

Table of Contents

1.3.4 Does your university as a body have programmes to assist students who fall into the bottom 20% of household income group in the country to successfully complete their studies?	1
Programs to assist students to complete their education:	1
STUDENTS SUPPORT AND EXTENSION ACTIVITIES	1
MANDATE OF DEAN OF STUDENTS WELFARE OFFICE	2
STUDENT'S COUNSELLING:	2
MENTOR – MENTEE PROGRAM	3
PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM UDAAN	4
UPES COUNCIL FOR INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP (UCIE)	5
Runway Incubator – Launch.....	5
Runway Incubator – Cohort onboarding	6
Can mathematical models shed light on clinical depression? UPES faculty tells us how.....	6
Good Mentoring is Critical to a Mentee’s Career Success.....	9
Mentor-mentee relationship	11
UPES Mentoring Program	11
Objectives of the program:	11
Global edtech giant confers award on UPES professor for ‘Optimising Student Experience’	12
Developing the ‘Star Count System’	13
Convert Students into Change-Makers.....	14

1.3.4 Does your university as a body have programmes to assist students who fall into the bottom 20% of household income group in the country to successfully complete their studies?

Programs to assist students to complete their education:

STUDENTS SUPPORT AND EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

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The Dean of Student Welfare Office (DSW Office) is conceptualized to foster all round development of UPES students. UPES understands that Extracurricular and Co-curricular activities are just as important as academics. Dean Student Welfare Office closely works with students to ensure a wide range of initiatives of and activities for engaging them throughout the academic year.

The office focuses as much on emotional well-being mental health as it does on physical well-being and through various activities such as Personal Counseling, Yoga & Meditation, etc. The DSW office maintains a special focus on personal values, making students appreciate cultural O differences, and adapt to a diverse society.

MANDATE OF DEAN OF STUDENTS WELFARE OFFICE

- To serve as the first point of contact for students for any unheard issues.
- To develop, coordinate and run relevant prevention programs that help them become responsible citizens.
- To provide them a platform to exhibit their skills and talents, through the mode of various activities where like-minded people meet each other, exchange ideas, and develop into better human beings.
- To provide emotional support to the students in the form of personal counseling & mentoring and to help them identify personal values, appreciate differences, and adapt to a diverse society. The Dean of Students Welfare Office encompasses the following areas:

STUDENT'S COUNSELLING:

Offers a variety of Personal and Clinical Counselling and support to students in times of need.

- Personal Counselling:

- Home Sickness
- Academic Overload
- Relationship Problems
- Exam Pressure
- Peer Pressure
- Attendance
- Year Back
- Adjustment Issue

- Clinical Counselling:

UPES full-time Clinical psychologist adopts a holistic approach and includes all P domains of a student's life while providing group and one-to-one counseling. The counselor aids the students with problems of adjustment, temperament, anxiety, depression, and family & relationship issues. There are special sessions on gender sensitization, drug abuse, prevention of sexual harassment, and so on.

- We also have ties ups with hospitals psychiatrists in case the student needs any medical intervention h and P or psychiatric help.

MENTOR – MENTEE PROGRAM

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UPES practices Mentor-Mentee System in all Schools. As per the UPES Mentor-Mentee policy, each student is assigned a Faculty Mentor upon his / her joining to UPES. The Faculty Mentor has advisory role and guides / assists the student in the pursuit of his / her academic career throughout his / her tenure at UPES. Students are expected to consult their Faculty Mentors on any matter relating to their academic performance and the courses they may take in various semesters / summer terms. The Faculty Mentor is assigned to extend guidance to the students enabling them to complete their courses of study for the required degree in a smooth and timely manner. The Faculty Mentor is the person to whom the parents / guardians should contact for performance related issues of their wards.

A Faculty Mentor is expected to:

1. Guide a student on rules and regulations of the academic programme
2. Pay special attention to the academically weaker students
3. Guide and liaise with the parents of students
4. Monitor and analyse performance of the students on regular basis
5. Encourage students to satisfy the mandatory attendance requirement
6. Analyse and try to solve personal problems of the students
7. Record all the activities in the mentor diary in the prescribed format

Each student registers for a set of courses as advised by his / her Faculty Mentor at the commencement of every semester. Students with backlog may continuously seek help from their faculty mentors.

