

# Student Mentor Programme



Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology,  
Nagpur

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## 1.0 Introduction

The Student Mentor Programme (SMP) is a programme within the VNIT, Nagpur student community, with the following primary objectives of:

1. Enabling constructive interaction, guidance and mentorship of junior students by senior students
2. Providing a reliable and comprehensive support system to motivate students to excel in both academic and non-academic fields and to make the most of their life at the Institute.

The two way system is devised to help freshman to be at ease with the new environment of VNIT. In this system a group of 15 mentees (freshman) of a particular branch are allotted a Student Mentor (SM) of the same branch. At the same time, one of the teacher, who is teaching a particular section is made Faculty Mentor of about 40 students of that section. This scheme is given below:

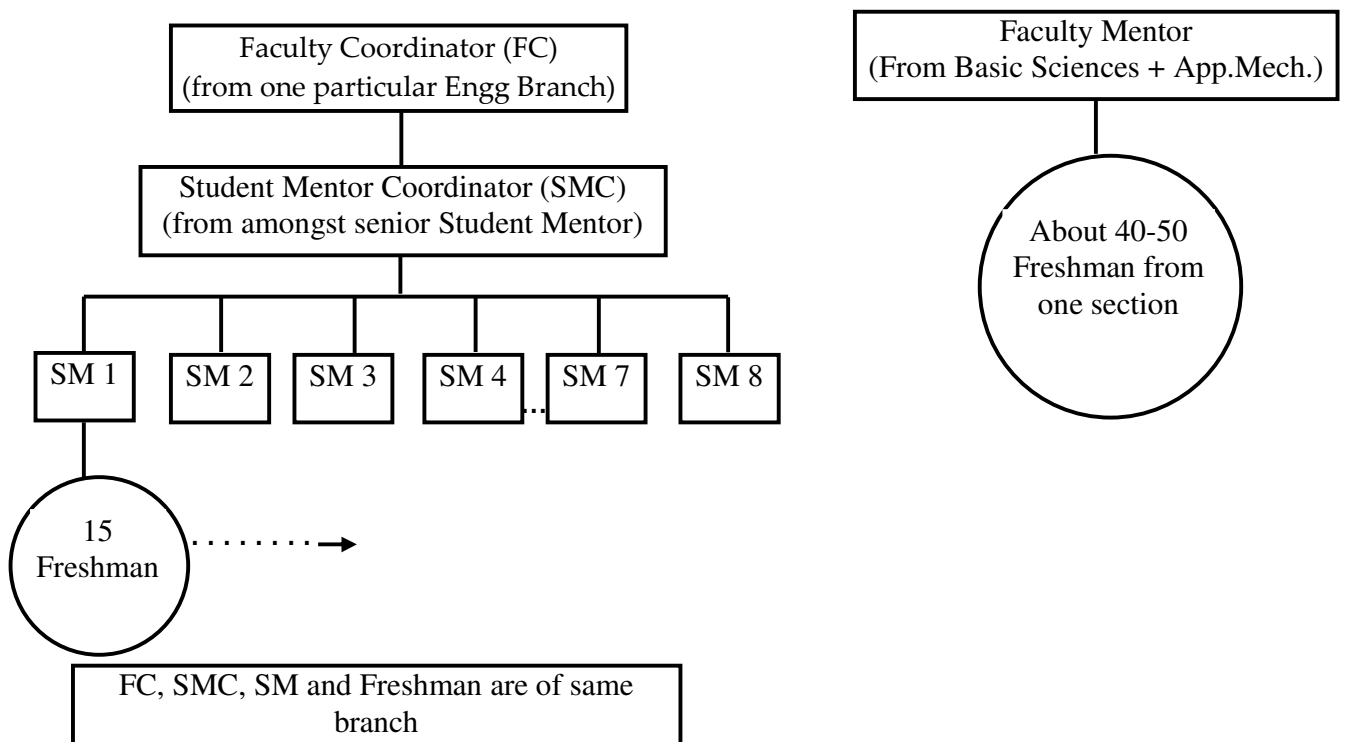


Fig. 1 Scheme of SMP

## 2.0 Objectives of the SMP

The objectives of the SMP include:

