

ABOUT US

The Gandhigram Rural Institute – Deemed University is one of the ten institutions chosen at the national level by UGC under the ninth plan to implement the Scheme for **Higher Education for Persons (Disabled) With Special Needs (HEPSN)** in order to provide special assistance to disabled students to facilitate better accessibility in higher education system. This scheme is in operation at Gandhigram Rural Institute – Deemed University since April 2001. Under this HEPSN, Our University has organized more than 100 different flagship activities such as student/support group counseling, Soft skills training, technical skills training, entrepreneurship training, communication skills training, Emotional Intelligence enhancement workshop, etc.

The HEPSN cell is also facilitating the disabled students of our University to get various scholarships particularly from NHFDC –Trust Fund Scheme. Through HEPSN, many of our disabled students have got employment in various private sectors. Towards the disabled friendly campus mission, our institute superstructure has been modified architecturally barrier-free mode such as ramps and slopes, handrails to all buildings, special toilets, lowered washbasins, etc. to ensure disabled friendly campus.

On an average about 25 to 30 students both boys and girls, pursue their higher education at the Gandhigram Rural Institute-Deemed University from Diploma to Doctoral programme. Currently during the academic year 2015-2016, there are about 21 special needs students (12 boys and 9 girls) enrolled with the HEPSN, GRI.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

(to implement the scheme and facilities available under higher education sector for the students with special needs)

MEMBERS

1. Dr. S. Natarajan, Vice Chancellor - Chairman
2. Dr. M. Saleem Baig, Dean, F.T.I.L&R.A.
3. Dr. B. Padmanabha Pillai, Dean Students' Welfare
4. Dr. A. Joseph Dorairaj, Professor of English
5. Dr. M.P. Boraian, Professor & Head, Dept. of Extension Education
6. Dr. P. Anandakumar, Liaison Officer, Reservation Cell
7. Dr. T. Selvin Jebaraj Norman, Director, Placement Bureau
8. Dr. P. Kalavathi, Programme Coordinator, NSS
9. Dr. D. Grace Nirmala, Dy. Director of Physical Education
10. Dr. C. Sugumar, Dy. Director of Physical Education
11. Dr. B. Senthil Kumar, Counsellor cum Placement Officer, HEPSN
12. Dr. H. Samuel Thavaraj, Coordinator, HEPSN – Convenor

OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the HEPSN Scheme are as follows:

1. To provide equal educational opportunities to differently abled persons in higher education institutions.
2. To create awareness among the functionaries of higher education about the specific educational needs of differently abled persons.
3. To equip higher education institutions with the facilities to provide access to differently abled persons.
4. To provide special devices to higher education institutions that will augment the learning experiences of differently abled persons.
5. To monitor the implementation of all existing and future legislation and policies, which are pertaining to the higher education of differently abled persons.

ACTIVITIES

WORKSHOPS

ONE DAY WORKSHOP ON “*ENERGISING THE CHALLENGED*”

The first One-Day Workshop on “*Energising the Challenged*” for our students with special needs (Differently Abled)) was conducted on 7th December 2012 successfully in view of celebrating the “World Disability Day” which falls on 03/12/2012. The venue was held at MBA Seminar Hall, GRI from 9.30 am to 5.00 pm.

Technical session 1 – Moulding Attitude.

The first Session ‘Moulding Attitude ‘ was handled by Prof. J.Shanmuganathan, Soft skill trainer. As the workshop focussed on “energising the challenged”, the first session kicked up with bringing energy among the participants. To bring energy, the trainer conducted “Word Power” game, wherein everyone has to coin words continuously one by one without repeating the used words and not breaking the chain. The participants enjoyed and actively participated, as a result, they came to the right track of the programme and energy level raised up and the tempo was maintained by conceptualizing the attitude building, which gave them a clear idea about how to build a positive attitude. Motivational stories like Deaf Frog, Judo champion, etc., added spice to the programme. As a final touch, to measure the positive attitude of the participants WAT – Word Association Test, a psychological test was conducted, and surprisingly majority responses are positive in nature and the trainer ended the first technical session with some inspirational videos of how physically challenged persons succeed in life.

