

REPORT OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE PROGRAM (IEP) 2014 AT LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY, CANADA

16th June 2014, an important day for 97 GTU students who were granted VISA for Canada under International Experience Program-2014. The students are from CE, CSE, IT, Engineering Semester-6 and MCA Semester-4. They left for Canada to study two subjects for the duration of 6 weeks. This long process of selection, student and parent counseling, VISA process and travel plan arrangement of all the selected students, finally 97 GTU students were granted VISA for Canada under this International program. This is the third consecutive successful year where GTU students were granted 100% VISAs for Canada.

The students were divided into two groups for traveling to Canada. The first batch of 51 students left from Ahmedabad's International Airport on 12th June 2014 and the second batch of 46 students left on early morning of 13th June 2014. Laurentian University had arranged a bus to receive GTU students from Toronto International Airport to the campus in Sudbury which is 350 km north to Toronto Airport.

The first thing the students felt was that, the atmosphere was very cold. This was unexpected for the time of year in Canada. Due to the long journey and jet lag students rested for the weekend and visited the places around the campus to know the vicinity around university.

Students were briefed from GTU's International Department about the on time schedule of the foreign university and how important it is to be on time for their classes. They felt and reflected the same in their report. They have observed that their classes started on 16th June 2014 at the exact time as mentioned in their time table. (not even 5 minutes late)

For the Computer Science students, introductory lectures were conducted by Dr. Kalpdrum Passi, Associate Professor and the main Program Coordinator at Laurentian. Pharmacy introductory session was conducted by Dr. Gerardo Ulibarri.



Students leaving early morning from Ahmedabad Airport

Students' first response was "it was a nice experience to have a new environment for studies. Class rooms are well-equipped, new atmosphere, new pattern of studies".

After lecture it was time for lunch in the Alphonse Raymond Building. Students said: "The chefs here are working hard to give us the taste of Indian food."



Left the classroom where the presentation is going on by Dr. Passi. On right an empty class room picture before the class started.

There was a post lunch Orientation Program by Laurentian's residence Staff to introduce the students with the residence rules and the way to use residence rooms and the equipment provided. It

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was very helpful and good experience to be familiar with the Campus environment and Residence rules for students.

A special meet and presentation was organized from the Department of Geography on the City of Sudbury which was presented by Dr. Jorge Virchez,

A Reception was organized in the second half session on 19th June 2014 at Alphonse Raymond Building. Faculty of Science & Engineering; Rachel Trudeau, Business Officer, Faculty of Science & Engineering; Dr. Kalpdrum Passi, the coordinator of this International Experience Program and managers of LU with few more staff members were present.



Dr. Kalpdrum Passi (center) with students at the Reception

The first Friday (20th June 2014) evening was kept for City Tour. Students were taken to the city tours in three chartered city buses explicitly arranged for GTU students along with city tour guides. In addition to the city places and downtown areas, the students were taken to the famous DYNAMIC EARTH nickel mines; The Big Nickel was a place of interest and a landmark of Sudbury.

One student said “City tour was a great attempt of LU to help us know the city and the places around the city of Sudbury”.

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The best way to go around is the city bike hire scheme

The students were taken to a stadium for a special event on Friday late evening. A program was organized in the remembrance of the people who had lost their lives due to Cancer. The purpose was to bring awareness on Cancer among the local people. Students have observed that there were 3000 to 4000 people in the stadium with pin drop silence. This was a unique thing for Indian students who are habituated with large groups with bits of more sound.



[At the Stadium in Sudbury in the support of Cancer awareness](#)

The groups of people had many families who had lost their members of family in the fight against Cancer. In the event, people marched in round in the stadium holding candles in the remembrance of those who had lost their life due to cancer. There were people who were fighting with cancer among them too.

A student commented, “This showed a great humane gesture in the people here. Grand Salute to the organizers of this program and the citizens of Canada. We have many things to learn from this culture which we experienced.”