- To help undergraduate fresh students understand the challenges and opportunities present in the Institute and develop a smooth transition to campus life
- To counsel academically weak undergraduate first year students and to play an important role in helping troubled students cope with academic, extra-academic and personal issues
- To provide positive role models to first year undergraduate students in the institute
- To proactively try to identify various issues of concern to the general student populace and to bring them to the notice of the concerned authorities
- To provide them one such friend among the seniors, with whom they can freely share their problems, ask any queries which they otherwise feel shy to ask or share.

The SMP endeavors to pursue these objectives by carefully identifying those who can act as an anchor and guide for a freshman or an academically weak student to bank upon. Student Mentors are selected to play this role and are given the authority to pursue the mission of this programme.

Student Mentors are respected, well-balanced students usually belonging to the IIIrd year B. Tech and IVth year B.Arch. A student mentor's role may be perceived to be facilitative, supportive and developmental for the student community in general. The implementation of the SMP and its details are covered subsequently in this document.

## 3.0 Structure of the SMP

This programme primarily deals with first year undergraduate students. The senior students, called Student Mentors (SM) are responsible for helping a set of freshmen adjust to the new environment and subsequently monitor their progress throughout the year. Every undergraduate freshman is covered by this programme.

People involved in the Student Mentor Programme

- 1) Dean (Academic)
- 2) Dean (Students Welfare)
- 3) Prof.-in-charge, SMP
- 4) Associate Dean (Hostel)
- 5) Student Counselor/s
- 6) Medical Officer
- 7) Faculty Coordinators - One from each Discipline/Branch
- 8) Faculty Mentors from Basic Science Department
- 9) Alumni representation- Local.
- 10) Parent Representation: One Lady and One Gent

### **Student Mentors (SMs)**

Selected students from the IIIrd year B.Tech and IVth year B.Arch constitute the team of SMs. Each of them would be assigned a group of first year students. Each Student Mentor reports directly to the Faculty co-coordinator. He/she would be the direct point of interaction with the first year students and may report special cases for the consideration of Faculty Co-ordinator.

### **4.0 Essential Qualities of a Student Mentor (SM)**

The qualities mentioned below are guidelines used by the Faculty co-coordinators in selecting the new Mentor team. A Student Mentor is normally a student from the IIIrd year B.Tech and IVth year B.Arch.

- Empathy and humility are the most essential qualities for any mentor to possess. It is necessary for a mentor to empathize with the wide variety of situations his mentees could face and be humble enough not to impose their own opinions but to tailor advice to the mentee's needs.
- Ethics are of paramount importance for ISMs and they should be able to instill the same in their mentees.
- SMs should be academically inclined and capable of persuading others to be the same.
- SMs should be someone as a role model people can look up to, because of their achievements and personality. SM shall be a person of high integrity.

### **5.0 Functioning of the SMP**

The Student Mentor body is vested with the following powers:

- In matters pertaining to hostel-life, which require intervention in the interest of the wards, the student mentors are empowered to do so by notifying the case to the hostel authorities. The same must be taken with utmost seriousness by the concerned hostel bodies. Student Mentors may enter freshmen wings at any time in order to talk with freshmen if they seek his/her help.
- Every Student mentor has the right to halt any activity that involves freshmen. Such activities include, but are not limited to: introduction sessions conducted by seniors, either personal or relating to extracurricular activities, fundae sessions in hostels which extend beyond acceptable limits of time or decency etc. Senior/Junior Prefect are advised to keep the SMs informed about any activities involving freshmen.

- In matters pertaining to academics, which require preventive or curative action to be taken in the interest of the wards, the mentor has the responsibility and the right to bring the case to the notice of the concerned Faculty co-ordinator/ Faculty Mentor, who would in turn take the necessary action.
- In matters that affect the wards, and can only be resolved at the institute level, the Student Mentors shall bring the matter to the notice of Faculty Co-ordinator, Student Mentor co-ordinator and Deans. It is however essential that the mentor team works in harmony with the other functionaries of the Institute.
- In case of fresher who needs additional help, Students Mentors shall co-ordinate with Faculty co-ordinator. Student Mentor will also receive inputs/guidance from Faculty Mentor.