Technical session 2: Time Management.

The second technical Session is about Time Management. The trainer started the session with a small time game, wherein, everyone should count 60 seconds in mind and exactly who will be able to count 60 seconds will be the winner. No one was able to count correctly, and the trainer started with the importance of time management. Time wasting culprits, Techniques of time management, time management quadrants, self-management, etc., were discussed.

Time management multi-tasking game “beans counting’ was conducted and the participants clearly understood the importance of multi tasking.

Unscrambling the words game was conducted to measure the time management technique followed by the student.

Finally, the trainer summed up the concept with inspiring video clips on time management.

To sum up, the students enjoyed the program enthusiastically, and gave a positive feedback about the programme and requested the authorities to conduct more such programs to encourage and motivate them.

Dr. M. Sivaraman, Controller of Examinations, GRI, Gandhigram, shared his personal experience with the students and motivated them to be happy and energetic in their work. He also highlighted using his attractive style of sharing a ‘Frog Story’ with humor and said that each one of us should be deaf to the negative comments of others. In addition, he also stated that each one of us is vested with a unique talent, and each one of us should use that talent and come up and not to develop self-pity. This highly energized the students.

PHOTO ONE DAY WORKSHOP ON “ENERGISING THE CHALLENGED”



ONE DAY WORKSHOP ON “EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: META SKILLS FOR LIFE”

The second One Day Workshop was conducted under the theme “**EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: META SKILLS FOR LIFE**”. As most of the differently abled students have an emotional imbalance which in turn leads to inferiority complex and finally affects their mental and physical health. To educate the students of special needs to balance their emotions thereby, they can lead a positive and productive life this special one-day workshop was organized. Five areas were focused which includes self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, social-awareness and social skills. Worksheets were given to the students to evaluate self and models were discussed through management games to improve the above-mentioned five areas for development.



ONE DAY TECHNICAL WORKSHOP ON “GARMENT DESIGNING”

HEPSN, GRI conducted a One-Day Workshop on “GARMENT DESIGNING” for HEPSN students with the support of Apparel Training and Design Centre, Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, Chennai. In the forenoon sessions, students were taught the basics of designing a shirt and Pattern cutting on butter papers and fabric materials and practical training was provided to students. These kinds of workshops are conducted on regular intervals to impart employability skills, which would enable them to get placements. Apart from theoretical inputs, the workshop gave them enough hands-on practice in garment designing and pattern cutting techniques.



ONE DAY ENTREPRENEURIAL WORKSHOP ON FABRIC PAINTING

HEPSN, GRI has organized a One Day Entrepreneurial Workshop on “**FABRIC PAINTING**”, 27th October 2015 for the welfare of special needs (differently abled) students of GRI. This workshop has a mission of creating skill development on specialized fabric painting of contemporary designs. The programme has been organized with the joint support with M/s Pedilite chemicals, a leading dyes and colour manufactures in the country. The resource person for the session was Mrs. Vasanth, who is the nominated trainer for this specialized skill development programme by M/s Pedilite.

The workshop focused on providing hands-on training in the following aspects such as illustration, mimicking of embroidery design by painting, mimicking of hand work design through painting, Indian culture based painting, etc. Indian traditional paintings such as Badri designs of Karnataka, Kalangari design of Andhra Pradesh, Gonth designs of Madhya Pradesh, Madubani designs of Bihar are more popular in Fabric Painted structures. This is one of the modern value addition techniques which provide a high amount of earning potential to the trained students. The painting will be long-lasting up to the life time of the fabric. Nearly 25 special needs students along with the Diploma in Textile Technology (DTT) students enjoyed leaning of this hands-on session and expecting us to conduct a series of workshops of this same kind for a week.