A mentoring program framework operates through a software 'MentorCity' to provide automation in the process and to avoid loss of data w.r.t. mentee's growth. The key features of the framework are as under:

- Serve as a framework & roadmap to identify Mentoring Program priorities and designate roles, responsibilities, and criteria for meeting those priorities.
- Develop relationships within school to address the need for a high-performance team of faculty who guide, are adaptable and inspire students and fellow colleagues to produce tangible results.
- Provide institutional knowledge and accountability for the program's success factors and desired outcomes.
- Help students in their transition to the University environment and navigate their programs of study.
- Help ascertain career paths for students and support their personal growth.

- Provide opportunities for students to build academic & social skills and practice professional networking skills.
- Equip students with the understanding and tools to make ethical and informed decisions.\

PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM UDAAN

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A Leadership building program for 30 Academic Heads of the Departments from 6 Schools with an aim to build their leadership capability, thereby helping them become more effective people managers, was launched. This is a 1-year long journey having 4 powerful modules on Managing Self, Managing Teams, Managing Organizations and Leading Change. Each module is designed in such a way that there are lots of interactive sessions, simulations and role plays with an immersive experience. Each module is further designed with a slot of 3 days, thereby ensuring an investment of 12-man days of leadership development at HOD level.

SHAKTI: After successful completion of Shakti 1, UPES launched Shakti 2, a power packed program for the emerging women leaders at UPES. The purpose of the program is to develop the leadership capability of our women leaders who have been taken through a carefully designed intervention focused on adaptive skills, emotional intelligence, communication effectiveness and multiple other competencies needed to be successful in the world of tomorrow. The program is spread over nine months and is based on real empowerment.

SHIKHAR:

Shikhar is talent development initiative and has been designed for developing leadership capability and a pipeline for larger roles as UPES grows. The program has been designed with the intent of helping the leaders to understand their roles deeper and quickly cultivate credibility with their stakeholders and also to make them start their journey from Manager to Leader Transition. The program consists of 4 modules and 9 man-days.

PRAGATI:

The initiative was launched to inspire high potential and high performing leaders who possess the capability, attitude, aspiration and have been contributing to the organizational growth. The five key elements of Pragati are inspire, influence, immerse, improve and ignite. The programs focus on executive coaching and mentoring with the objective to develop strengths of individuals and work on their areas of development. It aimed to find the next top leaders of UPES who have the capability to move at least one level higher from their current role in a time span of two years and at least two level higher in 4-5 years. Pragati has 4 modules based on the Mckinsey Transformational Leadership Program and designed for a period of 12 months.

LEAP:

Leap is a 11-month Post Graduate Program in Leadership and Management, offered to colleagues at UPES to help them build skills and attitude necessary for bigger roles & responsibilities. Participants will receive Certificate from UPES upon successful completion of the program. The program has

specific objectives of Developing Gen Next leaders - Future CEOs, VCs, Presidents, Deans, Business Heads & Functional heads, giving opportunity to high potential young leaders to take center stage and creating a strong pipeline of professionals to take more responsibilities - in India as well as globally. The program has been specially created to ensure – relevance, critical thinking, innovation, people leadership and technology. The program is relevant for both faculty as well as non-faculty colleagues as it focuses on core leadership skills that are needed in all areas.

