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IISER goes online till Dec, plans inclusive learning

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Usually, IISER begins its term in August. It will now begin a month later

Those in need will be given internet access; semester credits have been reduced

The education system has been altering its ways to the pandemic, with most of its components going online. The Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Pune — one of the reputable research institutes in India — has now joined the web-base to connect to its students. It has deferred classroom teaching till December 2020 and has taken the lessons completely online for the undergraduate students, starting September.

Moreover, it is taking into consideration the dearth of uniform access with some students; such scholars will be identified and given internet dongles with an appropriate data plan.

Professor and dean (research and development) Sanjeev Galande said, "Our academic year starts from August, which has been postponed this year so that we can prepare for the online medium. However, there is a possibility that not all students may have internet access. This lot is being identified by our mentors, who will take care of their needs."

At least 1,000 undergraduate students are studying and pursuing courses at the institute. Talking about the same, Bhas Bapat, dean (academic) of IISER, said, "We are identifying students in need of internet. We are also trying to develop a channel through which students can reach one another with study material and recorded video."

IISER has also given relaxation in the next semester's credit. In case a student is unable to complete his/her syllabus due to logistical difficulties, their burden can be reduced — wherein they can opt for a few credits.

The requirement for the September-December semester has been reduced to 10 credits instead of 18. Lab courses are not to be taken this semester.

These methods are being adopted to cater to its majority out-of-Pune population, almost 80 per cent, that has enrolled with the institute. Of these, at least five per cent need logistical help.

Students have shown confidence in the institute as it adapts to the online form and the way it is trying to reach all of them. Shriya Hirve, a fifthyear student, said, "Our institute has reached out students in need of connectivity. We will miss on classroom teaching, but this help provided by the institute will ensure that everyone can be a part of online learning."

Angam Shah, another fifth-year student, said, "The institute is paying for the internet for the students who do not have it. All exams are to be taken at the end of the semester. Any online exams can only be conducted if all students taking the course and give documented proof that internet access is sufficient."

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—Bhas Bapat, dean (academics) at IISER