

FDP on Academic leadership in Private higher education institutions

Date: 18th November to 22nd November

Program Directors: Prof. Ajith Tom James and Prof. Suresh KG

The Faculty Development Program (FDP) on Academic Leadership for Private Higher Educational Institutions, organized by IIM Bodh Gaya from 18th to 22nd November 2024, was a transformative initiative aimed at equipping faculty members with the skills necessary to navigate the evolving higher education landscape in India. Designed with a focus on leadership in private institutions, the program addressed the critical need for capable leaders who can foster innovation, academic excellence, and institutional growth. With the increasing prominence of private institutions in India and the competition posed by global universities entering the Indian market, this program aligned with the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, emphasizing faculty development as a cornerstone of educational reform.



The program, directed by Dr. Ajith Tom James and Dr. Suresh K.G., welcomed eight participants to the IIM Bodh Gaya campus, where they engaged in a comprehensive schedule of expert-led sessions, interactive discussions, and experiential learning activities. The newly developed MDP Residence provided accommodation, fostering a conducive environment for learning and networking. The opening session set the tone for the FDP, with Dr. Amit Srivastava, Chairperson of Executive Education at IIM Bodh Gaya, highlighting the importance of leadership in shaping the future of academic institutions. His remarks were supported by insights from the program directors, who encouraged active participation and shared the objectives of the program.

Over the course of five days, participants delved into various dimensions of academic leadership. The first day began with sessions on the financial dynamics of the education sector, strategies for improving NIRF rankings, and the design of impactful executive education programs. These discussions provided a strong foundation in understanding the economic and strategic aspects of running educational institutions. The second day shifted focus to research excellence, crisis management, and decision-making in academic environments. Participants learned how to craft persuasive research proposals, build institutional resilience, and apply analytical approaches to solve complex challenges.

The third day featured an outbound activity that blended cultural exploration with academic reflection. Visits to the historic Nalanda Ruins, the contemporary New Nalanda University, and the Mahabodhi Temple offered participants a chance to connect with India's academic and spiritual heritage. The experience underscored the value of integrating historical wisdom with modern educational practices, fostering a deeper appreciation for sustainability, mindfulness, and intellectual curiosity.

The sessions on the fourth day addressed strategic leadership and institutional branding, guided by eminent speakers like Prof. Vinita Sahay, the founding director of IIM Bodh Gaya. Drawing from her pioneering experience, Prof. Sahay emphasized the importance of visionary leadership and inclusivity in achieving sustainable institutional growth. The discussions on branding and employability further highlighted the need to align academic goals with industry demands, ensuring that institutions remain relevant and impactful.

On the final day, the program explored themes of governance, interpersonal communication, and professional etiquette. These sessions emphasized the role of transparent and participatory governance, mental wellbeing, and effective media management in enhancing institutional reputation. The concluding session on designing industry-integrated programs demonstrated how academic curricula could bridge the gap between education and real-world applications, thereby enhancing student employability and institutional credibility.



The valedictory session marked the end of the FDP with reflections from participants and program leaders. Dr. Amit Srivastava expressed his gratitude for the participants' enthusiasm and highlighted the program's success in addressing key challenges faced by academic leaders. Participants shared positive feedback,

praising the comprehensive and practical nature of the program, which equipped them with valuable insights and strategies for their leadership roles.

The FDP was a landmark initiative in fostering academic leadership, blending theoretical insights with practical applications. Through its thoughtfully curated sessions and cultural activities, the program inspired participants to embrace innovative approaches and cultivate resilience in their academic and professional endeavors. The five-day journey was not only an opportunity to learn from seasoned experts but also a platform to connect with peers, explore new perspectives, and envision a future of excellence in higher education.