaluation form and report from the internal examiner, i.e., PhD advisor.

Action: To inform HoD-CB about AAC's recommendation.

ii. **HOD CB also mentioned that in many of reputed Institutes (including IIT, IISc, IISER etc), only one external examiner conducts Ph.D. defense. At IIIT Delhi all external examiners (or at least two) are required to be present in the Ph.D. defense. It is challenging to get a date for viva voce suitable for all examiners (all are senior researchers and busy). Multiple examiners are not comfortable to conduct Ph.D. viva voce.**

AAC noted that as per present Ph.D. Thesis Evaluation Guidelines, at least two external examiners are required to participate in the Ph.D. thesis defense talk. It is also noted that in other reputed Institutes like IITs, IISc, etc., only one Indian examiner attends the Ph.D. Thesis defense in person.

The AAC discussed the matter in detail and is of the view that having all external examiners during the defense has more merits.
(i) It provides more exposure & opportunity to the student to interact with the external examiners.
(ii) This also helps in increasing the visibility of the Institute.

Also, since IIIT Delhi also allows to conduct the defense in the online mode, the AAC did not see any challenge in inviting all PhD examiners for the defense seminar. In view of above points, the AAC recommended to continue with the existing practice of inviting all external examiners for the Ph.D. thesis defense.

Action: To inform HoD-CB about AAC's recommendation.

iii. **To discuss the timeline in which the students are required to defend the Ph.D. Thesis after receiving evaluation reports from all the examiners.**

Chair PG Affairs apprised the members of the background of the item. He also informed that as per present Ph.D. Thesis Evaluation Guidelines, there is no defined timeline within which the defense is to be scheduled after receiving the evaluation reports from all the external examiners.

The AAC discussed the item in detail and recommended that the student is required to address the comments of all the examiners (external & internal) within 8 weeks from the date of receipt of all evaluation reports and should be ready for the oral defense.

Action: To be taken to the Senate.

Item 6 **To consider the proposal from the placement office for reverting to the old academic calendar.**

DoAA briefed the AAC members about the proposal from the placement office for reverting to the old academic calendar. During discussion, the DoAA also informed that:

i. The reversal to the old Academic calendar, if approved, will be implemented from AY 2022-2023.

ii. As per old Academic calendar, the semester is to be started from the last week of July or 1st week of August. The same pattern will continue if the above reversal is approved.

iii. Presently 2nd half of Wednesdays are reserved for meetings and are treated as non-class days (however the Tuts are scheduled during this slot). Placement section has requested to swap Wednesday 2nd half with Friday 2nd half.

The AAC noted that the earlier decision was taken after much deliberation with all the stakeholders including the placement office and asked questions as to why not the placement office showed the concern then. AAC also looked into the arguments which were noted in the Senate Minutes while approving the shift to New Academic Calendar from Old Academic Calendar. The AAC observed that there were many merits behind shifting to the New Academic calendar and inputs from all the stakeholders were taken while considering the shift. Hence the AAC recommended seeking suggestions from all the stakeholders including DOSA office, HoD's, etc. in this regard.

Action: To seek suggestions from all stakeholders, including DoSA office, HoD's, etc.

Item 7   **ECE Department has recommended to consider below courses towards 32 ECE credits requirements for B.Tech. ECE program**

Course Name	Course Code
Statistical Machine Learning	CSE342
Deep Learning	CSE641

AAC requested to check with the department if their suggestion is to add an ECE course code for these courses in which case the courses will also count towards ECE credits of M.Tech. ECE students. During discussion, it was also noted that the Deep learning course is already added in the list of approved courses for counting towards 32 credits for B.Tech. ECE students.

Action: Academic Section to check with the ECE department.

Item 8   **To discuss below points:**

AAC discussed the following FAQs with regard to B.Tech. , M.Tech. & Ph.D. students and approved respective answers.

i. Are students allowed to register IP/IS under visiting Faculty?
   Allowed

ii. Are students allowed to register IP/IS under Guest Faculty?
   No

iii. Are students allowed to register IP/IS/ under Adjunct Faculty?
   No

The following points need to be discussed for Thesis/SP/CapP for M.Tech. Students

   iv.   Are students allowed to register Thesis/SP under Guest faculty?
           No

   v.   Are students allowed to register Thesis/SP under Visiting faculty?
           Yes, it is allowed with a Visiting Faculty (with Ph.D. Degree).

   vi.   Are students allowed to register Thesis/SP under Adjunct faculty?
           Not allowed, however Adjunct Faculty can co-supervise the Thesis/SP/CapP with a regular faculty member.

   vii.   If a faculty leaving IIITD and becoming an Adjunct faculty, is an internal guide necessary while registering for Thesis/SP/CapP?
           Internal guide is not necessary for continuing an existing thesis/SP/CapP which started when s/he was a regular faculty of IIITD. For guiding any new thesis/SP/CapP, s/he will be treated as an adjunct faculty only and can only be a co-supervisor with a regular faculty of IIITD.

   viii.   Can we register Thesis after the Capstone project or vice versa?
           No. In a program, one can take only one of the CapP, SP, or thesis. However, if a student fails in SP/CapP/Thesis, then s/he can take another to complete the requirements.

   ix.   Do the grades of both Thesis & Capstone calculated in CGPA, if we consider only Thesis as a part of the graduation requirement?
           No, as it is not allowed to register more than one component during the entire program.

   x.   Are students allowed to opt for Thesis and Capstone in the same semester?
           No, as it is not allowed to register more than one component during the entire program.

   xi.   If a student has completed the credit requirement, however only thesis defense is pending; what should he/ she register in a semester to continue his/her registration?
           Students will be required to register for Thesis Progress credits.

   xii.   If a student has completed the credit requirement, however not submitted a CapP/ Scholarly paper report; what should he/ she register in a semester to continue his/her registration?
           The Student will be required to register for CapP/ Scholarly Progress credits.

==Current regulation states the following: "==The M.Tech. thesis shall be done under the guidance of thesis supervisor(s), who shall be faculty member(s) of the Institute. A thesis may also have co-supervisors, who may be Adjunct Faculty of the Institute, or external co-supervisors approved by the PG Committee."

==Proposed regulation changes: "==The M.Tech. thesis shall be done under the guidance of thesis supervisor(s), who shall be regular faculty member(s) of the Institute ==or a Visiting Faculty (with a Ph.D degree)==. A thesis may also have co-supervisors, who may be Adjunct Faculty of the Institute, or external co-supervisors approved by the AAC."

Action: Item to be taken to Senate

Item 3 & Item 9 stand deferred.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to and by the Chair.