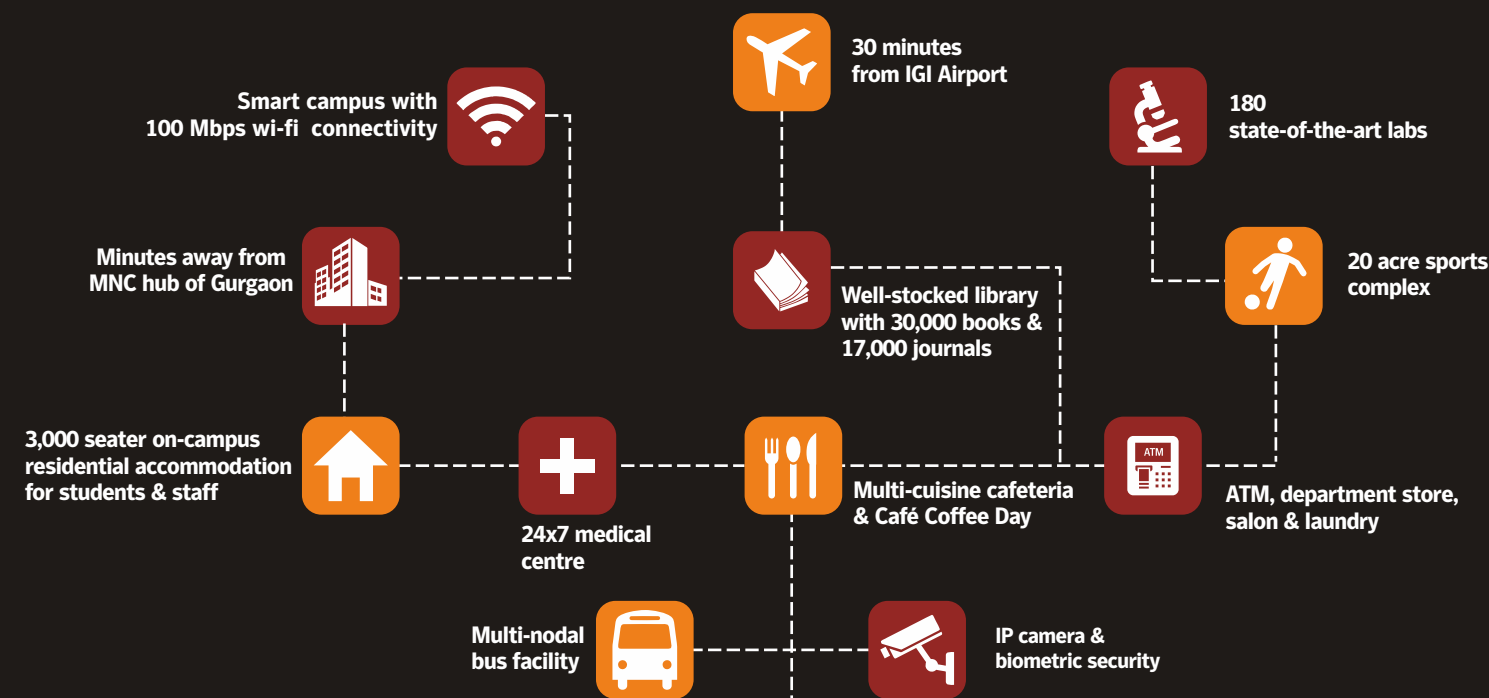


## 110 ACRE NEXT-GEN CAMPUS FOR THE GEN-NEXT



"EDUCATION IS NOT THE LEARNING OF FACTS, BUT THE TRAINING OF THE MIND TO THINK"

### AMITY SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

B Block, Ground Floor, Amity Education Valley, Manesar Amity University Gurgaon, Haryana, India  
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# ASLA NEWSLETTER

VOLUME -1

MAY 2016

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

• Objectives	2
• Director's Message	3
• Interview	4
• Academic Innovations	5
• Time to Contemplate	6
• Perspectives	7
• Achievements	8
• Intellectual Forum	8
• Feature Articles	10
• Students' Page	11
• ASLA Events	12
• Feature News	13
• Pedagogic Innovations	14
• Faculty at a Glance	15



AMITY SCHOOL  
OF LIBERAL ARTS





## OBJECTIVES

Disseminating and imbibing the importance of Liberal Arts to see proper integration of knowledge with intellect.

Creating an intellectual forum to see workable solutions of distinct paradoxical and cross-cutting issues of Liberal Arts.

Helping ASLA students compete with their global counterparts academically and excel to a new horizon of success.

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



### Dear Amitians

Welcome to ASLA (Amity School of Liberal Arts) at Amity University, Gurgaon, India. Since its inception in 2012, ASLA has undergone rapid academic growth with its vision to be *at par* with institutes of international stature and join the league of world class Centre of Excellence in Liberal Arts.

Apart from existing world-class degrees like BA (History), BA (Political Science), BA (English), MA (English), Ph.D (English) along with two value-added courses: Communication Skills and Physical Education, the School, as part of its futuristic venture, is all set to launch three more Master Programmes in Linguistics, Philosophy, and Sociology from the next academic session July 2016. With about two dozens of staff, seven committees, and three clubs, the School is bustling with the energy of 210 students who are involved in various academic and extra-curricular activities.