On the first weekend Saturday, 21st June 2014 students were taken to the trip of Toronto Wonderland. Students departed from their hostel at 6:30 AM for Toronto. It took five hours to reach Wonderland. Students found a huge crowd in the Wonderland entry but they were happy to know that Dr. Passi had already booked entry tickets, so they got straight entry. Dr. Passi had also accompanied the students. The trip to Wonderland was a thrilling and nice experience for students. At 10 PM, students departed from Wonderland to their hotel in Toronto.

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Trip of Canada's Wonderland -Toronto

On 22nd Morning at 11 AM, the students left for CN Tower (Canada's National Tower).

Some of the comments of students about their visit: "The CN Tower was great to see, 1815 ft. tall. As per their observation it was a thrilling and breathtaking experience to walk on the edge of such a tall structure." Many students went on to the city tour in an open bus, ship riding in lake and a visit to a huge aquarium below Ripley's Aquarium of Canada below CN tower.

Students were amazed to hear a roadside band playing music on their trip and they felt it as a unique experience which they had not experienced back home. One of the student's commented "The band near the CN Tower was simply awesome; they played trumpets, drums, and other instruments. We felt that we need more time for everything in Toronto. These were memorable moments and we had a great experience of enjoying the first weekend in Canada.



CN Tower (Left), Band playing in the street near CN Tower (Right)

Then comes week: 2, the weather was wonderful and in the drizzle of rain students have generated this portion of the report.

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The course of Wireless Communication and Mobile Programming was started by Dr. Khalid Mahmud. Students enjoyed the way he taught and the interactive classes throughout the week. In his first lecture Dr. Mahmud gave a class plan of the entire syllabus of Wireless Communication and Mobile Programming which was quite different than what they were used to under our study system. Second week gave students an experience on the aspects of New Technologies.

In the third week Professor of Web Data Management Dr. Passi gave students instructions about the way students have to study and guidelines regarding the trip to OTTAWA on Canada day.

On 1-July-2014 students went to OTTAWA the capital of Canada. This day is celebrated as "CANADA DAY". The Canadian people celebrate this day as an important festival and they wear Red clothes. Students wore red colored clothes as part of Canada day celebration. They left with Dr. Passi and Dr. Grewal in a bus on their way to Ottawa.

Students had lots of fun in their journey and played games on their way to Ottawa.



Students on their way to national day celebration in Canada

After the journey of 7 hours, students reached OTTAWA. Due to some confusion, students were unable to reach their hotel, LES SUITES TORONTO by their bus and they looked for parking place for an hour. Finally they reached their hotel and got ready to celebrate the festival. At the hotel, students had an unique experience of how efficient the emergency services in Canada are; and how much they are responsive. A fire alarm goes off, at the hotel of student residence and they were

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surprised to see in 3 to 5 minutes time; there were about 5 fire brigades and 2 vans of Canadian Cops who had come to the hotel. But after 5-10 minutes of surveying, it was declared as a false alarm due to some mischievous act by a foolish person. Students were very surprised by the time taken by emergency service to evaluate the right situation and avoid problem to other people staying in the Hotel.



At Canada day in Ottawa

In the evening, students visited the area close to the Parliament of Canada and witnessed many of their cultural activities. Students had some new experience which they never saw in India. People were doing different activities like Tattoo painting, skating, bands playing on the road. The amazing thing they observed was that the entire area was in RED. A student said “Canadian people were happy to see us celebrating their festival in their way. They joined our group and enjoyed with us. We also met some local people and tried to get a brief introduction about the history of Canada Day celebration. We went inside the campus of Canada’s Parliament; we were given Canadian Flags. “We accepted them and we respected the culture of Canada and we were experiencing new sort of things”. Students enjoyed musical night; fireworks near Canadian Parliament and participated in dance with other Canadians. A student shared “The locales were very friendly, they joined us in dance and also some police officers joined us in our enjoyment. There was a photo session; during this the entire environment was echoed with the word ‘CANADA.. CANADA’”



Students stay at Ottawa

A free tour of parliament on Canada day was available for students and they took this opportunity. They visited the House of Commons, Senate and Library. A library so huge, with over 1 million books; amazed the students. Students were made aware about the importance of library and books for personal knowledge and referencing.