## **6.0 Role of the Faculty Co-ordinators (FC)**

- The FCs play a very important role in selecting the team of Institute Student Mentors. Selecting a team of responsible, sensitive and dedicated mentors is very crucial to the success of the SMP.
- The FCs oversee the day-to-day functioning of the SMP. For this, they must keep in regular touch with the SMs and freshmen to ensure that the primary objective of the programme is being fulfilled.
- The SMs are expected to give regular updates regarding the functioning of the SMP to the FC.
- In particular, if a SM feels that a particular freshman is facing academic/emotional problems that cannot be handled by him/her, the SM must report the matter to the FC and Counselor immediately.
- The FCs must ensure accountability from all SMs to the extent possible. As such, they may recommend suspension or removal of SMs from the team for dereliction of duty/non-performance to the SMP body.
- The SMP body should interact and share their experiences once in a month in the odd semester, and twice in even semester.

## 7.0 Role of Faculty Mentor (FM)

- Faculty Mentor shall meet respective batches during their Laboratory classes in the Department. Information regarding timing of these laboratory classes is given.
- FM shall certainly meet students of their batches in the first week and discuss general matters and make them at ease.
- Subsequently, they shall meet students after the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> sessional examinations and discuss their performance and comfort level
- A meeting with students just before the end Semester Examination is very essential.
- FM shall counsel the students with difficulty in adjusting to the environment, and if need be, help them to approach Institute counselor.
- FM shall also, advise students to take help of their Student Mentors (SM), as per their branch of engineering.
- FM shall sign the leave applications, request for absentee exam from students, after ascertaining the reasons, thereof.

## 8.0 Role of the Student Mentor (SM)

Each Institute Student Mentor is assigned a group of 15-20 freshmen, who would henceforth become his/her mentees. Under normal circumstances, it is the primary duty of the SM to guide the group of students assigned to him/her through their first year in the institute. However, the responsibility of each mentor extends to the entire first year batch and hence, the Mentor should feel free to intervene in any matter related to freshmen.

- The Mentor should ensure to the best of his/her ability that the freshmen (especially his/her mentees) are able to adjust comfortably to life at VNIT - both in the institute and in the hostel.
- In view of online teaching, interaction, exams etc, SM shall inform the mentee about the online mode of education/platform/exams etc. The Dos and Donts should be shared. Tips about how to resolve issues faced should be informed and helped in some cases. SMs can diligently foresee some of the issues that may be faced by mentees, and address them.

- For this, it is imperative that the Mentor establishes a close rapport with his/her mentees. In view of online teaching/learning, a common online meeting with mentee as well as parents can be held, and rapport with parents can also be created.
- The Mentor should see to it that he/she meets them at certain critical junctures of the first year such as the first few weeks of the semester, well before Ist sessional, IInd sessional, end semester exams and at the time of results.
- The Mentor must act on any complaint of misbehavior by a senior. The institute has strict policies against ragging of any form.
- Time management is a crucial aspect of one's life at VNIT, and the Mentor should tell the mentees about this aspect. The Mentor has to impress upon his/her mentee the need to maintain a balance between academic and co-curricular activities, so that one utilizes one's time at VNIT in the most productive manner.
- The Mentor must ensure that no activity is forced upon any freshman against his/her will. The thin line between forcing and persuasion is one which the Mentor has to judge based upon his/her perception of the freshman, and the matter at hand.
- The Mentor should be ready to help his/her mentee overcome any problems (academic or social) in an advisory role and act as a responsible role model. At the same time, he must realize the importance of making his/her mentee independent and self-reliant. Spoon-feeding is a strict no-no.
- Mentors should immediately inform the FC or the Student Counselor regarding any potentially serious case related to their mentees or any other student (if they come to know of it).
- Mentors are expected to play their role as responsible seniors using their own discretion.
- There are many activities, seminars, workshops which take place in Institute, which freshmen are unaware of. Mentors can thus inform their mentees about any such event going on catering to his/her mentee's interest.
- Mentors are as well expected to keep a check on whether his/her mentees haven't deviated from their track and fallen prey to any bad habits. The mentor should



be influential in helping his mentee cope up from any such activities if found indulged in.

