

Fostering Undergraduate Research in University Spaces

An Online Lecture Series

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19 Mar 2022, 5-7 pm IST

Prof. L. S. Shashidhara, Professor of Biology

Ashoka University & IISER Pune

Why and how of undergraduate research vis-a-vis NEP 2022

23 Mar 2022, 5-7 pm IST

Prof. Robert B. Gibbs, Professor of Philosophy
and of Religion

University of Toronto

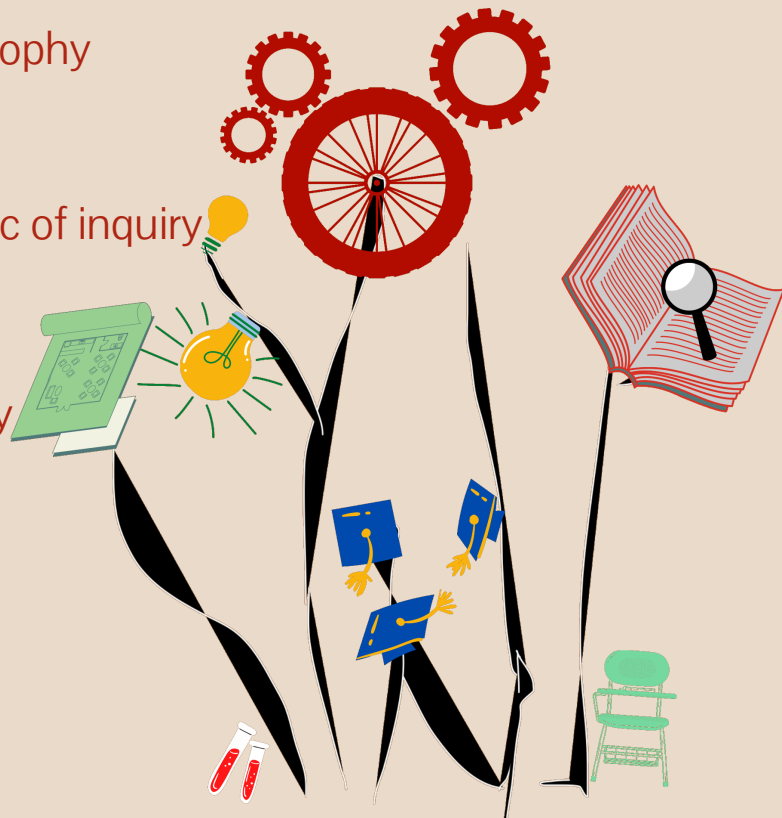
Research for our future: Learning the logic of inquiry

26 Mar 2022, 5-7 pm IST

Prof. Rukmini Sen, Professor of Sociology

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi

Research as Reflexivity: Confronting
Self and Communities





19 Mar 2022 | Sat | 5-7 pm IST Why and how of undergraduate research vis-à-vis NEP 2020

Traditionally, while school education was meant to be learning languages and developing mathematical and social awareness and skills, higher education was primarily to learn the processes by which a body of knowledge is deconstructed, tested, validated and reconstructed. This “research” activity is critical for advancing our knowledge of both natural and human worlds. It helps us develop critical thinking and analytical abilities, key life-saving skills in a fast-changing and globally connected world. The talk explores simple, inexpensive, but effective ways of doing research at the undergraduate level.

Prof. L. S. Shashidhara is a Professor and Dean (Research) at Ashoka University, Professor of Biology at IISER, President of the International Union of Biological Sciences, and lead member of Pune and Delhi Knowledge Clusters. He has facilitated the training of more than 10,000 school and undergraduate teachers in adopting inquiry-based teaching methods. He is currently steering an international project on Climate Change Education.