The revered Vice Chancellor of GRI Dr.S.Natarajan has inaugurated this workshop and delivered the Presidential Address. Felicitation Address was delivered by Dr.Palanidurai, Professor in Political Science, Dr.L. Rathakrishnan, Professor and Head, Department of RIM and Dr.M.Soundarapandiyan, Professor, Department of RIM. Dr. H. Samuel Thavraj, Coordinator HEPSN and Dr. B. Senthilkumar, Placement Coordinator HEPSN, Dr. P. Murugananthan, Department of RIM has also helped in organizing the workshop.

HEPSN - ONEDAY WORKSHOPS ORGANISED

S. No	Date	Title	Resource Person (s)	Technical Session I	Technical Session II
1	7 th December 2012	ENERGISING THE CHALLENGED	Prof. J. Shanmuganathan , Corporate Soft Skill Trainer, IIPS Business school, Tirunelveli	Molding Attitude	Time Management
2	23 rd February 2013	EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE – META SKILLS FOR LIFE	Prof. D. Joseph Devadason , Vice Principal Kodaikanal Christian College Kodaikanal. & Prof. Dr. M. Lawrence , Department of English, The American College, Madurai.	Personal Competence	Social Competence
3	23 rd August 2013	GARMENT DESIGNING	Mrs. Kalavathi , Senior Lecturer, Apparel Training and Design Centre, Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, Chennai	Shirt Designing	Pattern Cutting
4	27 th October 2015	FABRIC PAINTING	Mrs. Vasantha , Technical Trainer – Fabric Painting, Coimbatore.	Fabric Painting - Drawing	Fabric Painting - Practical

REGULAR WEEKLY TRAINING PROGRAMMES

We, the HEPSN, GRI, organised a special series of lectures every week with the aim of enhancing the soft skills of the special needs students of our institute. This training played an important role in increasing the confidence level of the individuals and in turn enabled them to manage their emotions effectively and also increased their employability skills. Some of the important motivating programmes were organized by HEPSN,GRI with expert members **“GOAL SETTING”, “TIME MANAGEMENT”, “IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH COMMUNICATION”, “PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT” and “HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE”.**

‘GOAL SETTING’ SEMINAR PHOTOS



PHOTOS OF 'TIME MANAGEMENT' SEMINAR



PHOTOS OF 'ENGLISH COMMUNICATION' SEMINARS





PHOTOS OF 'HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE' SEMINAR



PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

Dr.Selvamani, Faculty, GRI spoke on Personality Development on 09.03.2015. In his speech, he highlighted that the personality of an individual plays an important role in influencing the environment. He underlined the need to be responsive to the relationships we maintain with others rather than giving importance to the physical outlook. Also, he added that even when other excludes us, we have to be ready to accept that and show love and affection to them who hate us. This was a thought provoking idea for the students with special needs. He described the word personality in a different perspective which was an eye opener for the students.

REGULAR WEEKLY PROGRAMMES ORGANISED

S. NO	DATE	RESOURCE PERSON	TOPIC
1	11.09.2013	Dr. P. U. Mahalingam, GRI	Goal Setting
2	24.09.2013	Mr. Aswath Babu, Madurai	Time Management
3	01.10.2013	Mr. Balasubramanian, Gandhigram	Importance of English Communication
4	08.10.2013	Dr. Selvamani, GRI	Personality Development
5	15.10.2013	Dr. D. Ramkumar, Karaikudi	Habits of Highly Effective People
6	22.10.2013	Mr. Balasubramanian, Gandhigram	Demo on Communication Skills Enhancement

COUNSELLING

HEPSN, GRI, provides a series of need-based counseling sessions for the special needs students of GRI in the HEPSN Office/Department of RIM, GRI for getting scholarships from various funding agencies, regarding personal problems, and placements. In this academic year only two students's required placements and the other special needs students opted for higher education. Counseling played an important role in increasing the confidence level of the individuals and in turn enabled them to manage their emotions effectively and also increased their employability skills.

Need-based counselling is being given to the students with special needs (differently abled) of GRI. Based on the interactions we had with the students, we were able to identify the gaps in the facilities provided and steps were undertaken to bridge the gaps and to provide the necessary facilities/provisions which would help the special needs students to pursue higher education.

