

COMPETE *Plus*



THREE WISE
MONKEYS

8

The picture is from my terrace in Kolkata, West Bengal. This was taken around the time when Cycle Amphan hit this area. Even though scary the sight was like never seen before, kinda beautiful. Stay safe, Stay indoors.

Photo Credit : By Aashka Raichand, BBA Sem-3, UWSB

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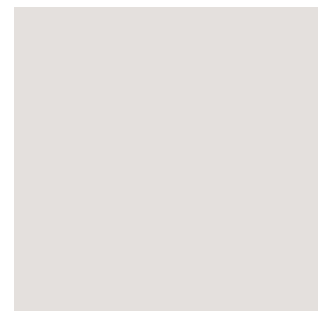
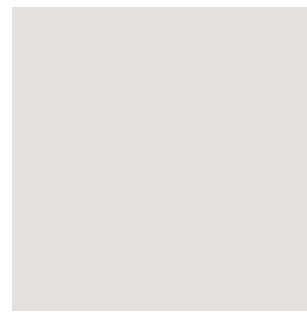
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Online Classes – Solution or Filler

-By Srotaswini Bhowmick, Assistant Professor, USLM



Spring this year hardly looks colourful or chirpy. Most of us are sitting at home abiding by the lockdown decision of the State. The Covid-19 crisis has reached its peak in many parts of our country. Economy, Health, Education – all these sectors are in a bad shape right now. Some of us are struggling to work from home amidst the global chaos.

Many educational institutions are striving to conduct online teaching sessions for their students. It involves Zoom or Skype classrooms, audio and video recordings uploaded on YouTube and institution websites, various quizzes and assignment submissions through email and the list is vast and varied. While the organisations and most of the teachers are enthusiastically at it, many students are not finding this easy.

A report published this week in The Telegraph says that the Vice Chancellor of a premier public university of our country is warning the education system about a clear digital divide.

One may say that it is a populist approach; that there are limits to digital divide alarmism; that

online classes do not 'create' the digital divide; perhaps they are accentuating it. And we know that these days plenty of college students use smartphones. The question is whether the phone internet support is sufficient to substitute physical classrooms?

Ultra-urban population feels that everybody in the country is flooded with internet and that things like digital India has already happened. But we need to remind ourselves that having a smartphone is one thing, connectivity in that device is completely a different ballgame altogether. 70% of India, even most of the municipalities (leave aside the villages) get at most 2.5G connection, not even 3G which is alright for using WhatsApp, checking mails etc. but not enough for even downloading videos, leave alone live streaming. So as long as even 1% of students have problem with digital access, Indian Universities cannot endorse online classes for select group of more privileged students, and promote an alleged learning divide.

The moment we come to the talk of 'divide', we need to widen the scope of it. Divides are promoted by economic background, social

community, family type, gender and last but not the least, religion. To give an example, I have some female students who have sufficient internet access at home but are not comfortable to attend online AV sessions for more than half an hour. Honestly, these girls are brightest of the lot. Their family structure demands them to do household chores or at least be support for the older women who cook and clean, all the more when they are at home. These youngsters prefer audio lecture clips because they can access them anytime they wish to, maybe when the families doze off and no one can disturb or distract their academic commitment.

We as educators are sincerely trying and will keep trying our best to connect to our students through virtual media, in our professional and individual capacities, to ensure that there is some kind of academic interaction with learners during these unforeseen circumstances. But we need not assume that this attempt is a substitute for our regular lectures that are required to do justice to the completion of courses. These can act as mere support but surely cannot be an all-encompassing and sufficient alternative system to teach and learn.

We need to come up with better answers. Our country needs to take a decision to postpone one entire semester, if need be. The economic condition of the nation tells us that it will take a minimum of six months to revive the health of the job market. As far as graduating batches and their further admissions are concerned, if national education board decides a postponement then, by default, that will push all the semesters forward for six months for all. And it would fall in place in a cycle where a uniform policy may benefit students of all institutions in an even manner. Till then these online interactive sessions will remain in the discourse as favourable methods of experiment, not pebbles in the path of solution.

Get Ready To Fight

-By Aritra Sarkar, Senior Executive – Digital Marketing, KU



You are not strong
Not strong enough
Never was
Because you always fought
A battle
Against yourself
You won- you lost
Lost yourself
Your strength became
Your weakness!

But you believed that
You were
You are
And always will be
A dreamer
Who can
'Dream a dream'
Of a better future
And that's what
Will always be
Your driving force!

The nightmares are over
Because you believed
In yourself
And the fighting stopped
Because when you
Believe in self-love
You live a
Happy life!

A happy life where
You loved
You trusted
You didn't know
You couldn't recognize
You lost
You lost yourself
You lost time
You were broken
You were scared
You fought everyday
You lost again and again
You were hopeless!

You were searching
You found out
You have to face your fears
You have to
You have to..
You fought back
You fought back hard enough
You started winning
You lost again but
You know now
You are capable
You may lose again
You may lose the battle but
You will surely win the war!!

"So, get up
And get ready to fight!"

