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IIT Bhubaneswar Completes its Academics for 2020-21 with Uncompromising Standards during the Pandemic

By [skilloutlook](#) / May 19, 2021 / Comments Off on IIT Bhubaneswar Completes its Academics for 2020-21 with Uncompromising Standards during the Pandemic

At the time when the nation is grappling with the 2nd wave of Covid, it is very challenging to run the academics for our youth, the future generations without compromises in the standards. Precisely that is what has been achieved by IIT Bhubaneswar. The institute ran its academics in uncompromised standards, and completed its Spring end semester examinations of 2020-21 on 15th may 2021 for all of its students except for the 1st year BTech which will take a month and half more for due to late admission and late starting of the semester across all the IIT's.

Last year in March 2020, before lockdown was announced, the institute switched to online education without any gap due to prior planning, innovations and execution. The institute also developed a very unique and innovative online method to hold comprehensive pen and paper exams, trained its faculty and applied the same very successfully to hold the end-semester examination, in May 2020, not willing to compromise on the standards. Ever since the institute didn't have to alter its academic regulations and standards and completed the academics for 2020-21 for its students.

Prof Raja Kumar, Director, said, "due to the very tough pandemic, the theory classes for the entire 2020-21 too were conducted online, timely for all the students. For science and engineering students hands-on laboratory training is important and carrying on the same during the pandemic posed a serious problem. The Lab courses were organized for students with both (i) physical presence with hands on experience and (ii) online by live streaming or pre-recorded video of demonstration of experiments performed on the lab table by the faculty members. In the later method students are provided with the live video streaming of the demonstration of an experiment during the lab class as per the time table. All the students have been imparted online training as per (ii). All students except for the freshers were brought to the campus and they had their full lab sessions with physical presence as stated at (i) in the campus during Feb – April 2021 very successfully. Due to the onset of the 2nd wave of the pandemic in a severe form, the lab practice with physical presence of the freshers has been postponed and it will be completed as soon as it is conducive. Even the extra academic activity (EAA) including Yoga classes and practice of the first year BTech students could be done online in a very innovative and unique way during the pandemic. Project and research seminars, evaluations, of UG, PG and PhD programmes have been conducted over online platforms. "

Prof Rajakumar added by saying "Keeping good health and protection from the pandemic is more important than running the academics in standards. IIT Bhubaneswar campus has been kept Covid-free except for 5 cases in September 2020 and up to 7 cases in April 2021 and 5

cases in May 2021, through a very strict and spirited implementation of the Covid protocols, awareness campaigns and participation of the whole fraternity in the same. These standards of protection could be achieved, even as the essential services of the campus including offices like that of the Director were never closed during the pandemic. Though the situation in Odisha has been better, nearly 90% of our students come from all places in the country, up to 2000 migrant workers stayed in the campus, and the challenges have been like anywhere else”.

“We could not have successfully and timely implemented our plans with perfection, but for the whole hearted support and participation from deans, heads, registrar, all of our faculty, staff and students. We are also aware of our role, responsibility, aspirations of the nation, being a premier institution”, said the director.

The institute carried out and successfully developed several products for combating Covid, conducted a study on effectiveness of mask for Covid prevention, and contributed research on drug repurposing and drug inhibitors. The readers may be aware of this that the institute is also honoured with the “University of the Year” award by FICCI recently for its performance during the pandemic.

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