UPES COUNCIL FOR INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP (UCIE)

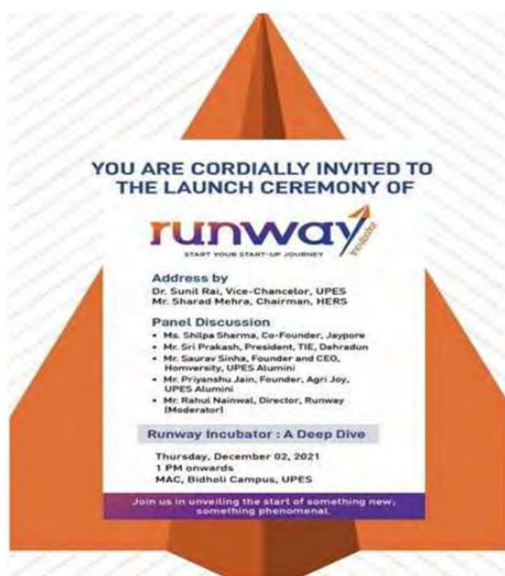
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UCIE has been leading the University in driving entrepreneurship in its ecosystem since its incorporation as a Section 8 company in 2015. Through mentoring, guidance, and support from ideation to product development, and finally incorporation, UCIE has helped startups like Pension Box and Homeversity to get to the stage of raising Angel Investor Funding.

Runway Incubator – Launch

In 2021-22, UCIE launched Runway Incubator, its entity focused specifically in identifying, selecting, and mentoring idea stage startups and taking them to the level of early revenue and growth stage.

Runway Incubator is a crucial stakeholder in the local ecosystem as a Nodal Agency and recognized business incubator by the Government of Uttarakhand. UCIE has amongst its partners Startup Uttarakhand, TiE Dehradun Chapter, HEADSTART, The Indian Network, Techstars, FICCI FLO, and Atal Incubation Centers, with whom resource exchange and event partnerships have been carried out in the past year.



Runway Incubator – Cohort onboarding



Runway Incubator launched its first Cohort on March 26th and 27th, 2022. It was an interactive two-day event wherein the first day witnessed business professionals and entrepreneurs engage in a lively panel discussion. The panel discussion was succeeded by an impromptu business plan competition in which the participants participated with great spirit. All entrepreneurs were asked to make their pitch decks and presentations on the second day and most entrepreneurs even secured huge investments from Angel Investors during the event.

In its first cohort, Runway had about 120 startups in its pre-incubation program. The startups ranged from sectors such as manufacturing engineering to agri-tech, fin-tech, deep-tech, ed-tech, travel and tourism to Himalayan products. About 15% of the cohort comprised of women led startups. Apart from UPES students, faculty, and alumni, there were significant external startups in the pre-incubation program. The common thrust of the startups is to provide solutions through products and services to enable life in the 21st century with sustainability and responsible use of resources as well as aimed at lowering the carbon footprint. The 15-week pre-incubation programme comprised of intensive online classes and workshops on the following basic aspects of setting up and running a business including entrepreneurship mindset and skill set, business ideation, ideation to scaling, teamwork for startups, value proposition canvas, business model canvas, product pricing, fund-raising for startups, and legal aspects of running a business. In addition, the startups also had one-on-one sessions with mentors to identify their challenges and provide specific help and guidance to reach the next level.

Can mathematical models shed light on clinical depression? UPES faculty tells us how

<https://blog.upes.ac.in/can-mathematical-models-shed-light-on-clinical-depression-a-upes-faculty-tells-us-how/>



EKTA KASHYAP · MARCH 30, 2023

Clinical depression

Dr. Melissa Reneaux, Assistant Professor, UPES School of Liberal Studies

A computational neuroscientist by training and Assistant Professor at the School of Liberal Studies UPES, Dr. Melissa Reneaux is working on building mathematical models to understand inflammation-associated depression, and the effect anti-depressants and antihistamines have on alleviating depression

When we talk about mental disorders, we often view them only from a psychological perspective, ignoring the role of bodily functions. However, what happens in our brain has a direct connection with our body. For instance, clinical depression has a direct relationship with bodily inflammation.

“At the onset, clinical depression is seen as a chemical imbalance in the brain caused by a reduction in the level of serotonin – a neurochemical in the brain associated with an individual’s mood. However, recent literature shows that depression may also be associated with bodily swelling (also known as peripheral inflammation),” explains Dr. Melissa Reneaux, Assistant Professor at the School of Liberal Studies, UPES.