I am pleased to share this first biannual ASLA Newsletter (Volume 1, May 2016) with you. The Newsletter covers a wide spectrum of insightful segments from different innovative perspectives like intellectual forum, perspectives, pedagogic innovation, interview, time to contemplate, and feature articles, and feature news. In the pursuit of promoting research, ASLA has also started publishing a quarterly international journal entitled International Journal of Innovations in TESOL and Applied Linguistics which can be accessed at the URL: [www.ijital.org](http://www.ijital.org).

To stay competitive in global scenario and for holistic development of its students, ASLA is not only in the process of collaborating with several Indian and overseas universities; but more importantly, it has recently established its own placement cell and in-house training programmes to ensure that our students become ideal candidates for local, national, and international workforce. To this end, all the faculty members of ASLA are expected not only to create and strengthen the intellectual ambience of openness to ideas and plurality of perspectives but also to guide and directly speak to the students at the right moment to avoid a plethora of problems and bring them back to the virtuous cycle of positive thinking. There is also a need to focus on infrastructural development such as enriching library collection, ideal size well-equipped classrooms, language lab, subscriptions of mainstream journals and periodicals, audio-visual teaching aids, computers, campus accommodation for the faculty, etc.

As the director of ASLA, it is a privilege for me to work with distinguished faculty in the diversified areas of Humanities and Social Sciences. We collectively and creatively address issues and seek innovative approaches to meeting the academic and non-academic challenges of ASLA and the ASLAites. Finally, I urge upon all the students to integrate their intelligence and intellect with morality and make a mark in their areas of specializations and prove themselves as good human beings and worthy global citizens.

With best wishes,

*Sanjay Kr. Jha*

Director, Amity School of Liberal Arts  
Amity University, Gurgaon, Haryana, India



## INTERVIEW



**Prof. P.B. Sharma**  
Vice Chancellor, AUG

*Prof. Pritam B. Sharma, the Vice Chancellor of Amity University, Gurgaon was interviewed by Prof. S. K. Jha on a wide range of topics concerning Liberal Arts, formal education, and moral education in current scenario.*



SK Jha

**SKJ:** In the pursuit of today's self-centric academic excellence, human race is degrading unprecedentedly and education is becoming paradoxical as it proves boon as well as bane for us. Kindly justify the significance of academic excellence vis-à-vis academic equivalence under the purview of human excellence.

**VC:** The aim of our education is not merely to create an army of degree holders but more importantly to prepare a cadre of highly enlightened and capable humans who could integrate capabilities with human values of peace, harmony, respect for life, and care for Mother Nature. Our academic tripod of knowledge (*gyan*), behavior (*aacharan*) and character (*charitra*) ought to inspire the educated to serve the society with utmost devotion and unconditional commitment so that academic excellence in true sense could reflect human excellence as human excellence finds its highest of expression both in respect of capabilities of a human to rise to the level of divinity and proclaim “*aham brahmasmi*” (I am the eternal).

**SKJ:** It is ironic to see in both local and global scenario that an average student today prefers to go for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths) courses; whereas, Liberal Arts is being deemphasized. In this scenario, how can we bring liberal arts at par with STEM courses?

**VC:** Nowadays, the attraction towards STEM courses is more predominantly visible and STEM courses have become a natural choice for the pursuit of education as these create trajectories that may take an individual to global eminence. However, the attraction for STEM does not necessarily undermine the importance of Liberal Arts. Liberal Arts fosters the dynamics of the society, beauty of nature, cosmic rhythm and vibration. More importantly, it enables the society to comprehend Arts, Architecture, Human Behavior and Human Psychology and attracts the inspired young minds to nurture their talent to scale new frontiers of knowledge. There are many examples of the people of STEM rising to glory in Arts and Humanities, Literature and Film Making. The finest example of such individuals could be seen in respect of Gur Charan Das, the author of “The Price of Being Good” and Chetan Bhagat of our own times. Lately, I have begun to think that the best way to go about strengthening the cause of Liberal Arts education and research would be to focus on STEM i.e. affectively integrating the dimension of Liberal

Arts and Humanities into STEM so that the scope of STEM could be enhanced to Liberal Arts / Humanities to make human excellence achievable goal for our education endeavor.

**SKJ:** Given the Innovation Day at hand, would you like to give any message to the Liberal Arts students and faculty in terms of how could they conceptualize and actualize innovation in Liberal Arts?

**VC:** My message to the faculty and students of Liberal Arts is to nurture the culture of innovation and make innovation a habit as there is abundance of potential to innovate and excel in Liberal Arts and Humanities. This is also visibly happening in areas like Fashion Designing, Art and Architecture and in human expressions and appreciation of Art and Literature. However, a lot can be done given the easy access to the power of science and might of technology to advance the frontiers of Liberal Arts and Languages.

**SKJ:** Given the compromised moral values and debacle of intellect, should we not contemplate over introducing moral education as a part of our academic curricula.

