

With you, for you - Delhi University tells students

Admissions to Delhi University (DU) are due to start in less than a month and the premier varsity is going all out this time to help nervous college aspirants and their equally harried parents with information and counselling.

What's more, even existing students are about to find the going easy thanks to e-learning that will complement classroom teaching.

DU has over 70 colleges. Youngsters, fresh out of school, run around for application forms, submit them, keep track of entrance exam dates, cut-off percentages and then finally register themselves.

To answer the hundreds of queries that students generally have at this time, the university officials launched a helpline earlier this month. Needless to say the officials have since been bombarded with calls.

'Right from the start, we have been receiving more than 150 calls a day. Initially, the phone line was open Monday to Friday, but because of the overwhelming response we decided to keep it operational on Saturdays, which is normally a holiday in the university,' said Gurpreet Singh Tuteja, deputy dean, students welfare, in the university.

Some of the calls have been from as far as the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, besides from the northeast and southern India.

According to Tuteja, the helpline (011-27662507, 27662508), is manned by a panel of 17 faculty members and student counsellors. They answer queries ranging from which course one should opt for or which college is good for which subject or whether the admission form for accommodation facilities can be filled by a relative.

Some of the university's ex-students have also come to the rescue of those not satisfied with the information given in the university's website and through the helpline.

'Like last year, this year too we will have student counsellors who will station themselves at all the centres where the admission forms are available,' said Amrita Bahari, president of the Delhi University Students Union.

'Most of them are ex-students of DU who are eager to help out students and their parents in the admission process.'

But it's not just new students who are getting all the help. DU will soon be promoting e-learning with the launch of videos, animation, simulation and virtual labs on a web portal.

A.K. Bakshi, director of the Institute of Lifelong Learning (ILL) that the university started last year to promote e-learning, said the initiative would be launched in the coming academic year with a few subjects.

'We are working on the study material of 10 subjects, which include life sciences, maths, physics, chemistry and English, but we will upload the study material of only some of them this academic

year.

'Hopefully, this initiative will help the students understand their subjects clearly and in the process feel that learning need not be boring...it can be fun,' Bakshi told IANS.

Some, like the students of the philosophy department in DU, have created their own web portal to interact and share their problems on just about any issue.

'It was some time last year when I realised that except a few of us, the rest of my classmates generally kept quiet during class. There was simply no interaction happening...when a philosophy class should be abuzz with discussions!' said Manvitha Singamsetty, a post-graduate student of philosophy.

'That's when I decided to create the web portal 'Wisdom Seekers'. With just 16 members - that's how big our class is - the portal is now an active platform where discussions, be it on our syllabi or Pink Floyd, take place,' she told IANS.

'Wisdom Seekers' thus is a platform where members post questions, doubts, share videos, music and even use as a notice board to post any changes in their class schedule.

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