Canada House of Commons

By this time, students got used to the study system and the weather of Canada, food times and the timely schedule for their studies.

Week ending with July 5, 2014 was special for the students also. On Saturday a GARBA was organized at the Alumni Hall in the Fraser Building of LU. Students dressed up in the traditional dress for GARBA. Having Garba environment in Canada was something which IEP students had never imagined.

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Students enjoying Garba at Alumni Hall of Fraser Building

Then came the Week 4: the week of exam. It was the Mid Semester exam. Students did not know the pattern of the exam so they shared mixed feeling. An excitement and some worries. Usually students have one exam in a day back in India but in Canada they had to appear in both the midterm exam on the same day. Total two course exams were taken by Pharmacy and Computer Science teachers. The schedule was from 11 AM to 12:30 PM for Wireless Communication and Mobile Computing and 3 PM to 4:30 PM for Web Data Management.

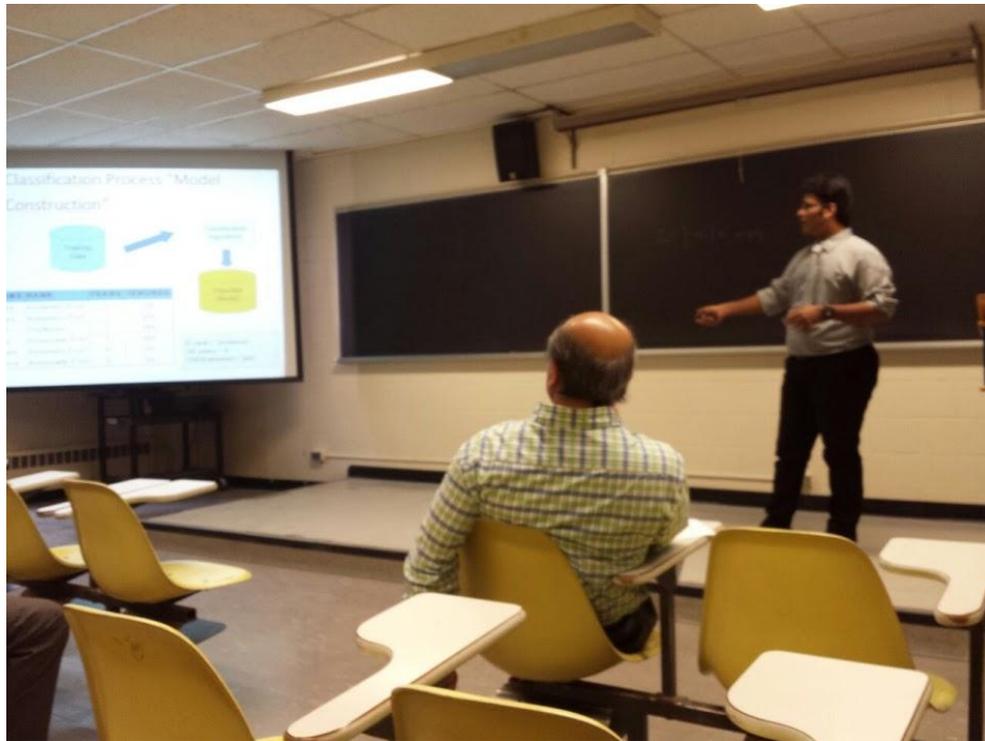
Students felt that the examination pattern was different from the way that they give their exams in their colleges. Students primarily think it is tough but after careful consideration they found it very new and very helpful in making their concepts of the subjects clear.