Peripheral inflammation increases the level of histamine in the brain – a chemical known to be commonly associated with allergies, runny nose, and sneezing to name a few. “This increase in histamine reduces serotonin levels in the brain, which leads to depression,” she says.

A computational neuroscientist with training in Physics, Dr. Reneaux is working on building mathematical models to understand inflammation-associated depression, and the effect of antidepressants and antihistamines on alleviating depression.

How does mathematics fit into solving biological and psychological questions? “If you think about medical imaging techniques like X-ray, CT scans and Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) used to detect disease in the body, to using probability and statistics to validate a drug’s effectiveness, all these measures were developed by individuals with a training in mathematical sciences. Here, I am addressing mental disorders using mathematical principles,” she says.

Dr. Reneaux highlights that in mental disorders, the approach followed for treatment is psychological, however, the metrics used are grounded in mathematics. “For instance, in depression there are self-reporting assessments like the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ). In this test, individuals are asked a series of questions based on their mood, and the severity of depression is graded. Based on the scores obtained, individuals are classified as mildly, moderately or severely depressed, and henceforth the medication course begins.”

As part of her Master’s thesis, Dr. Reneaux worked on understanding rheumatoid arthritis – an autoimmune disease causing severe pain and inflammation in the joints of individuals suffering with this disease – using the principles of physics. She was amazed to see how physics and mathematics could be used to address questions in biology. As her interest in understanding human diseases grew, she decided to use the concepts of physics and mathematics to understand mental illnesses.

It was during her post-doctoral research work at Imperial College London, that she came across a startling revelation. “My research team was working on finding biomarkers in the body of depressed mice. We measured serotonin in the mouse brain while mice were injected with lipopolysaccharide – a chemical that elevates body inflammation. The mice also underwent a chronic mild stress paradigm. We found that another chemical, histamine, which is a marker for bodily inflammation, was also elevated in the mouse brain, which led to a reduction in serotonin. This interaction between histamine and serotonin led to clinical depression,” explains Dr. Reneaux.

This research demonstrated that inflammation in the body could lead to changes in the brain. Dr. Reneaux developed a metric termed Stress Index. “This is a scale that varies from zero to positive values. More the positive value of the Stress Index, greater is the level of stress in the individual. Bodily inflammation causes an increase in stress levels, causing alterations in the level of the neurochemicals, which can be measured,” she adds.

While going through the literature on clinical depression Dr. Reneaux, was shocked to discover that more than 30 crore individuals around the globe were depressed according to the 2017 World Health Organisation (WHO) report. COVID-19 saw a drastic increase in these numbers. About half of the depressed population that happens to be such a large number do not respond to anti-

depressant medication. And those individuals who do respond to medication, it took weeks and months for the medication to act on them and make them feel better.

“Antidepressants like the Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs), which are the first line of treatment for depression, show limited ameliorating effects. Serotonin until recently was known to be the only neurochemical lowered in depression. So, treating depressed individuals with SSRIs, should have made them feel better. However, this was not the case,” she says.

This fact made her team wonder if there was a missing link in the understanding of depression. The depression literature suggested that about a quarter of individuals who had depression also had bodily inflammation which meant they had increased histamine levels. “The experiments conducted by my team observed that rise in histamine reduces serotonin, and subsequently serotonin aided in the production of more histamine. Hence, when serotonin medication was provided to these mice, a rise in serotonin did occur but so did the level of histamine, that led to the lowering of serotonin. There exists a bi-directional interaction between histamine and serotonin. We found that mice for whom the underlying cause of depression was inflammation, when they were treated with a combination of SSRIs and histamine inhibitors showed a rise in serotonin,” informs Dr. Reneaux.

This study now published in the Journal of Neuroinflammation was performed on mice and used chemical recordings from the mouse brain. However, this invasive approach is not feasible in human subjects. So, Dr. Reneaux is presently involved in building a mathematical model that provides measurable outputs as brain wave frequencies to alterations in the level of inflammation. These brain wave frequencies can be measured using non-invasive electroencephalogram (EEG) recordings. “In depression, there is an observed reduction in theta frequency band (3.5 to 7.5 Hertz) in the pre-frontal cortex – the brain region involved in thinking and an increase in theta band activity in the anterior cingulate cortex – the brain region involved in emotions. This mathematical model will show the impact of antidepressants and antihistamines on these brain waves,” Dr. Reneaux describes.

