



# SYMBIOSIS SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

## DEEKSHARAMBH

### Induction Programme 2024

As part of the induction programme 'Deeksharambh' for the students of Symbiosis School of International Studies (SSIS), Pune, a series of events, field trips, and mentoring sessions were organised to provide a comprehensive introduction to university life. These activities, which spanned from welcoming addresses to in-depth explorations of universal human values, aimed to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary for their academic and personal growth.

#### 1. Welcome Address and Introduction to the Institute (30th July 2024)

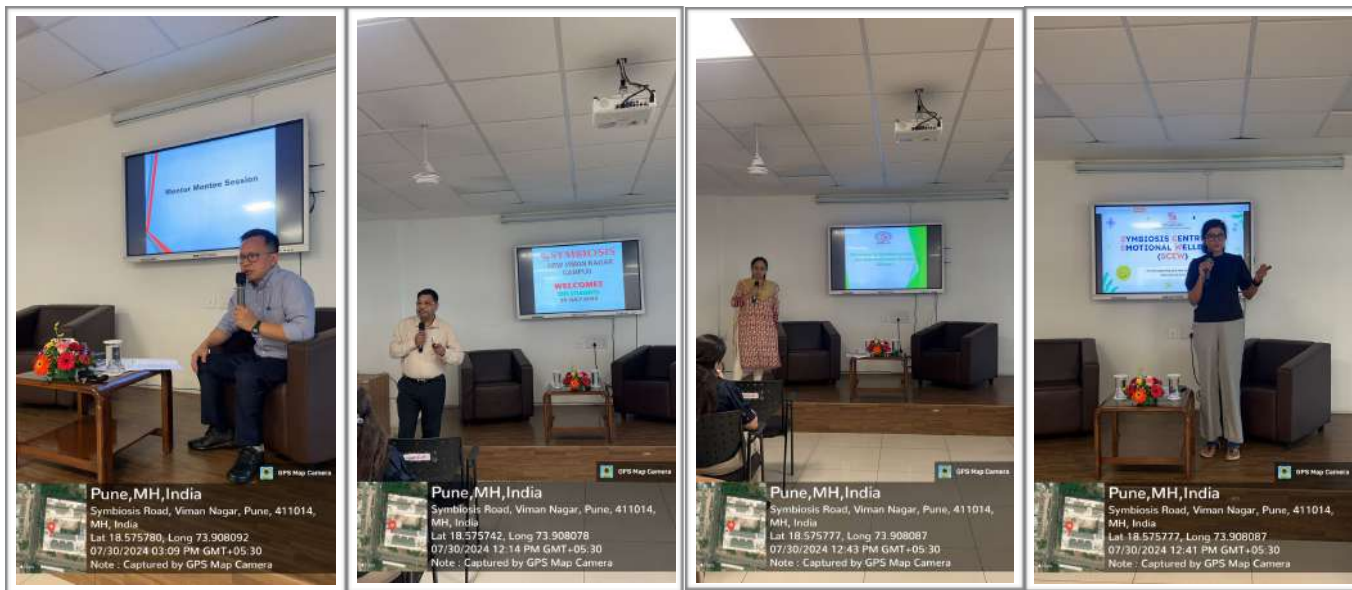


The induction programme began with a welcome address delivered by the Director of SSIS, Ms. Shivali Lawale, who set the tone for the days ahead by emphasising the importance of international studies in the Indian curriculum. This was followed by a fireside chat between Ms. Lawale and Ambassador (Retd.) Talmiz Ahmad on the same theme, providing students with valuable insights into the relevance of their chosen field in today's globalised world.

Following the fireside chat, students were familiarised with the institute's regulations and policies by Dr. Sukalpa Chakrabarti, Deputy Director, and Ms. Bharti Borkar. They covered crucial topics such as eligibility criteria, academic expectations, examination procedures, leave policies, the code of conduct, anti-ragging

measures, the feedback mechanism, scholarship opportunities, the plagiarism policy, and the use of technology.

Dr. Alvite Ningthoujam then sensitised students to the mentor-mentee system, sports facilities, extracurricular activities, and various student committees, highlighting the support and opportunities available to them. The day also included sessions on campus safety, security, health, hygiene, and emotional wellbeing, alongside an introduction to the library facilities and rules.



