

Workshop on Philosophy of Evaluation

Teaching in a COVID-19 world has moved almost entirely online across all levels. Professors and teachers have had to find new ways of tackling the assessment and evaluation process that is intrinsic to the pedagogic system to gauge the learning and understanding of the students. In view of this, IIT Bhilai organised a workshop on the “Philosophy of Evaluation” where faculty members were presented an opportunity to interact with eminent academicians and through timely discussions learn of new ways of adapting the evaluation system in an online mode.

Prof. Ashok Misra, NASI Distinguished Professor at IISc Bangalore, spoke on “Out of the box approaches for student evaluation with online teaching”. Prof. Misra emphasized that the best approach to teaching is student-centric and instead of faculty members coming up with innovative ways to circumvent inevitable issues of cheating, teachers must take students into confidence and figure out the best ways of handling the online mode of education. He further suggested that informed exams could be one excellent method. Assessing students based on group project submissions and research papers would also help them digest the subjects taught and promote a student-friendly teaching approach.

Prof. Vijay Gupta, Distinguished Professor, Dept. of Mechanical Engineering, Sharda University spoke on “Student Evaluations” and suggested the need for a continuous assessment in place of the traditional methods of examining students at the end of the course. He shared various relevant incidents from his own teaching experience and emphasized on the need to change evaluation methods to best meet the needs of the hour and bridge the trust deficit between teachers and students.

The workshop closed with a panel discussion between the Prof Rajat Moona, Director IIT Bhilai and senior and young faculty members of IIT Bhilai. While it was established that evaluation is a necessity to maintain the standards of the institute, the shift to an online platform puts to question what it is that faculty members are looking to evaluate. There are no doubt drawbacks in different online based approaches when evaluating objective questions, particularly since students will inevitably find means of exploiting any such system that does not come to them as a surprise. However, if assessment is not based on just the knowledge acquired, but the process of getting to that knowledge, then the freedom presented by online evaluation becomes the perfect scenario to measure the student’s understanding, effort, and application.

The event was well widely attended by faculty members eager to meet the challenges that lie ahead where distance education increasingly becomes the norm. The event coordinators Dr Raghavender Medishetty and Dr Pawan Kumar Mishra thanked all the faculty members who joined in both online and offline modes and ended the workshop with the hope of implementing the various philosophies of evaluation discussed in the days to come.

