

Teaching Learning Workshop for Next-Generation Academicians

Organized by: TLC, BITS Pilani (Pilani Campus)

Venue: J.C. Chaudhry, NAB

Date: September 27, 2025

1. Introduction

The *Teaching Learning Workshop for Next-Generation Academicians* for Research Scholars and Higher Degree Students was organized on 27 September 2025, with the objective of fostering academic and professional excellence among new research scholars. The workshop aimed to orient participants to their dual roles as learners and teaching assistants, familiarize them with academic policies, and equip them with the necessary pedagogical, ethical, and communication skills essential for success in academia. The workshop was attended by 87 HD and PhD students of BITS Pilani, Pilani campus.

A series of interactive sessions, led by distinguished faculty members, covered topics ranging from institutional regulations and teaching responsibilities to research ethics, professional conduct, and active communication. The program also provided a platform for scholars to discuss common challenges and exchange ideas for improving the teaching learning process.

2. Detailed Session Summaries

Session 1: Inaugural Address

Speakers: Prof. Shibani Khanra Jha and Prof. N. V. M. Rao

The workshop commenced with an inaugural address by Prof. Shibani Khanra Jha, FIC, TLC, BITS Pilani, Pilani campus, who emphasized the significant role of research scholars in contributing to the academic ecosystem. She highlighted their dual responsibilities as both educators and learners, and outlined the workshop's goals and expected outcomes.

Prof. N. V. M. Rao, Dean Administration, BITS Pilani, Pilani campus, enriched the discussion by reflecting on the philosophy of Shankaracharya and a parable of Birbal to illustrate the deeper values of wisdom, humility, and responsibility in education. Prof. Rao's address encouraged scholars to adopt a reflective and value-driven approach to both teaching and research.

Session 2: Academic Rules and Regulations for Research Scholars and Higher Degree Students

Speaker: Prof. Shamik Chakraborty

Prof. Shamik Chakraborty provided an overview of the academic framework governing Ph.D. and higher degree programs. Prof. Chakraborty elaborated on course structures, evaluation mechanisms, and research milestones, emphasizing the flexibility and academic rigor built into the programs. The session highlighted opportunities for interdisciplinary learning and encouraged scholars to take ownership of their academic progression.

An engaging Q&A session allowed participants to clarify procedural doubts, followed by a brief felicitation ceremony recognizing the contributions of faculty and organizers.

Session 3: Roles and Responsibilities as Instructors and Teaching Assistants

Speaker: Prof. Shibani Khanra Jha

In this session, Prof. Shibani Khanra Jha discussed the multifaceted role of research scholars as teaching assistants and mentors. Prof. Jha underlined the importance of preparation, classroom management, and interactive engagement in lectures, tutorials, and laboratory sessions.

Introducing Bloom's Taxonomy, Prof. Jha demonstrated how learning objectives can be structured to foster higher-order thinking among students. Prof. Jha also linked assessment strategies and feedback mechanisms to broader program outcomes, helping participants understand how their teaching contributes to overall learning quality.

Session 4: Effective Communication – Knowing Your Stakeholders and Developing Professionalism

Speaker: Prof. Chintalapalli Vijayakumar

Prof. Vijayakumar's session centered on the "What – So What – Now What" framework for effective communication. Prof. Vijayakumar emphasized that research scholars, as emerging professionals, must be able to communicate ideas clearly, empathetically, and purposefully to diverse stakeholders—students, peers, and faculty alike.

Through storytelling and interactive discussions, the session highlighted how awareness, reflection, and professionalism strengthen the scholar's identity as a responsible academic.

Session 5: Issues and Challenges – Interactive Discussion

Moderators: Prof. Amit Kumar and Prof. Madhurjya Dev Choudhary

This interactive forum invited participants to share experiences and challenges faced in their teaching and research roles. The discussions brought out pertinent issues such as the misuse of AI tools by students, difficulty in motivating learners in non-core subjects, and balancing research commitments with instructional responsibilities.

Faculty moderators offered practical suggestions for fostering academic integrity, designing engaging learning activities, and maintaining enthusiasm in the classroom environment.

Session 6: Ethical Practices in Research and Teaching

Speaker: Prof. Tapomoy GuhaSarkar

Prof. GuhaSarkar's session focused on the ethical dimensions of both research and teaching. He defined ethics as the practice of truthfulness, transparency, and integrity, and emphasized that ethical conduct is foundational to academic credibility.

Through thought-provoking examples, participants explored potential ethical dilemmas, such as authorship conflicts, data manipulation, and fairness in assessment, and discussed ways to uphold ethical standards consistently.

Session 7: Active Listening and Holistic Responding

Speaker: Mr. Emerson Nobel Scott

This dynamic and participatory session illustrated the importance of active listening in effective communication and classroom engagement. Mr. Scott conducted a series of interactive exercises, including listening games and reflective speaking activities, that helped scholars experience the impact of empathy and attentiveness.

The session reinforced that holistic communication, rooted in mutual respect and understanding, enhances the quality of both teaching and collaboration in academic settings.

Session 8: Valedictory Session

Speakers: Prof. Amit Kumar and Prof. Madhurjya Dev Choudhary

The valedictory session summarized the insights and key takeaways from the workshop. Prof. Amit Kumar and Prof. Madhurjya Dev Choudhary expressed gratitude to the BITS Pilani leadership, all speakers, organizers, and participants for their enthusiastic involvement.

The concluding remarks encouraged scholars to carry forward the spirit of continuous learning, integrity, and collaboration in their research and teaching endeavors.

3. Conclusion

The Orientation Workshop successfully achieved its objective of preparing research scholars to take on their academic and instructional roles with confidence, ethical awareness, and professionalism. Through a blend of theoretical discussions, interactive activities, and reflective sessions, participants gained valuable insights into teaching methodologies, communication skills, and academic ethics.

The workshop reaffirmed the institution's commitment to nurturing a community of responsible, skilled, and engaged researchers who contribute meaningfully to both academia and society.