Counselling is also given to the support groups of the special needs students with regard to the attitude and behaviour to be exhibited among them to help the special needs students to feel at ease.

PLACEMENT SUPPORT

HEPSN, GRI have approached various organizations for the placement of our final year Special Needs (Disabled) students. Every year few students were placed with the private companies through this cell.

NAME OF THE STUDENTS	COURSE	PLACEMENT COMPANY
Muthu selvan.S	BBA-RIM	Admin officer-D2D International ,Tirupur
Uma.C	MBA-SBM	Attend Interview at M/s Saravana mills Ltd, Batalagundu through HEPSN , GRI. Placement under process.

Most of the students have gone for higher studies or opted for doing B.Ed/M.Ed programmes. We are in the process of entering into a MoU with few corporate companies/Associations with regard to the placement of the special needs students along with skill training.

FEE WAIVER

Based on the feedback HEPSN, GRI have received from the special needs students during the need based counseling sessions, we took an initiative and gave an representation to our Institute administration to implement fee waive scheme for our students of GRI.

As per the direction of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, the Gandhigram Rural Institute – Deemed University has implemented tuition fee waiver for all disable students, hostel room rent waiver and establishment charges waiver for the disabled students who are staying in the hostel from the academic year 2014-2015 onwards.

In addition to the above our University Administration is also taking steps to extend the fee waiver to the special needs Ph.D./M.Phil Scholars also in the forthcoming years.

DISABLED FRIENDLY WEBSITE

The Gandhigram Rural Institute –Deemed University complies with World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 level AA, as well as Article No.-9 (“Accessibility”) UN convention on the rights for persons with disabilities.

Screen Reader Software

This will enable people with visual impairments to access the website using assistive technologies, such as screen readers. The information of the website is accessible with different screen reader free downloadable software supported with Windows Vista, Windows 7 operating System.

FOLLOWING TABLE LISTS THE INFORMATION ABOUT DIFFERENT SCREEN READERS

Screen Reader	Website	Free / Commercial
Screen Access For All (SAFA)	http://www.nabdelhi.org/NAB_SAFA.htm (External website that opens in a new window)	Free
Non Visual Desktop Access	http://www.nvda-project.org/ (External website that opens in a new window)	Free

(NVDA)	new window)	
System Access To Go	http://www.satogo.com/ (External website that opens in a new window)	Free
Thunder	http://www.screenreader.net/index.php?pageid=2 (External website that opens in a new window)	Free
WebAnywhere	http://webanywhere.cs.washington.edu/wa.php (External website that opens in a new window)	Free

Speech recognition software

This will enable people with mobility impairments, people with visual impairments and senior citizens access the website using assistive technologies, such as speech recognition software. The information of the website is accessible with different speech recognition software supported with Windows Vista and Windows 7 operating systems.

**FOLLOWING TABLE LISTS THE INFORMATION ABOUT DIFFERENT SPEECH
RECOGNITION SOFTWARE**

Information releated to speech recognition software

Speech Recognition Software	Website	Free /commercail
E-speaking	http://www.e-speaking.com/free_speech_voice_recognition_dictation_software.htm	Free
<u>Dictation-pro</u>	http://dictation-pro.en.softonic.com/	<u>Free</u>

ARCHITECTURALLY BARRIER FREE CAMPUS

DEVELOPMENT OF ARCHITECTURALLY BARRIER FREE CAMPUS

Most of the new buildings are built in such a way that our University campus is disabled friendly. We under the HEPSN have taken steps in identifying various departments, where there is a need for providing ramps and slopes, handrails to the buildings, special toilets, lowered washbasins, etc. and has taken an initiative to ensure 100% disabled friendly campus. At present almost all the buildings in our University campus are disabled friendly.

An initiative was also taken to construct four new special toilets (two for boys and two for girls) near Department of Political Science, GRI with the financial budget of nearly **RS 10 lakhs**.