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Students giving mid semester exam

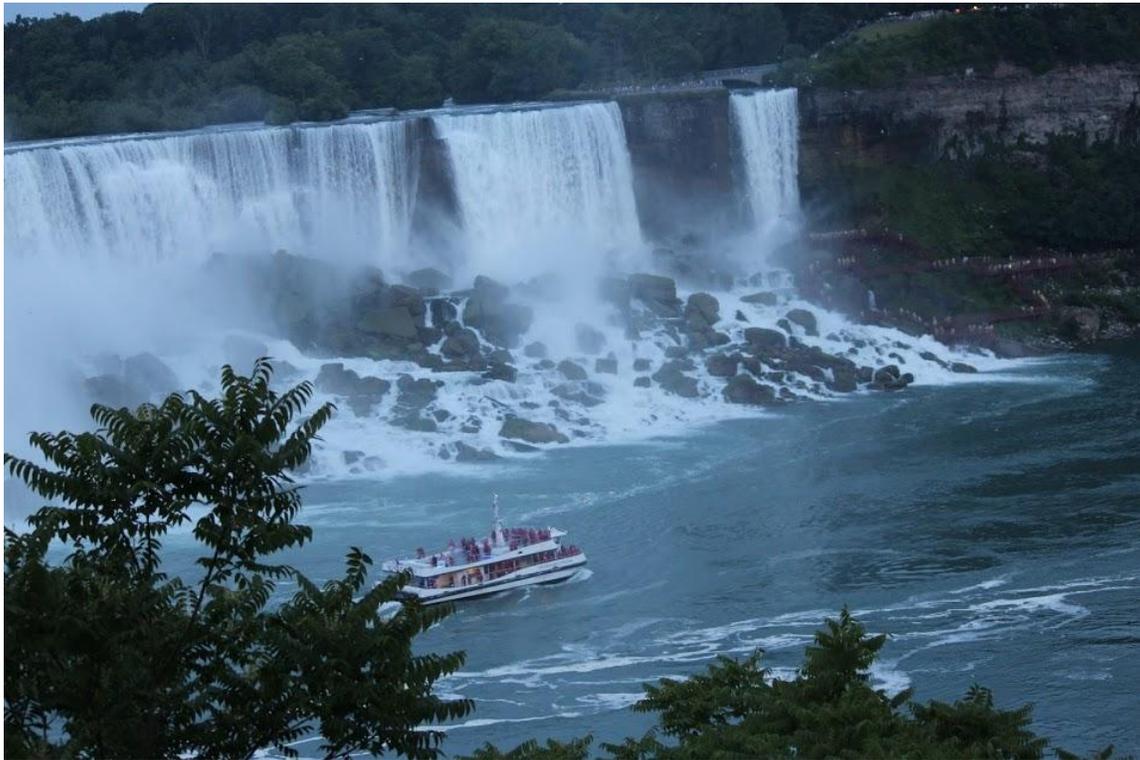
From Monday, 14-July-2014 the regular lectures were once again started by Dr. Passi and he completed the syllabus of Web Data Management. 19-July-2014, was a presentation day for students on the Research paper which they had studied during the course.



Student giving presentation on the Project to Dr. K passi

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After the Mid semester exam a trip to Niagara Falls was organized by LU for all the students. Students left for Niagara in the early morning on July 12, 2014. After their visit, a few of the comments received from the students are: “The view of Niagara Falls from hotel was awesome. From one side the citizens of USA enjoy and from the other side the citizens of Canada enjoy the beauty of Niagara Falls. Looking at the Niagara Falls we must say that humans cannot reach up to the level of nature.”





Niagara Falls Canada

Varied activities are available at Niagara Falls. Some of them are Journey behind the falls, Cruises, White Water Walk, Niagara's Fury and helicopter ride across the Niagara Falls. Night time the fall was lit with wonderful lightings. It is called Illumination effect. Students visited the Bird Kingdom to see the beauty of nature where they came across various birds and reptiles in wild. Students found an Indian Restaurant and enjoyed their meal there. Students also visited BAPS Swami Narayan Temple on their way back to Toronto. It is the first temple of North America. The carving and sculptures are amazing. Students had their delicious meal at the temple premises.