**VC:** Yes, we need to integrate moral education in our mainstream education to provide people sound moral and ethical foundation who along with capabilities shall possess with pride the practice of human values and serve the society and nation with commitment and dedication.

**SKJ:** Upon your arrival from USA two weeks ago, you shared with us an array of insightful ideas and overseas experience. Could you please reflect on how the notion of empathy can be inculcated in realistic manner for the positive advancement of our school (ASLA)?

**VC:** Empathy (aatmiyata) ensures emotional and spiritual concern between people at all levels of hierarchy in an organization. This inspires people to give their best to the growth and development of the organization. The only danger is that if empathy is practiced without care and concern for human values of compassion and humility, it may lead to self centered interest of a limited group of people. So empathy is a powerful means to inspire people to give their best in the service of mankind, but should always be associated with human values. Swadharma (religious jingoism) is to be practiced for saving the self (the Atman) and the society at large in the interest of the humanity.

## ACADEMIC INNOVATION IN LIBERAL ARTS



Prof. Padmakali Banerjee  
Pro Vice Chancellor, AUG

Achieving academic excellence expresses the core philosophy at Amity University Haryana and this is the driving force behind rigorous academic programmes and high quality teaching which instill a spirit of learning amongst students.

Prof. Padmakali Banerjee  
Pro Vice Chancellor, AUG

We believe in learning that takes students beyond the classroom and into the real world where they must use instinct, negotiating skills, collaboration and experiential learning with innovation.

In line with the core philosophy, Amity School of Liberal Arts is an incubator of intellectual agility where students can pursue their individual passion, live and learn in a vibrant community. The value of liberal arts education rests on its long and unique tradition and also the innovative offerings to the world where learning to navigate the new is very important.

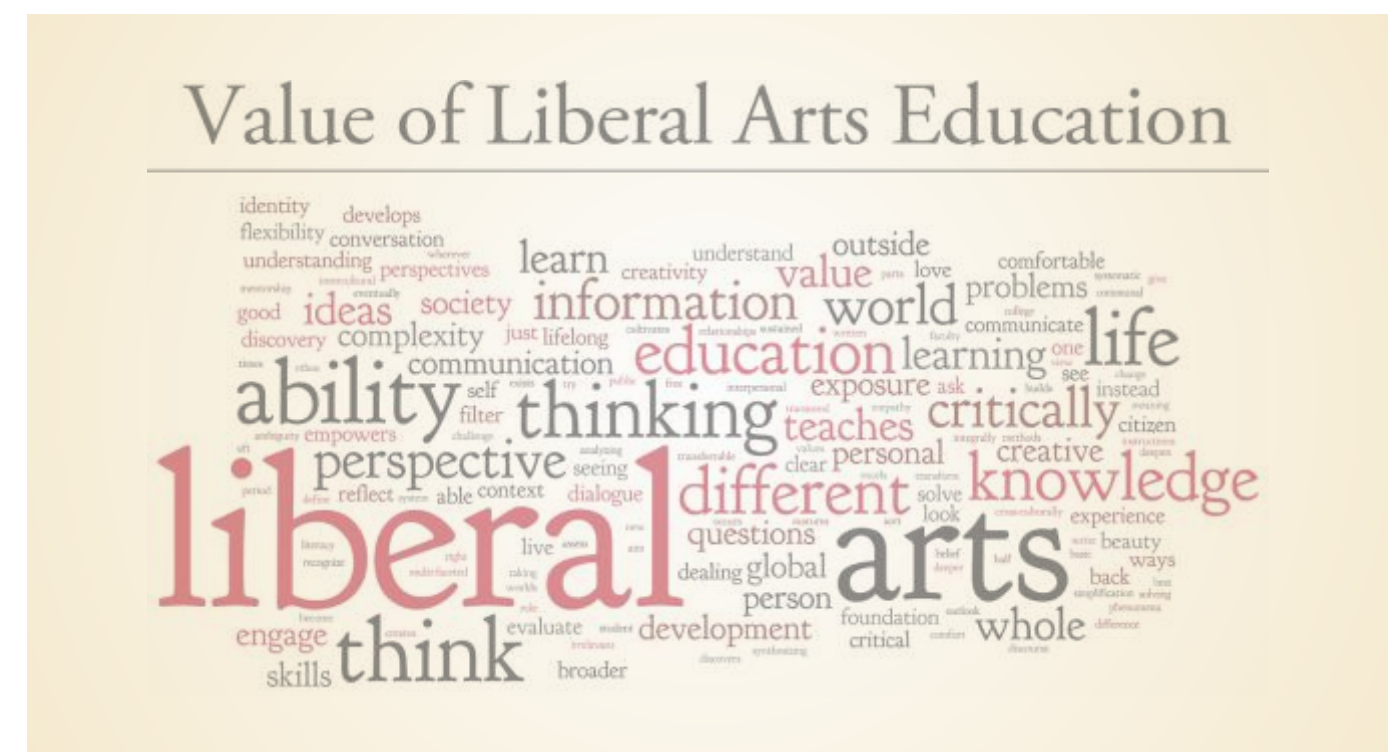
The flexible credit system at the university focuses on leveraging the talent and innovative capabilities of the budding professionals to meet the needs of the contemporary dynamic business environment thus making the student more industry ready.