23 Mar 2022 | Wed | 5-7 pm IST Research for our future: Learning the logic of inquiry

Drawing on my experience as inaugural director of the Jackman Humanities Institute at the University of Toronto, I propose that every undergraduate student at a research university should be learning the logic of inquiry. I make the case by exploring the history of universities, and looking at how we know maps onto the time of knowing. While critical reasoning unsettles received knowledge, allowing the present of the knower authority over knowledge; research explores what is not-yet known, and opens paths to future knowledge. When students learn how to research they take their place in a society not primarily understood as a knowledge economy, but as a society of questions. This kind of study teaches a responsibility to attend to live questions, questions that matter to someone. This lecture offers philosophical reflection on learning how to research that can help us understand the specific benefits for students and for society of different kinds of programs for undergraduate research. More, it can show us why we should develop and refine programs as a central element in university education.



Prof. Robert B. Gibbs is a Professor of Philosophy and Religion at the University of Toronto, and has recently completed a 10-year term as Inaugural Director of the Jackman Humanities Institute. Presently, he is working on *The University in Question: Ideas in Dialogue*, an inquiry into what a research university is for and an exploration of different university models through their students’ research capacities. He has previously worked on ethics in relation to the modern Jewish philosophical tradition, and has brought a comparative and historical focus to law and ethics.



26 Mar 2022 | Sat | 5-7 pm IST Research as Reflexivity: Confronting Self and Communities

Research as a process of enquiry unfolds creative possibilities. While the usual understanding is that the enquiry is always ‘outside’, the field is out there waiting to be discovered; it is important to emphasize that the process of research transforms and gets us connected to our self (selves). Reflexivity is an important methodological approach in social sciences and this lecture will engage in discussing certain forms of undergraduate research activities enabling the practice of being reflexive about one’s social identities. Through a discussion of courses transacted at the undergraduate Sociology programme of a public university in Delhi, where students from multiple socio-economic-ethnic backgrounds study, this lecture will engage with questions of identity, culture, kinship, community all of which are touched, explored, assessed, re-imagined.

The need for research culture, temperament and analytical writing abilities from the undergraduate levels as proposed in the National Education Policy 2020 is a step towards institutionalizing some of the practices mentioned above. The significance of research as a pedagogic practice, as an immersive and reflexive exercise needs to be structurally embedded in the undergraduate teaching learning framework. Higher education is a space of creating new and sustained knowledge for the future and especially in plural societies like India, imparting critical research-ing skills from the undergraduate stages will only develop a firmer and more representative understanding of our social life.

Prof. Rukmini Sen is Professor of Sociology, School of Liberal Studies, and Director, Outreach and Extension Division and Centre for Publishing at Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi. Her areas of teaching and research interests are sociology of law, gender justice, kinship and family, cities and cultures. She is the recipient of the 2020 WISCOMP SAAHAS awards 2020 recognising her continuous engagements with curricula using an intersectional lens. She was co-Investigator on an international research collaboration ‘Teaching Feminisms Transforming Lives’ with University of Edinburgh funded by UGC-UKIERI. She is a member of the Core Group on Women, National Human Rights Commission since 2019.

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19 Mar 2022, Saturday	
5:00 p.m. - 5:05 p.m. IST	Welcome remarks
5:05 p.m. - 5:15 p.m. IST	Opening remarks Prof. B. Hariharan, Vice President, Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute
5:15 p.m. - 5:25 p.m. IST	Opening remarks Dr. Anita Patankar, Director, Symbiosis School for Liberal Arts
5:25 p.m. - 6:25 p.m. IST	Lecture: Prof. L. S. Shashidhara, Professor of Biology, Ashoka University & IISER Pune, 'Why and how of undergraduate research vis-a-vis NEP 2022'
6:25 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. IST	Discussion
23 Mar 2022, Wednesday	
5:00 p.m. - 5:05 p.m. IST	Welcome remarks
5:05 p.m. - 5:50 p.m. IST	Lecture: Prof. Robert B. Gibbs, Professor of Philosophy and of Religion, University of Toronto, 'Research for our future: Learning the logic of inquiry'
5:50 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. IST	Discussion
26 Mar 2022, Saturday	
5:00 p.m. - 5:05 p.m. IST	Welcome remarks
5:05 p.m. - 5:50 p.m. IST	Lecture: Prof. Rukmini Sen, Professor of Sociology, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi, 'Research as Reflexivity: Confronting Self and Communities'
5:50 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. IST	Discussion