The students were preparing for their final examination for the subjects they had studied at Laurentian University. Fortunately for final exam the students got some time to prepare as they were on separate days. As a bonus, students got a day off between the two exams. They felt bit less pressure due to this as they are used to this kind of system back in India.

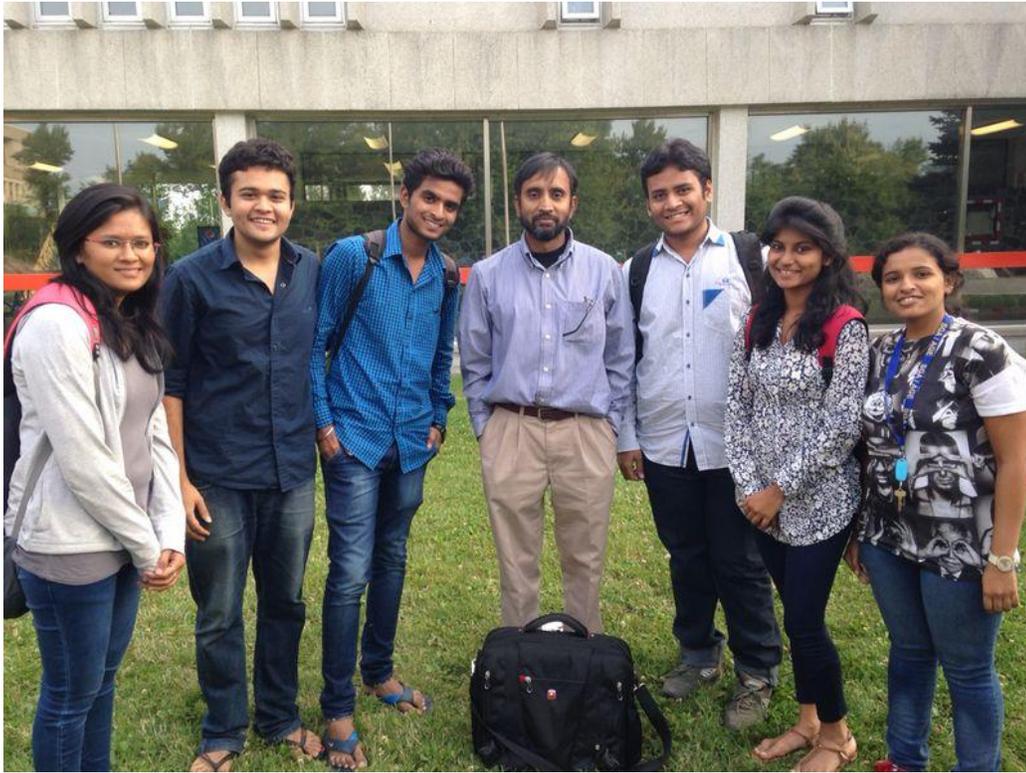
On the exam day, the weather took a strange turn and temperature fell to 8 degree which was totally unexpected at the time of the year in Canada. Students had to walk from their housing to the exam center and they felt the cold of Canada for the first time. A student said: “While going for exam hall we all had a terrifying experience and imagined how it would be in minus 56 degrees”.