It takes into consideration individual educational aspirations coherent with specific interests, prior experience and future aims and allows students to opt for courses cutting across disciplines. This enables the students to acquire a more holistic perspective and thus have better understanding of issues.



Liberal Arts are significant to success in every economic sector as they provide the foundation for learning critical thinking, teamwork, sensitivity to culture and ability to innovate. Focusing the imperative contribution of Liberal Arts in civil services, students of ALSA have exposure to public policies and administration to gain skills that make them industry ready. Liberal Arts students are enthusiastic to engage in 'problem centered, real world based, digitally informed learning' to be global citizens. Diversified and experienced faculty at ALSA facilitates the development by developing a deeper connection between theory and practice.

At ASLA, we continue to recreate the structure and culture of education to complement the forms of social and participatory learning and knowledge creation to make our students admirable nationals globally and good human beings.





## TIME TO CONTEMPLATE

I need to go back at least by fifty years to get nostalgic about my childhood in Shimla. It was full of fun. The studies were, nonetheless, a part of it. There were picnics, visits to meet friends and relatives, melas, exhibitions playing with snowballs, making the snowman and going down the roads covered with thick snow, sledging! Every night my brothers and I used to watch stars from every room of our house with excitement. We used to wonder how the thick mist in the hills covered the clear view after heavy downpour. It would suddenly get thinner where it was thicker and gradually become thicker in another area of the town. Watching street lights through trees and the lights in the houses gave us happiness. We never felt the pressure to perform at home, learning was participatory. We learnt spellings and translation by talking to each other. Our parents never made us feel that we needed to do better. They never compared us with those children who were toppers.



Attitude of parents has changed so much over the years. They start pressurizing children to do well in studies, the moment they are admitted to school. Everything is related to studies 'finish your homework, you will get an ice-cream', 'if you do well in exam, you will get a prize'. These are frequent promises of most parents. Children begin to feel a lot of pressure at home and in school. Some manage to cope, others try to cope while many give up!

I have often watched children in the evening, who get scared playing beyond the permitted time. Rigidity of mindset and attitudes of parents ensure children that they should study more and keep doing well. They keep assuring them that they check them and are rather imposing to ensure a secure future for them. The teachers in schools never forget to tell children that they need to keep working hard to ensure that they do well. Both parents and teachers are good and understanding only to those children who are good in studies. The ones who are unable to do well are a subject of gossip and ridicule of parents, teachers, relatives and peers!

- Kiran Devendra  
Professor (History)

## Where has their Childhood Disappeared !



I was quite sad last week (November 29, 2015) to see an innovative effort of a child, of school going age making an effort to relive the joys of his lost childhood while trying to pass it on to other children in a posh colony who were losing theirs. He had lost his childhood due to poverty, but was happy as he innovated a beautiful way of selling attractive balloons. He was playing a flute outside every house in the hope of seeing happy children running to buy his balloons with their parents. Completing my morning walk, I noticed that no one came out to buy a balloon or even listen to the melodious flute. The ears of the children and their parents had deafened, parents were busy creating a world of unrealistic expectations from their children. The children were struggling to live in an imposed world of dreams, of course, not their own! Some would succeed, the other would keep struggling to overcome the trauma and guilt of not making it!



It is necessary for parents to let their children dream and help them in realising those dreams. These children can become painters, bird watchers, mountaineers, marine engineers, reformers, philosophers, understanding teachers and contribute meaningfully to the development of society!

## PERSPECTIVES

**L.T. Gen. V.K. Sharma, VC, AUMP**

Innovations in Humanities and Social Sciences essentially require creativity. Teachers should first develop the very essential qualities of high EQ, tolerance to ambiguity, calmness of mind, tolerance of irrational behavior, and patience. In addition, we need to create an environment conducive to innovate and give the innovators exposure to museums, literature, etc.

**Prof. S.P. Singh, VC- AUC**

The case study method, storytelling, bright students taking the session, on the spot evaluation of teachers by students, checking learning on theories in the class, etc. are some of the ideas. In addition, inclusion of films of social relevance, dramatics, and role play are also important. Regular display of students' work, paintings, etc. may also be utilized as part of innovation.

**Prof. Archana Shukla, Director, AIBAS, AUG**

Innovation in Social Sciences refers to novel application of some existing idea or of a group of ideas to bring about some desirable changes in a social system. Because the means (social processes) and also the goal (abolition of dowry, equality, safety, drug free communities) of such innovations are social in nature, the same could be called social innovations. Social innovations are thus a mechanism of achieving systemic changes in society. The famous Hindi poet Dushyant Kumar's lines '*Sirf hangama khada karna mera maqsad nahi, Saari koshish hai ki ye soorat badalni chahiye*' voice a desire for disruptive social innovation. Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha, Civil Disobedience, Dandi March, etc. were disruptive 'aandolan'. The 'Jasmine Revolution' – in the Arab world – is a recent example of disruptive innovation.



## Innovations in Liberal Arts

Innovations in Social Sciences are a different ball game altogether as the actors, raw materials and the objects of such innovations are dynamic, complex, subtle and sometimes fleeting and difficult-to-observe tendencies of living, interacting and evolving human beings. Science and Technology do not clash with Humanities and Social Sciences; rather, they reinforce each other.

