



We are delighted to present the 3rd Edition of Aśvattha, the bi-monthly TLC Newsletter!

This edition includes reporting of TLC events in the last 2 months, insightful articles on 'Self-Awareness' and 'Evaluating the Process of Evaluation', 'Faculty Speak' on the topic "The end of semester" and finally, announcements for future programs offered by TLC.

Happy Holidays and an Enjoyable New Academic Session!

EVENTS

Faculty Development Programme on "Teaching Learning Methodologies" for TEQIP Engineering Colleges (16-18 Oct, 2013)

A Faculty Development Programme on Teaching Learning Methodologies for TEQIP Engineering Colleges of Tamilnadu was conducted by the TLC core faculty team and Wipro. There were 26 participants from three different TEQIP Engineering Colleges from Tamilnadu. The participants were trained to write learning outcomes for their courses, conduct sessions through active and collaborative manner and write assessment plans for their courses.

National Education Day: Talk by Dr. M. P. Ganesh (DoMS) (11 Nov, 2013)

Dr M. P. Ganesh (Assistant Professor, DoMS) gave a talk at TLC on the topic "Role of Teacher Leadership in Today's Education Paradigm" as part of National Education Day.

Interactive session on "Brain and Learning" by Dr. Rajeev Sukumaran, Director, SEED (26 Nov, 2013)

The purpose of conducting the awareness session was to explore the possibilities of identifying thinking styles and to check whether one falsifies natural brain preferences. The participants were able to identify their natural thinking preference with Benziger Thinking Style Assessment, understand the need to identify brain quadrants and their functions and relate 'learning' to brain functions.

Faculty Development Programme 2013

TLC, for the fifth consecutive time, organized a three-day Faculty Development Program (FDP) for IIT Madras Faculty during December 11-13, 2013. Prof. Jeff Froyd from Texas A&M University and TLC core team were the resource persons. The topics were the following: writing specific learning outcomes, making assessment plans, conducting classes through active and cooperative learning, demonstration of active learning session, reflective teaching, and managing issues related to large classrooms. Assistant, Associate and Professors of various Science and Engineering Departments of IITM participated in this program.

Dr Chandrika Rajagopal, former Program Coordinator, Centre for Teaching Excellence, Texas A & M University visited TLC for participating in the FDP and also for discussions regarding future activities of TLC.



FDP Participants 2013 @ TLC Hall



FDP Session in Progress @ TLC Hall

Faculty Development Programme for Karnataka TEQIP Colleges

TLC facilitated the conduct of a 2 day FDP on "Teaching Pedagogy" by Prof Jeff Froyd of Texas A&M University on 16th and 17th December in Bangalore for 30 Engineering College Faculty of Karnataka TEQIP Colleges. The Coordinator of TEQIP has invited Prof Froyd to conduct more such programmes in the future.

FDP 2013 PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

Dr. V. Sampath, Professor (MME)

“Truly, it was an eye-opener. It is different in terms of content and approach. There was something new both to the new and the seasoned teacher. A true and student-centric teacher cannot afford to be complacent. He is ever learning. Many of the intricate issues related to teaching and learning with all their ramifications were laid threadbare. This programme is being offered at a time when teaching is relegated to a secondary position and research is given prime importance. Teaching seems to have lost its pristine charm and glory. More people seem to have lost the first love that they had towards teaching considering the present academic milieu. Hope a course like this will revive the interest in teaching and restore it to its initial pride of place despite the adverse academic trend prevailing now. There was a surfeit of things to be learnt. Even if some of the lessons that one learnt were very scrupulously implemented, it would elevate one’s teaching to a higher plane.”

Dr. C.S. Ramalingam, Associate Professor (EE)

“Most of us tend to settle into a style of teaching that we are comfortable with and never bother to examine its effectiveness vis-a-vis students' learning. The FDP introduced me to approaches that will certainly transform students from passive participants to motivated and active learners. I wouldn't have made the effort to find out about these alternatives if I had not attended the FDP; even if I had tried to find out about them by searching for terms, it wouldn't have been as effective as attending the workshop. The sharing of the experiences of IITM faculty who have tried these methods with success was an invaluable part. Hence if one wants interested and motivated students, they should definitely attend the FDP---it is a gross misconception to think that only the new faculty members would benefit from this!”

New Faculty

“It was enlightening and really worth it. It helps develop a broader perspective on teaching. It provides a basic framework for course planning, development and delivery. These kinds of programs should be there at least in all IITs and NITs.”

FEATURED ARTICLE

Exploring “Self-Awareness” at IIT Madras
By Prof. Devdas Menon (CE)



Evaluating the Process of Evaluation
By Prof. C. Vijayan (Phy)



There is so much pressure on our youth – from all sides: parents, society, media – to “succeed” in the “rat race”, that they fail to look inward and discover where their true inner calling lies. Many of them are driven into aspiring to becoming engineers and doctors, while their aptitudes may well lie elsewhere. Even those who discover, through their college education, that their aptitudes indeed lie in the fields of core engineering and medicine, find themselves strangely compelled to abandon their calling, falling prey to the relentless forces of preyah sweeping across our culture. ([read more...](#))

It may be poetically incorrect to say ‘November is the cruellest month’ (though the poem reads well in the even semester!), but we all go through a hectic time, trying to wrap up the courses ensuring that we put our best into it, setting tough enough papers and then struggling to find the answers, putting together the grade sheet in time for the class committee meeting, pondering uneasily about the inevitable make-up exams and supplementary... Well, all that should be getting over by now; some breathing time before promising to ourselves that we will do a still better job the next semester. ([read more...](#))

FACULTY SPEAK – “END OF SEMESTER”



Dr. Parag Ravindran (ME)

Assessment: Loop Closure



Dr. Nirmala R. (Phy)

End of semester
Blues: for the teacher
or the taught?

The tail end of the semester is exciting and stressful for both students and faculty. The students are preoccupied with, “Will this be on the exam?” and the faculty with, “How to assess students in a fair manner?”. Thanks to the Teaching Learning Centre at IIT Madras, I finally learnt that both these questions should be addressed by the learning outcomes set out on day one of the semester. The learning outcomes clearly identify measurable actions as outcomes, and hence allow the construction of a yardstick. Assessment itself may be formative or summative: guiding or measuring. It serves a vital role not only in final measurement and rating but also in providing feedback en-route. Indeed in an ideal world the tail end of the semester would be just as exciting as the beginning!

As much as assessment and grading are important aspects of a course, I think, giving constructive feedback and comments on the performance of the student is equally vital, for which very often we do not have/allot space or time. In particular, it is quite difficult to do it for large class courses. But when these are given, students not only appreciate but accept that the grades received are only very fair.

UPCOMING TLC ACTIVITIES

January 2014	TA Training Programme
February 2014	Student interactive sessions on class room teaching
February 2014	Workshops on Learning Outcomes and Active Cooperative Learning
March 2014	Inter-IIT Meet

TLC Multipurpose hall is available for conducting interactive sessions. Interested faculty may contact Chairman, CCE for further details.

For suggestions/feedback, please mail to iitmtlc@gmail.com. We would be happy to feature your articles, suggestions, ideas related to the Teaching Learning Process. Looking forward to your support! Please visit www.cce.iitm.ac.in for interesting reads on TLP under our Faculty Reachout Initiative.

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