Final exam of the students

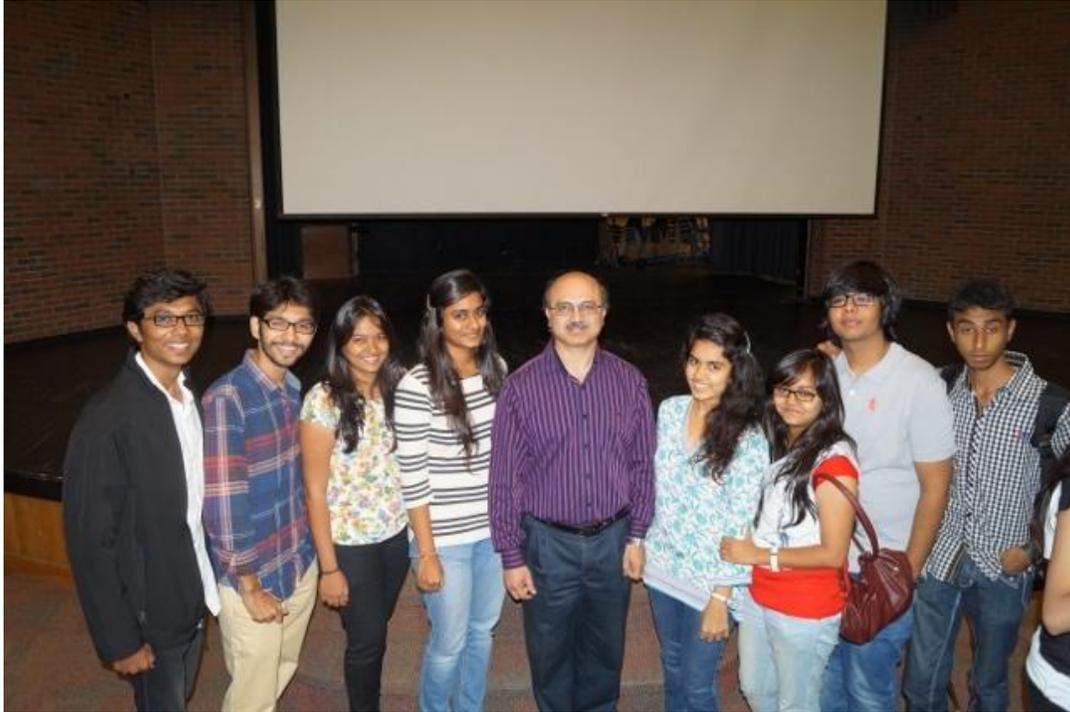
As soon as the exams were over, on the same day certificate distribution was held by Dr Passi for the students. The students were relaxed but a bit sad as their journey of IEP was about to end. Students grabbed the opportunity to take pictures with their teachers before they left.

Students with their teachers





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The return of all students was in two groups. The first group of 51 students left for India on the evening of 3rd August 2014 from Toronto International Airport. To travel to Airport from Laurentian University Campus, a bus arrangement had been done by LU for all students. The second group of remaining 46 students left on 4th August evening for India.

Many students had put their efforts to send us the information and helped us in preparing this report. Majority of the words and information are provided by them I have complied and put the information in correct order to this report to be published on GTU web. I would like to thank following students for their continuous information which helped us to finish this report.

Jainam Mehta, Shashank Rana, Harshil Gandhi, Deep Desai, Adarsh Mishra and team of students who had worked for and helped us in preparing this report and sharing their views and photographs.

Student's Feedback:

"We are very grateful to GTU for providing such precious opportunity of learning new things and enhancing our life's goal by experiencing the innovative ideas, use the global resource of learning to increase our knowledge and capabilities. And we must say that it would have been impossible to make this program successful without Hiren Sir. Thanks to GTU and special thanks to Hiren Sir, Passi Sir, Mahmud Sir". – Jainam Mehta

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“We enjoyed a lot during the Garba and finally the program ended with some DJ songs. Everyone enjoyed and we are thankful to LU, Dr. Passi and Dr. Grewal to organize such cultural programs for us.” – Harshil Gandhi and his friends

“The examination pattern emphasizes more on knowledge instead of memorizing. So, this was the first phase for which we actually came here. This experience will be quite helpful in the final examination here and also in many competitive exams in future.”- Jainam Mehta, Deep Desai, Adarsh Mishra, Shashank Rana