One of the main concerns associated with depression is the high suicide numbers of depressed individuals around the globe. Dr. Reneaux is also working with researchers at the Miami University, Ohio, on a joint project that is investigating reasons for suicidal ideation among youth in Northern India. Dr. Reneaux is passionate about her research as she sees her research work having the potential to directly influence the well-being of people.

[Good Mentoring is Critical to a Mentee's Career Success](https://blog.upes.ac.in/good-mentoring-is-critical-to-a-mentees-career-success/)

<https://blog.upes.ac.in/good-mentoring-is-critical-to-a-mentees-career-success/>

MANSHA DHINGRA · JUNE 15, 2021



High-quality mentoring programs in higher education helps learners acclimate to new subjects and increase the likelihood of academic success. Personalized direction to students helps improve attitudes, values and skills needed to master the curriculum and develop self-confidence

The transition from school to university is a life-changing experience for young adults, as it involves many challenges. First-year students have to manage their new study schedules, build social networks and friendships, and adjust to the requirements of the university style of learning and teaching. Furthermore, with rapid advancements in globalization, technology, and societal development the demand for a workforce that is responsive to complex problems that are often systemic and require innovative solutions.

Therefore, educational institutions should understand that mentoring is an integral part of young adults' understanding of leadership and assists first-year students in adapting from school to university culture. These programmatic interventions have diverse content (seminars, workshops, necessary resources, and research material) and are structured quite differently.

Role of mentorship in academic excellence

Mentorship programs guide students to proactively direct learning in higher education by inculcating effective study habits, offering a supportive and collaborative environment for good teaching, learning, research, innovation, and ideation. These programs help students to develop into more confident, self-directed independent learners. Mentors help mentees apply knowledge gained in classrooms to everyday life and translate life experiences into learning opportunities. Mentoring initiatives improve academic skills by helping students with school projects and encouraging the use of libraries and other research materials available. By providing information, guidance, and encouragement, mentors play an important role in nurturing students' college aspirations, helping them prepare for the professional world and advising them on how to make successful transitions from high school to their first year on campus. In addition, students feel more connected and engaged on college grounds, which can ultimately improve their results.

Further, mentors provide students with the emotional and psychological support needed to advance their careers and succeed. Structuring mentoring framework imparts advanced education to develop

students into research scholars, policymakers, and public and private sector professionals involved in the complex globalized economies of the 21st century.

Enhanced mentoring also serves as a personal enhancement strategy through which one person facilitates the development of another by sharing known resources, ideas, learning, expertise, values, skills, perspectives, attitudes, and proficiencies, and professional competence. It allows the learner to build skills and knowledge while increasing their career prospects.

Mentor-mentee relationship

Outcomes of mentoring programs not only depend on the objective of the program but also the relationship between mentor and mentee. Mentor competence and mentee commitment go hand in hand. While the journey of each individual mentor-mentee is unique, each mentoring relationship is built on trust, understanding, respect, and compassion, regardless of where that journey leads.

A mentor is envisioned as someone who is a counsellor, an experienced guide, a trusted ally, a teacher, one who instructs, chides, and assists the students in attaining success. A mentor helps students discover and develop the potential within themselves to succeed in the university and life. An effective mentor is respectful, reliable, patient, trustworthy, and a good listener and communicator.

Developing students' capacities, skills, values, and attitudes is possible through a well-structured mentoring process and learning experience. These frameworks can change a young person's attitudes about school, their perception of academic competence, and motivate them to evolve.

UPES Mentoring Program

UPES has launched a mentoring initiative to encourage interaction, provide guidance to students and enhance their chances of academic success. A mentor will be assigned for every 25 students who will be personally responsible for their personal and professional growth. The Mentoring Program provides lifelong learning and developmental opportunities for the students. The primary objective of the program is to promote students' development in specific areas.