## 2. Sessions on Wellness, Environmental Awareness, and Gender (31st July 2024)



The second day began with a session on the basics of yoga, promoting physical and mental wellness among the students. This was followed by a session on environmental consciousness, where students were made aware of waste management practices and the importance of environmental stewardship.

In line with the university's commitment to creating a safe and inclusive environment, there was an awareness session on sexual harassment, which aimed to educate students on recognizing and preventing inappropriate behavior. This was complemented by a session on human values, focusing on gender sensitization, further reinforcing the importance of respect and equality within the university community.

The day concluded with a creative arts and culture activity—a poster-making competition—that allowed students to express their creativity while engaging with the themes of the induction programme.



### 3. Mentoring with Universal Human Values

Session: Aspiration and Gratitude (1st August 2024)

Session led by Dr. Alvite Ningthoujam and supported by Dr Mohd Tahir Ganie, Dr. Anamika Asthana, and Dr. Shafat Yousuf

The session began with a general introduction on Universal Human Values (UHV) encompassing many aspects that pertain to our being as humans, our role in the larger human society and its specific context as students in an academic institution.

The session focused on Aspiration and Gratitude as key values among UHV. It explored how aspiration and gratitude relate to and support other universal human values and their role as catalysts for personal growth and social cohesion.

The session included the following activity:

Stimulating students to reflect on gratitude by answering these questions:

- How many people have helped us? Give examples from the past experiences. What sense of gratitude would you feel towards them?
- How many people are we helping now? Make a comparison with the above question and see if we are doing enough for the people who might need our help.



Towards the end, challenges to Universal Human Values were discussed, including technological advancement, globalization, political polarization, climate change, and economic pressures.

#### 4. Visit to SIU Campus and Museums (2nd August 2024)

The induction began with a visit to the Symbiosis International University (SIU) campus at Lavale. The purpose of this visit was to familiarise students with the university's resources and facilities. The day started with an exploration of the campus, including a detailed tour of the university library, where students were introduced to the extensive collection of academic resources available to students. They also had the opportunity to visit the recording studios, showcasing the university's commitment to providing state-of-the-art facilities for media and communication studies. The tour continued with a visit to the Symbiosis University Hospital and Research Centre, where students gained an understanding of the healthcare services provided by the university.



The day concluded with visits to two important cultural sites: the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial, and the Afro-Asian Museum in Pune. These visits were enlightening, offering a deep dive into the life and legacy of Dr. Ambedkar, as well as a broader perspective on Afro-Asian history and culture.



## 5. Mentoring with Universal Human Values

### Session: Human Needs and Peer Pressure (3rd August 2024)

Session led by Dr. Anamika Asthana and supported by Dr Md Tahir Ganie, Dr. Alvite Ningthoujam, and Dr. Shafat Yousuf

This session focused on the intersection of human needs and peer pressure, incorporating the following elements:

Objectives:

- Develop critical thinking and analytical skills
- Enhance communication skills
- Promote teamwork and collaboration

In order to achieve the above objectives, the session included the following activities:

- Viewing an animation on Maslow's hierarchy of needs
- Ice-breaking session with personal anecdotes on handling peer pressure
- Google Forms surveys on clothing practices, smoking/drinking, and study groups
- Scenario analysis and discussion
- Coping strategies workshop
- Reflection and debriefing

The session aimed to help students understand the relationship between human needs, peer pressure, and universal values, encouraging them to develop practical skills for navigating social dynamics.



## 6. Mentoring with Universal Human Values

### Session: Prosperity and Relationships (5th August 2024)

Session led by Dr. Shafat Yousuf and supported by Dr. Alvite Ningthoujam, Dr Md Tahir Ganie, and Dr. Anamika Asthana

This session delved into the concepts of prosperity and relationships, structured as follows:

Prosperity:

- Definition and components of prosperity
- Two pillars: self-knowledge and physical assessment
- Conditions for feeling prosperous
- Common misconceptions and educational focus

Relationships:

- Seven types of relationships
- Justice (Nyaya) in relationships
- Transactions vs. relationships

- Fair transactions and societal values
- Nine values in relationships
- Focus on trust (Vishwas)

The session included assignments for students to reflect on their understanding of prosperity and trust in relationships. It included the following:

- Give examples from your life where you think the lack of prosperity is due to your mixing the needs of the self with needs of the body (i.e., you are trying to satisfy the need of the self by physical things, which cannot be satisfied). What would you do about it?
- List the names of persons (if they are comfortable) on whom you have complete trust on their intention-continuously & unconditionally. Any person(s) they feel close to but who does not come in the above list, why? Why do they lack complete trust in them?