While the former is incomplete without having a vital social input, the latter can become more progressive and effective with technological support.

**Prof. (Dr.) A.K. Srivastava, Director, ASTIF**

Innovations are always focused in the perspective of societal interface to harness impact of change for creating positive interaction and ecofriendly co-existence. In this context to make it a viable change there is a need for reforming teaching and learning environment in the area of Humanities and Social Science. This will have geographical variations and can be achieved by adopting the principle of survival for the fittest with greater response.

**Dr. Anil Kumar, Director, ASET AUUP**

Innovation in the teaching learning environment of Humanities and Social Science could be practiced through case studies enacting street plays, social outreach activities and community micro- projects.

**Prof. S. M. P. Khurana, AUG**

Innovation is not only for Science and Technology. In fact, Innovations are occurring in every field and every activity at all times but they become recognized only if they are worthy of commercialization or industrialization. In social and related sciences also we feel that innovations need to be effective on a large scale, whether in legal matters, sociopolitical aspects, public administration, etc. Much has to be done for improving life, education, healthcare, etc. and by bringing harmony in the country & with the neighbouring countries.

**Prof. J. Mehta, ASCO, AUG**

There is an urgent need to develop an interpretative mind to take cognizance of life situation and Humanities seems to be the only tool to transform one's ideas from within, to help develop capacities to transform imagination, reasoning and thought process itself. In addition, we need to bring oneness in higher education especially between liberal arts and pure science. With introduction of flexi-credit scheme, journalism and mass communication is one of the preferred open electives for the students of ASET, ASLA, and other schools.



## ACHIEVEMENTS

- ASLA released its first journal entitled International Journal of The webpage can be accessed at [www.ijital.org](http://www.ijital.org). The journal has already gained immense popularity among prominent researchers worldwide.
- Based on its research report, ASLA has produced 21 research papers in peer reviewed journals and five proceeding papers.
- ASLA released its first biannual Newsletter on the 1st of January, 2016. The Newsletter is aimed to spread awareness about liberal arts education globally.



Journal



Newsletter

- ASLA has made collaboration with three premier institutions of India as its research partners. They are Central University of Hyderabad, Gautam Buddha University, Noida, and Central University of Kerala in terms of joint research projects, exchange programmes, and immersion programmes for students.

- ASLA has collaborated with seven foreign universities as its research partners and exchange programmes. They are University of Central Lancashire (UK), State University of Moscow (Russia), Aden University (Yemen), Dilla University (Ethiopia), University of Ajdabiya (Libya), Sultan Qaboos University (Oman), and Columbia University, New York, USA.
- ASLA has initiated two research projects to identify and rectify the impediments in English language learning of the first year students from vernacular background.
- ASLA organized two innovative talks on sign language and world literature by Prof. Ulrike. Zeshan (University of Central Lancashire, Preston, UK) and Prof. Yuyutsu R. D.Sharma (Columbia University, New York, USA) respectively.
- As part of its annual events, ASLA successfully held its two popular events namely Poetica and The Great Debate during AMIFEST.
- ASLA got its first departmental library on Humanities and Education with seven thousand books, 25 refereed journals, 700 e-journals, and more than two hundred reference books to meet students' requirements of quick reference and research orientation.
- Two books: An Innovative Approach to Comprehension and Composition" and "Nirad C Chaudhuri: His Mind and Art" were published by Dr. Archana Singh and Dr. Hemant Kumar Jha respectively.
- In pursuit of its academic excellence, the establishment of ASLA's Centre of Creativity and release of Anthology of Poems are underway.

## INTELLECTUAL FORUM

**Prof. (Dr.) Jai Paul Dudeja, Director (AILTO), AUG, India**

In the age of rapidly changing knowledge content and availability of online courses, brick-and-mortar universities will need a transformation to meet this challenge and retain their relevance in future. Universities of tomorrow will have to adopt a judicious mixture of web-based learning in conjunction with the class-room based teaching and learning approaches: an optimum model of blended learning. The lines between specific disciplines of subjects will be de-blurred in future and the interdisciplinary studies will be in great demand. Universities will have to shift their focus from the teaching-only-driven to research and innovation-driven modes. Entrepreneurial education will be an important aspect of the future universities.



**Prof. (Dr.) Francis Arackal, (ASCO), AUG, India**

An ideal university is one which promotes value-based education. This can happen only when education is imparted for education's sake. Skill imparting/learning leading to a job is secondary. Education for education's sake goes through the following steps: information-formation-transformation. Every university imparts information but an ideal university would see to it that this information results in the formation of the students (parents put their children into the hands of the university to be formed for life - character building), which will in turn transform the person of the student for the betterment of the mankind.