The program mentors first-year students to smoothly transition to a university atmosphere. Second and third-year students gain knowledge about various organisations, learning experiences and lucrative career opportunities. Students also get access to professional networks. Final year students are mentored by professionals who assist them with the transition from university to employment. These professionals are either UPES alumni or industry experts supporting the program.

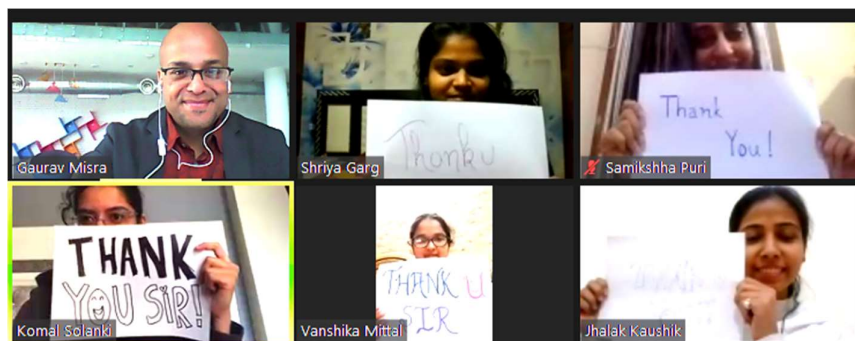
Objectives of the program:

- Help students in their transition to the university environment and navigate their programs of study.
- Guide students about the various career opportunities available and support their personal growth.
- Provide opportunities for students to build academic and social skills and practice professional networking skills.
- Equip students to make informed decisions.
- Shape students into confident graduates, with leadership, communication, critical thinking and other skills important for transition into the workplace.

Says Ram K Sharma, Dean, Academics, UPES “The Mentoring System at UPES is designed to help every student transit successfully from the school to the university environment and achieve his/her full academic and personal potential by providing him/her with efficient, effective and timely advice, guidance and support. Mentoring System not only helps students think through their life goals or major professional decisions, but has also been designed to inculcate a sense of belonging in every student. It reaffirms that the university cares for every student and is committed to his/her success and well-being.”

Global edtech giant confers award on UPES professor for ‘Optimising Student Experience’

<https://blog.upes.ac.in/global-edtech-giant-confers-award-on-upes-professor-for-optimising-student-experience/>



Gaurav Misra, Assistant Professor, UPES School for Life, during a Blackboard session with some of his students

Gaurav Misra, Assistant Professor, UPES School for Life, won the ‘2021 Blackboard Award for Optimising the Student Experience’, joining a select group of people from around the world, whose work has been recognised as a significant and exemplary contribution to the field of education

While learning during the pandemic has been overwhelming for students, it has been a challenging time for educators as well. Despite the obstacles, the teaching fraternity has ensured that students receive the best quality of education, albeit online, by devising creative strategies.

Gaurav Misra is one such dedicated academician who has worked hard to enhance the students’ learning experience in a virtual environment at UPES. Recognising his extraordinary efforts,

Blackboard – a leading global education technology company – has honoured him with the ‘2021 Blackboard Award for Optimising the Student Experience’.

An Assistant Professor at the [UPES School for Life](#), Gaurav joins a select group of people from the Blackboard community around the world whose work has been recognised as a significant and exemplary contribution to the field of education.

For him, teaching and learning have always been his calling. “It won’t be an exaggeration to acknowledge that I am truly in love with my profession as an educator.” Gaurav says. “It is always exciting to see my students proceed towards betterment; their progress in life is the definition of my success. There is nothing more rewarding than to see them become confident with each passing day. There is nothing more pleasing than to see their winning smiles on their accomplishments with each passing year. And this is exactly what keeps me motivated all the time.”

Commenting on the nature of the concept he developed, Gaurav remarks, “I am a life skills teacher; I teach courses such as Leadership and Teamwork to my undergraduate students. The pandemic made everything difficult for teachers like me. After thorough research, I complemented my Blackboard classes with a self-invented gamification model. Resultantly, my student engagement and student involvement increased by more than 300%.”

