



The Future University: Access, Quality, Relevance

Project E-QUAL: Third Student Conference

July 14-15, 2016, Jadavpur University, Kolkata

Enhancing Quality, Access and Governance of Undergraduate Education in India

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Concept Note and Call for Papers

The two-day International Student Conference “**The Future University**” will focus on the University of the Future, the emergent university of the twenty-first century. As recent studies show, higher education is facing a global challenge with respect to structures, institutions and pedagogic practices. The advent of online and digital learning platforms, as well as a newly ‘connected world’ pose challenges to traditional modes of face-to-face teaching. Yet the importance of human agents in education can never be minimized. At the same time, the ‘connected world’ is far from being a world of equal opportunity or equal development. Economic inequality, rapid technological obsolescence and problems of employability make questions of access, quality and relevance extremely complex, especially in a developing nation like India. Higher education priorities will necessarily be driven by the emergence of new fields related to ecology and environment, as well as interdisciplinary fields within humanities and social sciences. These are key areas of Project E-QUAL, focusing as it does on Enhancing Quality, Access and Governance of Undergraduate Education in India through (a) technology enabled learning and (b) pilot courses in four interdisciplinary areas:

- Critical Thinking and Knowledge Systems
- Cultural Studies
- Human Ecology
- Natural Resource Management and Sustainable Development





This conference invites papers from **university students** on any aspect of the 'Future University', focusing on, but not restricted to any of the following sub-themes:

- Imagining the University in 2084
- E-governance of 'New Universities'
- Desirables versus Achievables in Higher Education
- Can Virtual Learning Environments replace human teachers?
- Unequal Worlds: opportunity, privilege, discrimination
- Interdisciplinary learning and employability
- The 'knowledge economy'
- The goals of education: research versus industry, higher studies versus jobs
- The 'ecology' of learning environments: are universities destined for extinction?
- Look before you leap: what do school-leavers want?
- Employability of e-learners: are they 'EQUAL'?
- Caste, class and gender: societal barriers in higher education
- Majoritarianism vs the marginalised: what is education?
- In a 'connected' world, how do technophobes survive?
- Interactivity in online platforms versus person-to-person contact
- Institutional knowledge versus oral and folk heritage
- Coercion and subversion: what does higher education teach us?
- Freedom of speech and the future of the university
- The debate around 'open-source' and 'open-access': knowledge in a new age
- Technological changes and the threat of obsolescence in the digital world
- Learning on the go: do we need formal university systems?
- The death of the *pundit*: Is Google the new university?
- Can universities be ranked?
- Higher education and society

Presentations are restricted to 20 minutes of speaking time, followed by questions and discussion. Abstracts (not longer than 500 words) should be emailed to projectequal2014@gmail.com by May 25, 2016. The Conference Committee will communicate its decisions by June 15, 2016.

Conference Convenors, "The Future University" at Jadavpur University, July 2016