**Prof. Burra V L S Prasad, (AIB), AUG, India**

An Ideal University should strive to uphold its Intellectual Health through a balance of Freedom and Discipline. Its health is defined and dictated by the health, happiness and contentment of its stake holders namely: Management, Staff and Faculty, and Students and Parents. Striking a balance of this TRIPOD is challenge for an ideal University which automatically and spontaneously results in an Ideal Model University for which there is no extra effort needed. An Ideal University shall be established when it can gain the trust and faith of the three stakeholders. This is only possible by following “मानो िह महताम् धनम्”- “Character is the greatest Wealth”. Character should be nurtured through transparency, hard work, patience, passion, perseverance, sincerity, and principles of selfless service. If a university commits itself to above simple principles, it shall become a right model of an Ideal University. Lastly: “Strive to win the inner 'self', winning the world follows” – Everything else falls in line and progresses toward Ideal Society.



**Prof. Archana Shukla, Director (AIBAS), AUG, India**

Discussing the 'right model of an ideal University' seems impossible and futile because (1) it has two very lofty, value laden words, (2) the constructs of 'right' and 'ideal' vary with time/culture and (3) if we knew the recipe, we would have already created one. Sharing the views of David Staley, Universities need to upgrade themselves by marrying technology with face-to-face instructions, by emphasizing innovation/creativity/generativity, and by making students do double majors especially combining science with art and humanities so that they think differently and approach assignments more creatively. We also need to create a culture of 'Lifelong Learning' to encourage pass outs to return to their alma mater periodically for relevant courses on skills training, executive coaching, etc. benefitting not only themselves but also the young junior students by way of being their role models and through enlightened interactions.



**Prof. Kiran Devendra, Prof. & Head, Amity Institute of Higher Education, AUG,**

Do declarations like 'research driven' and 'innovation driven' lead a University to achieve these? Universities must refrain from such announcements. All the TV channels have claimed to be 'breaking news'! Every breaking news was 'another channel's 'breaking news'! The repetitiousness became a culture because the channels were racing against time and one other. We actually need to have a University which will create space for experience sharing, both inside and outside the campus. A University needs to have a designated fund for participation in conferences as sending and presenting papers for national and international conferences often become a challenge. Moreover, we need to allocate substantial 'welfare fund' for students and faculty to reach out to everyone who faces financial crisis, illness or any other difficulty.





## FEATURE ARTICLES

## The Crisis of Human Values

J. K. Mehta & Francis Arackal (ASCO, AUG, India)

There is a value crisis in Indian society be it economic, educational, industrial, scientific and social. The dream of our freedom fighters for a prosperous and just society is independent India remains a mirage. Anguish and disillusionment among intellectuals over the state of affairs in our society find expression in literature, art, academic seminars, public discussions, and in private conversations. Many in society are aggressively striving towards personal success in terms of acquisition of money, wealth, power, and prestige. Individuals are facing a crisis in a society which is losing its values. Envy, hate, fear are jeopardizing health of our younger generation with reduced coping skills and bring on fatigue and diseases.

Today good life is equated with limited enjoyment. Guiding slogan of the present consumerist culture is "higher the quality of consumption, better the quality of life." Globalization and neoliberal economic policies seem responsible for over consumerism. Lack of sensible ideology

is common. Selfish individualism bordering on narcissism is becoming more acceptable and respectable in our society.

There is a definite need to ensure development of citizens who care. The feeling that 'it is my society' can only generate a sense of responsibility for working towards removal of social inequalities prevalent in our society. Indian Constitution promises the citizens justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity. We need to raise and reflect on issues of societal concerns.

The main aim of education is to form the character of the students and thereby to make them good human beings and become contributing citizens. The positive energy, thus needed comes from moral values, a combination of truth, ethical behaviour, the right action, peace, love and non violence.



## Understanding Liberal Art

Sanjay K. Jha (Amity School of Liberal Arts, AUG, India)

The term Liberal Arts, though popular in American and Australian academia, has recently been introduced interchangeably for the faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in India too. Precisely speaking, liberal arts encompasses subjects like History, Literature, Languages , Linguistics, Philosophy, Political Science, Performing Arts, Physical Education, Psychology, Religious Studies (Theology), Sociology, Fine Arts, Music and Geography.

In today's competitive world, having merely occupational or professional skill is not enough; our students should also learn how to think and how to live. And, such a learning is possible only through liberal arts. Unlike narrowly defined degrees in which students master a specific area of knowledge like business, computer language, engineering, etc., liberal arts education places more value on rationality, reasoning, critical thinking, and communicating ideas. Liberal Arts education equips students with qualities like higher order critical thinking, better communication skills, greater flexibility, appreciation of diversity, more adaptability, human values, ethical values, and problem solving abilities. The lack of these qualities in the graduates of practical education (that teaches only how to do a specific



task) has resulted into steep decline or closure of several industries and leaving highly skilled graduates out of work. Liberal arts graduates are often found suitable to cope up with rigors and pressure at workplace.

To sum up, it is apt to quote the most popular Software icon Steve Jobs's stance on Liberal Arts, "... we need to revolutionize education to encourage creativity and by not teaching our children liberal arts we will hinder their capacity to be creative and innovative."

Taking cue from the quote of Steve Jobs, it is evident that only liberal arts can help us develop both sides of our brain.