“Teaching life skills (or any skills for that matter) is demanding, compared to a completely theoretical subject,” he adds, weighing in on the approach needed to make online classes as welcoming as possible. “It requires high levels of engagement and involvement on the part of the learners. All my Blackboard sessions needed to be highly interactive because of the nature of the course. And given that my students are the Generation Z – who have less than 8 seconds of attention span and more than 12 hours per day of screen time – making them feel enthusiastic about participation was even trickier.”

Developing the ‘Star Count System’

Spelling out the strategy that he followed to achieve the results, Gaurav says, “To understand what makes online classes meaningful and fruitful both for facilitators and learners, I started my research. I explored several articles, blogs and educational websites to seek the answers and stumbled upon an interesting idea called ‘Gamification’. Subsequently, I devised a model that can be used by any online educator to make the online learning experience fun and exciting. I named this model ‘Star Count System’ (SCS).”

For this model, he set simple rules and introduced some ‘cool’ badges, student-friendly recognition techniques, and a completely transparent award system. The 4 badges – ‘Star Performer’, ‘Super Star Performer’, ‘Rock Star Performer,’ and ‘Special Mention Category’ were used to recognise and appreciate the participating students in every Blackboard class.

And the results were remarkable. “My Blackboard classes witnessed unprecedented student participation and the discussion forums were flooded with student reflections (more than 2500 this semester). The Blackboard analytics showed a 300% increase in the overall user activity, with more than 1,50,000 hits throughout,” Gaurav informs.

“My students’ consistent efforts not only showcased their keen interest and engagement but also brought them accolades at the international level,” he gushes with a pride that only teachers would have on seeing their students succeed. “One student, for instance, received praises for she was able to get a response to her questions from [New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern](#). A student team project got selected by Association Internationale des Étudiants en Sciences Économiques et

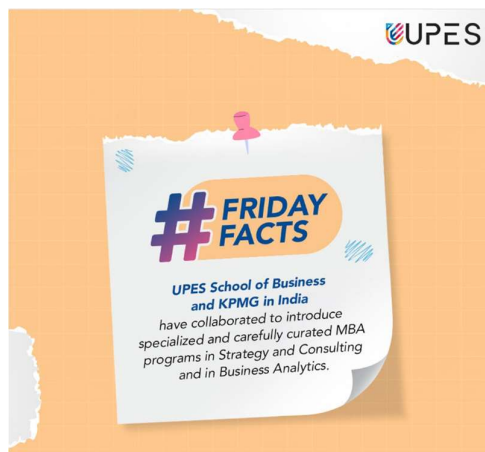
Commerciales (AIESEC), the world's largest student organisation. Another student team interviewed acclaimed environmentalist Dr. Harshwanti Bisht and Indian politician Maneka Gandhi. Many such stories are underway."

Gaurav strongly believes that teachers are changemakers and they do have the power to positively impact young minds and help build a strong nation. He says, "A teacher must also be a mentor who leaves no stone unturned in making students realize their true potential. Students who are inspired by their teachers accomplish amazing things and that motivation lasts longer than ever."

When he is teaching, three things hold utmost importance for him. "First, students should always feel curious and appreciated in the classroom (whether it's online or in-person). Course material should be designed and developed in such a way that it ignites a spark of interest in learners. Second, students should always feel respected and that they are not going to be judged under any circumstances. Even if they make mistakes, they should be encouraged for their efforts. And lastly, there should always be an element of fun. There is always room for smiles, cheer, and laughter when I'm teaching," Gaurav concludes.

Convert Students into Change-Makers

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CfvbgEyLJ8L/>



The UPES-KPMG in India collaboration for our MBA programs in Strategy & Consulting and Business Analytics aims to convert students into change-makers who can solve real-world problems.

This program offers multiple benefits to students. Some of them are:

- Real-time live consulting projects
- Mentorship support
- Networking opportunities with industry experts
- One-on-one interaction with industry mentors
- Experiential learning
- Industry-relevant capstone project

And many more...

To become a business management professional, apply now to UPES School of Business and give wings to your dreams!