

GUJARAT TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

Bootstrapping Learning Processes: A student-driven Pilot Project for Improving the Soft Skills of our Students: The **Project** is called ATELIER. (Please see the Note below.)

For 25 Colleges only: A Call to the Principals/ Directors: if you are interested in helping conduct a **pilot project for improving the soft skills of the students**, GTU can provide support and recognition to the students, who work on the project. (A student, who works as a Resource person for the project, will be designated as the **GTU Atelier Fellow** (GA Fellow)). Please use the online form to send your bid for inclusion in the pilot project on or before Monday, **15th February 2016** – by sending the following information, **online**, for every class, which you want to include in the pilot project:

Class (with year, branch in case of engg, number of students in the class)

For the class:

The student, for whom the College is sending the recommendation for appointment as an Atelier Fellow (*not more than two from a class*)

Name and Contact details including e-mail address, telephone numbers, enrolment number

A one pager from the proposed Fellow about what he/ she plans to do and how it would help improve the soft-skills of his class-fellows and the environment

Faculty Member in-charge for Atelier in the class

Contact details including e-mail address, telephone numbers

Note: The Faculty Member will mentor and manage the program. He/ She will also be responsible for assessing the status at the beginning of the program and for evaluating the impact of the program at the end of the semester and for conveying it to GTU, so that an informed decision about continuing and expanding the program can be taken.

Please send the necessary information online at <https://goo.gl/p91002> on or before Monday, **15th February 2016**.

GTU will provide the support, as mentioned in the document below, for every project, which is accepted.

GTU will inform you on Tuesday 16th February 2016 about the acceptance of your proposal so that you may know about the GTU's support to your activities.

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Activity-based TEam Learning for Innovative EngineeRs (ATELIER) Program

for

Language Proficiency and Soft Skills

- 1. Introduction:** The graduates from the Higher Education system in India are said to be unemployable since they are deficient in soft skills. The universities have been working to increase

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the content of soft skills in the syllabi and many institutions, which offer 'foundation courses' and 'finishing school' experience have been established in the larger cities.

Gujarat Technological University (GTU) has used both the conventional methods and some new pathways for working towards the goal of 'No GTU Graduate Without Good Soft-Skills'.

In every area, GTU has innovative and continuously up-dated syllabi, with a renewed stress on Communication Skills and Personality Development. It makes continuous efforts for an improved delivery of its syllabi through its ALCE¹ program and it is working to re-focus the examination process towards evaluation of understanding of concepts and learning of skills through its Confluence² program.

During the last five years, other steps, which have been taken are as follows:

1.1 THE SYLLABI: The subject of English studies or Communication Skills is a required course in every program of GTU. At the new MBA program, in 2012, a 9 credit Foundation program was introduced. GTU has signed an MoU with the Society for Creation of Opportunity through Proficiency in English (SCOPE) on 22nd December 2011. It was to encourage the Colleges for taking the help of SCOPE for improving the communication skills of students.

1.2 Since January 2012, the Contributor Personality Development Program (CPDP) has been introduced as a compulsory program in every stream, after the organization of an extensive Vivekanand Faculty Development Program (FDP). 1,020 Faculty Members participated in the Vivekanand FDPs. A third-party evaluation for CPDP has been done for GTU. An academic group at GTU has been set up to coordinate with all the Colleges and to help build up capacities so that the class-rooms can become alive and the course of CPDP creates not only awareness but it is also able to inculcate a value system among the students. A web-site for CPDP (<http://cpdp.gtu.ac.in/>) has been made operational so that the Faculty Members from all over the State may be able to upload interesting and useful material and references for the students.

1.3 A PROGRAM by 'Dewang Mehta Foundation and the Educational group of NASSCOM' (DMF): On 4th April 2014, DMF, jointly with GTU's Integrated Training and Placement (I-TAP) cell, organized a competition for English Language proficiency for the Final Year students of GTU Colleges. Approximately 200 students from 66 different Engineering colleges affiliated with GTU participated in the competition. 150 students were selected as the Finalists and a Job Fair was organized jointly by DMF and I-TAP. DMF made efforts to have the students placed in good companies. (As many as 23 students were selected by the HR Department and L&T along for further interviews by the concerned departments.)

It was found that in the group of 150 students, we had students from Colleges located in mofussil areas, in addition to the students from well-known Colleges from bigger cities.

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While all these steps have contributed to better outcomes, ATELIER is designed to initiate a program, which encourages Colleges to start developing methodologies for boot-strapping the distributed talents of some of their students to develop a program for strengthening the soft skills of all their students.

- 2. The Atelier:** It is proposed that in every department, for every class of 60 students, a student, who is highly proficient in English and who has an interest in working as the **GTU-Atelier Fellow (GA Fellow)** may be selected. Similarly a GTU-Atelier-Faculty, who would guide the Fellow and the class be appointed for the class of 60 students by the Head of Department or by the Principal/ Director of the College/ Institute/ Polytechnic. GTU will be informed about the appointment of the GA Fellow and the GA Faculty Member for a class. The Faculty Member and the Fellow will work with the class to develop activities like

Elocution Competition, One-Act plays, Role-Play, 'Book reading and critical study-exchange' sessions, seeing motivational videos/ short movies in English and discussion about it etc.

Every month an activity may be taken up and it must be so executed that every student of the class takes part in the activity. At least two such activities must be completed in every semester. As soon as a program is over, its detailed Report along with photographs should be sent to GTU. When the students have prepared for one activity, a simple function at the College must be arranged to present the work to the parents, to the city, to Faculty Members and their families and to other students of the department. Since in an active department, every class may have such an event, in a semester there may be many such events. So the organization must be made simple and must use common facilities of the Department.

All the Atelier activities will be in English language.

To encourage such programs, during this academic year, it is proposed that every GA Fellow, who completes at least two such activities during a semester, will be awarded with a prize money of Rs 1,000.00. The Faculty Members, who mentor and manage the program will get an 'appreciative token gift' from GTU. GTU may also give awards to the best of the GA Fellows and the best of the GA Faculty Members at its Annual Sankuls Day of 14th February.

THE PILOT PROJECT: During the first year, the project will be supported at 25 Colleges only. So please fill up the online form on or before Monday, **15th February 2016**.

3.0 Conclusion: Continuous activities in every department involving every student during every semester will nurture talented Fellows and it will leverage their strengths to develop soft-skills in other class-fellows. Atelier is designed to develop team-spirit and transform the environment in every institution.

Note: The support for Atelier can be made available to students in any college/ polytechnic/institute, affiliated with GTU.

¹Active Learning and Creating Excitement (ALCE) in the workshops, laboratories and class-rooms

²Confluence: *The Art & Science of Designing Question Papers*