## STUDENTS' PAGE

## FREEZE

Freeze the Breeze and Feel it.  
Should I stop and be amused at the  
small acts of Kindness,  
Or move in pride for leading an  
action-packed life.  
Should I bother to incline and empathise,  
Or repent for paying no heed at the moment.  
Should the fumes of my rage not  
effect people,  
And be creative to connect with my conscience.  
Should I not go hand in hand with Appreciation  
and Criticism.  
Should I have a million dollars or  
Feel like Million dollars.  
Shouldn't it always be the Feeling of the  
Moment to be cherished.  
Just like Freezing the Breeze and  
Feeling all the flecks of oneself.

**Shivani Yadav**  
BA (English)



**Chirag Hathwalia**  
MA (English)

## THE ARTIST

He walks through the planet  
 Changing the world  
 The steps unknown and known  
 Breathing life in the faceless girl  
 Darkness he walks into –  
 Universes he leaves behind  
 The Mother of life and culture  
 White and Black, Balanced side by side  
 A Creator, A Preserver, A Destroyer,  
 Of Nature, War, Peace and Wonder  
 He traverses, Making the path along  
 The Law of Physics and of People,  
 Right and Wrong the Sound, the Sight, the Smell,  
 the Taste, the Touch – and tale of his mind  
 The power of his mind, the aim of his hand  
 He breathes life – Content – and trudges on into  
 the darkness  
 Smiling – he creates – the possible  
 Worlds as real as him, but not as tangible  
 Drunk with Power – He is Yet but an Artist  
 His mind journeys, It's return by many Awaits  
 Blessed – I – have the power to create

## Anonymous



**Ramnika Jain**  
BA (English)



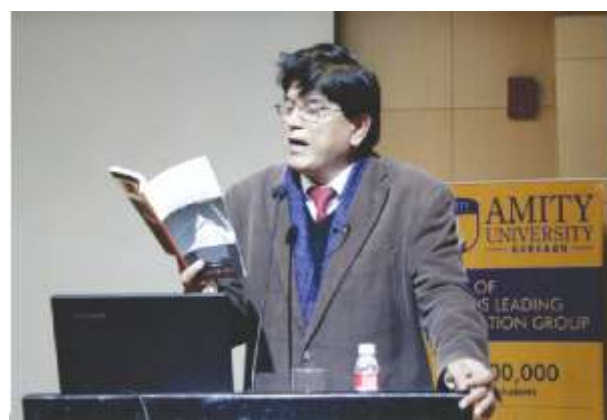
## ASLA EVENTS

### Events

- ASLA organized its first seminar of 2016 on the significance of sign language studies in Indian academia. The talk was delivered by Prof. Zeshan. Ulrike Zeshan is Professor of Sign Language Linguistics and Director of the International Institute for Sign Languages and Deaf Studies (iSLanDS) at the University of Central Lancashire in Preston, UK.



- ASLA organized its second Distinguished Talk of 2016 on world literature by Prof. Yuyutsu R. D. Sharma, Columbia University, USA. The theme of the talk was "Creative Writing with reference to Poetry". "Prof. Yuyutsu received a thunderous applause from the audience during his poetry recitation"



As part of AMIFEST-2016, ASLA organized two cerebral competitions for the entire Amity community namely **POETICA** and **Great Debate** in the month of February, 2016.

ASLA celebrated International Women's Day on the 8th of March 2016 and created a collage of important Indian women's contributions to the growth and development of Indian society.



### Future Plans

- Inspired by the success of its first online journal, ASLA is all set to launch two more journals by the end of December, 2015. They are *South Asian Journal of Language and Literature* and *Amity's International Journal of Liberal Arts*.
- ASLA organizes a workshop on communication skills (February 22 to 26, 2016) prepared by ICT, Chandigarh to groom AUG faculty, non-teaching staff, and students from three intertwined perspectives: language, body language, and personality traits.



- ASLA commemorates the birth and death anniversary of William Shakespeare on the 23rd of April. Historians believe that Shakespeare was born on this day in 1564 and the same day he died in 1616.

## FEATURE NEWS

### There is Value in Liberal Arts Education, Employers Say

Mark I. McNutt

With significant attention being paid to the utility of an education within STEM fields (science, technology, engineering and math), liberal arts students may find themselves asking: What is the value of their liberal arts education?

The prevailing wisdom and research indicate a growing emphasis on subjects such as computer science, engineering and finance – often included as part of STEM disciplines. At the same time, employers readily identify the creative, communicative and problem-solving acumen traditionally associated with liberal arts majors as the most valuable attributes of new recruits. With a sluggish job market, the job prospects for all college students have actually never been clear. College graduates with career-ready degrees are best positioned to get hired and earn the quickest return on their educational investment. It's no surprise that technology degree holders continue to be most in demand. But what about graduates with liberal arts degrees?

While the report may seem like good news for liberal arts grads, the overall growth in job offers may not indicate an improved job market for all liberal arts majors, according to

Edwin Koc, director of research, public policy and legislative affairs at NACE. "Liberal arts improved pretty much across the board," he says. "But the big jump was for education majors." Koc believes that education majors from a variety of specialties combined to boost overall hiring.

Unfortunately, the improved hiring rate for liberal arts degree graduates may be less about job growth and more about a rebound in state budgets following massive spending cuts in K-12 education in recent years, Koc notes.