SCHOLARSHIPS

HEPSN is also creating awareness among the special needs students about the various scholarships provided by the Central Govt, State Govt, and other financial institutions. HEPSN also assists the special needs students to fill the form online and to submit the same with the University Administration office and follow-up.

SCHOLARSHIP RECEIVED BY THE STUDENTS THROUGH THE ASSISTANCE OF HEPSN

S. No	NAME OF THE STUDENT	YEAR	AMOUNT
1	SURYA	2015 – 2016	40,000
2	MATHALAI MUTHU	2015 – 2016	75,000
3	KARTHIC	2015 – 2016	74,000
4	Monisa	2014 - 2015	52,000

Still few students are awaiting the scholarship sanction order.

***CENTRAL / STATE GOVT SCHEMES &
SCHOLARSHIPS***

PROPOSALS SUBMITTED

1. NATIONAL CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR DIFFERENTLY ABLED PERSONS

The Higher Education for Persons with Special Needs (HEPSN), GRI-DU has proposed to establish a **National Centre of Excellence for Differently abled persons**, and for which a proposal has been submitted to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India through the Institute for a tune of **Rs.13 Crores**. This centre is proposed to have the following activities:

- Counselling cell for disabled and support groups
- Therapy cell for mentally retarded students
- Medical rehabilitation centre
- Soft skill and vocational training & EDP cell
- Library with E-content facility for disabled
- Braille content development and interpretation cell
- Sign language interpretation cell
- Placement support cell for disabled students
- Research and development cell for disability studies

2. PROPOSED NEW DEPARTMENT FOR DISABILITY STUDIES

As per the direction of our Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, GRI, HEPSN team has submitted a proposal to UGC to create a new Department for Disability Studies with the prime focus of starting **"Degree Programme on Indian Sign Language Interpretation Course"** for a tune of **Rs 11 Crores**. This proposal has been submitted to UGC, New Delhi on August 2015.

3. PROPOSED NEW DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE

As per the direction of the AICTE, to establish a Disability Resource Centre, with the encouragement of our Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, GRI, HEPSN team has submitted a proposal to AICTE to create a new **"DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE"** for a tune of **Rs 22 Lakhs** . This proposal has been submitted to AICTE on May 2016.

FUTURE DIRECTION

PROPOSED TO ESTABLISH DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE

The Higher Education for Persons with Special Needs (HEPSN), GRI-DU has proposed to establish a **Disability Resource Centre**, and for which a proposal has been submitted to the **All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)**, A Statutory Body of the Govt. of India, New Delhi. through the Institute for a tune of **Rs.21 Lakhs**.

ARRANGED MOTIVATION TOUR TO OTHER DISABLED STUDY INSTITUTIONS

We have visited Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda University – Specialized faculty centre, Coimbatore, along with our University students on 30.01.2014. The main objective of this visit is to understand the facilities to be provided for the special needs students, so as to create a similar facility at our University campus.

This academic year we have planned to take the special needs students to other disabled study institutions and industries for an orientation and to motivate them.

MoU FOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND PLACEMENT

An initiative has been taken by the HEPSN-GRI in order to enter into a **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING** between ***GANDHIGRAM RURAL INSTITUTE – DEEMED UNIVERSITY, DINDIGUL, TAMIL NADU and NIFT –TEA UNDER THE AGEIS OF TIRUPUR TEXTILE EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION, TAMIL NADU*** for skill development and placement for the special needs students of GRI during the coming academic year 2016-2017.

NIFT–TEA UNDER THE AGEIS OF TIRUPUR TEXTILE EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION, TAMIL NADU has agreed to recruit special needs students from our University. They are also interested in providing financial assistance for need-based trainings to be given to the special needs students to match their job requirements.

EXCLUSIVE BROWSING CENTRE

Recently we have also proposed to set up an exclusive browsing centre for the special needs students of GRI in the HEPSN Office based on the opinion we have received from the special needs students.

BATTERY OPERATED VEHICLE

As per the guidance by our Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, we have taken necessary steps to purchase an Electric Operated Vehicle for the internal use of our special needs students.