## 7. Literary Activity- Debate on Contemporary IR issue (6th August 2024)

Debate topic conception by K. Thangjalen Kipgen

Debate led by Dr. Md Tahir Ganie and supported by Dr. Shafat Yousuf and Dr. Alvite Ningthoujam

Topic: The role of international organizations in conflict resolution

Format: Oxford-style debate

Duration: 2:30 - 3:30 PM

Structure:

- Opening Statements (7-10 minutes each for Proposition and Opposition teams)
- Rebuttals (5 minutes each)
- Cross-Examination (5-10 minutes)
- Closing Statements (3-5 minutes each)

This activity aimed to enhance students' critical thinking, argumentation, and public speaking skills while exploring a relevant global issue.

The above activities as part of the Deeksharambh [Induction] programme provided a comprehensive introduction to universal human values, personal development, and critical thinking. Through a combination of lectures, interactive sessions, and practical exercises, students were encouraged to reflect on important aspects of their personal and academic lives while developing essential skills for their future careers.



### 8. Nature Walk and Village Visit (24th August 2024)



The second field trip focused on environmental awareness and community engagement. The day began with a nature walk around the Lavale campus, which provided an opportunity to observe, appreciate and learn about the rich biodiversity of the region.

Following the nature walk, team-building activities were planned by the SIU team, including Zumba and various team games, to foster collaboration among the students. These activities were instrumental in breaking the ice and building a sense of community within the cohort.



In the latter part of the day, a visit to nearby village had been organised where SIU has been actively involved in social initiatives. The students observed the medical services provided by the university to the villagers, which





underscored SIU's commitment to community health. Interactions with local women who have built careers with the support of SIU highlighted the impact of the university's empowerment programs. Additionally, they witnessed efforts to promote digital literacy in the village, reflecting SIU's role in fostering technological inclusion in rural areas.

### 9. Historical Visit and Social Sensitisation (14th September 2024)



The final field trip was a blend of historical exploration and social outreach. Students visited the Dharmaveer Chhatrapati Shri Sambhaji Maharaj Samadhi in Tulapur, where they learnt about the life and legacy of Sambhaji Maharaj. This visit offered a deep historical context, enriching their understanding of regional history and its significance.

Following the historical visit, the students spent time at the Sindhutai Sapkal



Orphanage Home. The experience was both humbling and heartwarming, as they interacted

with the children and learned about the incredible work being done to provide them with a nurturing environment. This visit underscored the importance of social responsibility and left a lasting impact on everyone.

#### 10. Fireside Chat on India-US ties in the contemporary world (26th September 2024)

A fireside chat was hosted with Mr. Mike Hankey, US Consul General, Mumbai, and Shri Vijay Gokhale, former Foreign Secretary of India. The event explored US-India relations and global dynamics, beginning with remarks by Professor Alvite Singh Ningthoujam and SSIS Director, Professor Shivali Lawale.

Mr. Hankey highlighted the progress in technology-sharing and defense cooperation following PM Modi's visit. He discussed the influence of the Indian diaspora in the U.S. and noted the shared democratic values between the two nations. On trust deficits, he pointed out progress in technology-sharing and counter-terrorism collaboration, stressing the potential for a Free Trade Agreement to boost economic ties. Key initiatives like the Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (ICET) and India's shifting defense partnerships were also discussed. Mr. Hankey addressed the Ukraine-Russia conflict, urging diplomatic solutions and capacity-building efforts.



During the Q&A, students raised questions on supply chain resilience, climate change, and the Quad alliance. Mr. Hankey emphasised India's need to lower tariffs for better investment prospects and clarified the Quad's focus on non-military cooperation.

The session concluded by highlighting the growing India-U.S. partnership in defense, technology, and economic cooperation, offering valuable insights on the evolving relationship between the two nations.

#### Conclusion

The 'Deeksharambh' induction programme was a comprehensive introduction to the academic, cultural, and social dimensions of life at SSIS, Pune. The field trips not only facilitated the integration of new students into the university community but also broadened their perspectives on various societal issues. These experiences have set a strong foundation for their journey in the Masters in International Studies program.