"Job placement for education majors has been really, really down," he says. "Since the recession, education majors have had the worst [job] offer rate we've seen, up until this year. And our guess is that it's the opening up of those job opportunities in K-12 education that really made the difference this year for liberal arts graduates."

Despite the caveat, the more obvious career tracks for liberal arts grads – visual and performing arts and communications – gained nearly 25 percent in 2014 over 2013, which is good news for those seeking jobs in public relations and entertainment, the report indicates.

(Courtesy: US News & World Report)

### Defending Liberal Education in a technology driven world

Gabriel Sanchez Zinny

"We are drowning in information, while starving for wisdom," writes the renowned scientist E.O. Wilson in his introduction to *In Defense of a Liberal Education*, the newest book from author Fareed Zakaria. Wilson continues: "The world henceforth will be run by synthesizers, people able to put together the right information at the right time, think critically about it, and make important choices wisely."

The importance of engineering or other science based fields for securing some of the best career paths of the future cannot be



denied. But at the same time, it is necessary to combine the STEM training with a solid foundation in the liberal arts.

In the 21st century, economic growth will come not so much from cheaper computer chips but rather from how computer and other new technologies interact with human beings. The creativity of the digital age comes from those who were able to connect arts and science. Technology alone is not enough. It is technology married with humanities that yield us the required results.

In other words, cutting out the humanities in order to focus on the "practical" fields of science is a false choice. For Zakaria, it is to develop the sort of well-rounded, responsible individuals that make stable democracy and sustained growth possible. "A liberal education gives us a greater capacity to be good workers," he concludes, "but it will also give us the capacity to be good partners, friends, parents, and citizens."

Courtesy: The Huffington Post



## PEDAGOGIC INNOVATIONS

### Consciousness – raising as a technique

Jaishree Umale

Consciousness raising sheets are prepared to make the students aware of the rules. Students are desirous of getting feedback from their teachers. Teachers also mark and correct their each and every error. This is not productive as students create the same errors in their next assignment. To make students learn from their mistake they are made aware of the error categories in advance. These categories are assigned codes. When the teacher corrects the student's assignment, she just underlines the mistake and puts the code by its side. When students receive their assignment, they look at the codes and correct their mistakes.

### Constructivism

Himani Kapoor

Students learn by doing hence project work is a part of their curriculum. A project is designed in such a manner that students will be able to visit relevant sites to glean information. The sites to be visited are chosen by the students. This is known as web quest. This leaves students from getting awed by the sheer amount of information available on the net and waste a lot of time. After collecting the information students apply it to the questions embedded in the project. In this way, they learn on their own by doing things.

### Four Effective Techniques

Archana Singh

**Hot Seat Session (HSS):** HSS aims to boost the confidence of students and to make them realize the importance of communication skills and presence of mind in today's competitive word.

**Conversational style:** It is adopted and in some cases the students are asked to demonstrate the situation relevant to the topic.

**Games:** Games like spin the yarn, Chinese whisper, and word games are included to promote students' creativity and to learn new words.

**Student Initiated Quiz:** Students, in the class, are divided in 3-4 groups. Group members shoot questions on each other from the portion discussed in the class to check their knowledge. In a quest to win, they try to ask exceptionally challenging questions.

### Marks Distribution

Sushant Chaturvedi

To encourage students' participation in learning process, as part of innovative teaching method, there is need to ensure the preparedness of students in the classroom. As of now we

are following 30 +70= 100 division of marks to evaluate our students. This requires a change. Fifteen (15) marks should be allotted for homework/class-room participation in each subject. This will encourage students to come prepared in the class which will in turn enhance their interest in studies, discussion and raising questions. If students come prepared, class time would be much more productive. It will also promote the habit of self-study among students.

### Pictorial Presentations

Jyoti Hermit

Training the students to prepare a small project/presentation on the historical and political background of a country associated with a literary text helps the students to understand and appreciate the historical details that influence the country and its literary wealth. Many films and dramas which are produced on various novels and literary stories can be screened for the students. The pictorial representation of the curriculum helps the students imbibe the subject matter in a more effective manner. The enactment of plays is an effective method of teaching as it helps in increasing the students' abilities to understand literature, in improving their speech as well as in developing their overall personality.

### Audio-Visual Technique

Chandni Sengupta

Using audio-visual technique, students can be made to see and learn the way History has unfolded over the past centuries. Students can be taken on site visits/historical walks to places of historical interest. This may include monuments museums, archives etc. Students can be engaged in a project wherein they get to interact with faculty members of all faculties within the university to find out the level of awareness about history and related themes. Through this interaction, a multidisciplinary approach to the study of social science as well as other fields can be developed.

### Participative Learning

Hemant. K. Jha

The students learn most when they are involved in doing some activities. For this, I usually distribute marks on different activities. Whenever I do some activities I announce marks for them. Marks motivate students to participate in activities like GD, Presentation, Class Test, JAM etc. It was found that many students who do not speak anything in the usual class open themselves when they sit with me in some informal kind of meeting. I find informal meetings in small groups easy for me to talk and motivate my students.

## FACULTY AT A GLANCE



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