## 9.0 Checklist for Student Mentor (SM)

Following things a mentor should definitely know about his/her mentees by the end of the first month:

1. Name, room no. and contact number
2. Whether he/she is at ease in interacting with others? Is he too reserved?
3. If he/she faces any Language problems
4. If he/she suffers from any medical issues
5. If he/she hails from a remote village/town/metropolis
6. Whether he/she is enthusiastic for engineering/academics
7. His/her hobbies?
8. Whether he/she is able to cope up with the academics or has he/she given up?
9. Whether he/she has fallen prey to any bad habit?
10. Attendance (rough estimate)
11. How well he/she has settled in the institute
12. Is mentee communicating regularly with family/friends ?
13. Whether online teaching/learning happening as per expectation ? Any issues in the network connectivity or any other problems faced.

## 10.0 Important Phone Numbers

| <b>Important Phone Numbers:</b>     |  |                            |                                     |
|-------------------------------------|--|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Dean (Student Welfare)              | 0712-2801320                                   | <b>Hospitals:</b>          |                                     |
| Dean (Academic)                     | 0712-2801301                                   | VNIT Ambulance             | 8623056246                          |
| Academic Section                    | 0712-2801241                                   | VNIT Health Centre         | 0712-2801342                        |
| Exam Section                        | 0712-2801278                                   | Sr. Medical Officer, VNIT  | 9422104694                          |
| Account Section                     | 0712-2801242                                   | Medical Officer, VNIT      | 9423057484                          |
| Sport Section                       | 0712-2801368                                   | Meditrina Hospital         | 6669600,6669666                     |
| Library Xerox                       | 0712-2801095                                   | Krims Hospital             | 2451188,6614564,6614565             |
| <b>Hostel Section:</b>              |  | Rathi Nursing Hospital     | 0712-2420044                        |
| Hostel Office                       | 0712-2801233/1117                              | Snake Catchers (Sarpmitra) | 0712-2546121,9822947083, 9604855276 |
| Associate Dean (Hostel)             | 0712-2801119                                   |                            |                                     |
| Asstt. Registrar (Hostel)           | 0712-2801373                                   |                            |                                     |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> year Boys Hostel    | 0712-2801822                                   | <b>Police Station:</b>     |                                     |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> year Girls Hostel   | 0712-2801012                                   | Bajaj nagar Police Stn     | 0712-2232773                        |
| Warden (1 <sup>st</sup> yr.; Boys)  | 9970335592,9373045542, 7983881146              | Fire Brigade               | 101, 2567777, 2567029               |
| Warden (1 <sup>st</sup> yr.; Girls) | 9860432387, 9826090830, 9960586984, 9850837937 |                            |                                     |
| <b>Security Section:</b>            |  | <b>Railway Inquiry:</b>    |                                     |
| Security Office                     | 0712-2801315/1222                              | Toll Free                  | 139                                 |
| Adm Building Gate                   | 0712-2801202                                   | Nagpur Railway Stn.        | 0712-2548263                        |
| Abhayankar nagar Gate               | 0712-2801011                                   | <b>Air Inquiry:</b>        |                                     |
| South Ambazari Gate                 | 0712-2801013                                   | Air India                  | 1800-180-1407, 1800-22-7722         |
| Yashwant Nagar Gate                 | 0712-2801014                                   | IndiGo Airlines            | 09212783838, 099103 83838           |
| <b>Bank:</b>                        |  | Go Air                     | 092232 22111, 02025662111           |
| Canara Bank, VNIT                   | 0712-2801020,2228001                           |                            |                                     |
| SBI VRCE Branch                     | 0712-2801234,2226046                           |                            |                                     |
| Post Office, VNIT                   | 0712-2220351                                   |                            |                                     |