Rising Star Of The Month

-By Aastha Thakur, BBA SEM-4, UWSB

1. Tell us about your latest accomplishment

I attended a Leadership Summit early this year in Dantiwada where I was invited as a chief guest and co-faculty accompanied by a well-known management trainer Mr. Suresh Patel. Also early this year I had adopted a government school in Khedbrahma, near Ambaji in Gujarat. I help the school run in whatever efficient way I can.

2. When did you ever think of such a noble thought of helping people around?

Ever since I was in class 7, I have been a part of Rotary Club events, I was a very shy and introvert girl back then. The Rotary events helped me overcome my shyness and stage fear. Being involved in various social work events since early growing years I was very confident I wanted to help as many people as I can as I grow up and become independent. I have just completed 6 years of being associated with the Rotaract club and I am now a Community Service Director at the club.



3. What/Who motivated you to begin with?

My father has been one of my inspirations because since childhood I have seen him do a lot of social work and that has encouraged me to work for the welfare of society.

4. Tell us more with regards to the awards and compliments you received for the same?

I have received various accolades and applauded for my work achieved as the youngest member of the Rotaract Club. Recently in

an inter-state meet, I was awarded the 'Best Speaker' amongst 3054 participating teams. I am the youngest Community Service Director at the club and I have also served as a social media chairwoman for the same. As part of such social service communities, I have had the opportunities of representing my district at various zonal meets in the last few years. Adding to that a lifetime opportunity of writing articles for the district governor's newsletter and having them published in Jaipur.



The other perks of being a part of social services was having the chance of chairing a very special project called Mashaal Rally, an International Project where we distributed solar lamps to the needy.



5. What are your plans for this year?

This year since I have adopted a government school I will work for the welfare of those students mostly in my summer break. I'm going to spend my time with those kids making them learn new skills which will help them for a lifetime. Other than that I am thinking of starting a street school for children of slum areas. Thinking of this on a serious note, and I shall need a lot of helping hands in the same... you are all invited to join hands.

6. Have you talked about the plans on other platforms to create awareness? If yes, what exactly did you do?

Yah, I have talked about this in Rotaract Club with my fellow mates as to accomplish this project I will need them backing up as my team. We can take this to digital platforms as well, if only I find the right person to help out with it.

7. Who is your constant motivator?

My constant motivator is my father. He has always encouraged me and supported me and been a guiding beam for me.



8. How can you help those who also want to contribute or give back to society in a similar way that you are doing?

I think whoever wants to help or be a part of my projects in a similar way can always contact me, or team up with a few friends and I can guide them on how to implement their ideas and help in social welfare issues. I hope my experiences can pave the way for many others and inspire them to take up such work.

9. Share us your most memorable experience in the journey so far?

Recently, after I adopted a small school, I went there to distribute sweaters to young kids. This was also my first visit to the school. I saw many of them didn't even have proper footwear. A lot of them were orphans, a few others came from BPA and were highly dependent on the mid-day meals available at the school. It made me so emotional. I realised what luxuries we are all living in, these kids still live with smiles and laughter. I thank God every morning for everything I have. This has made me more determined to do more for these kids.

10. Anything that you want to share with the KU fellow mates?

One person can make a huge difference and I think everyone should try investing their time for the not-so-privileged ones and I believe we all are born with the ability to change someone's life and we should not waste it. And we can start helping people with very small things and trust me you will not only feel happy but also satisfied with the smiles you are spreading. You can contact me anytime if you really wish to help someone. I would be glad to help you in reaching out to them.

Hope For A Cure

-By Nishtha Agrawal, Assistant Professor, UWSL



Our fingers are all crossed
As we all hope for a cure
A cure to end the pandemic of Covid-19
Which has killed many like Ebola did in 2015
Friends have journeyed to the land of the dead
Enemies have journeyed as well
We are now united by sympathies but still divided by entities
Our compassions cannot travel beyond the walls of our rooms
We are now left to succumb to the limitations set by WHO
As that is better me and you
Our fingers are still crossed
As we hope for a cure
A cure to make things back to how it used to be like before.

Three Wise Monkeys

-By Bhavi Shah, B.Des LSA Semester VIII, UID

My dad always says, "Never have NO for an answer when it comes to working, do everything that you're asked to even if it seems impossible for you to achieve, even if sometimes you don't feel like it or even if it's just a choice. Do it wholeheartedly and give it your hundred percent, you never know how it turns out for you and if nothing, you will surely learn something."

Hello! I am Bhavi Shah, from Lifestyle Accessory Design Department, semester 8. I took my dad's advice and it sure landed me with an opportunity I had never dreamt of. I was doing my Graduation Project with Arnaya, a constituent company of Trivedi Group. I joined the company with the intention of learning and gaining experience with something I had not learnt in college. The company deals with marble and it was altogether a new domain for me to explore.



Bhavi Shah student of Lifestyle accessory department, UID(Gandhinagar) working on initial mock model for memento in Clay; Image credit- Bhavi Shah

The owner of the company, Mr. Kiran Trivedi was kind enough to take interest in an intern's work and one fine day, asked to see my portfolio. Seeing a few projects where I worked with clay, he instantly asked me if I could help the artisan cast the 3 Wise Monkeys in clay. Without even knowing the purpose of this project, I said a yes. The same day, I started working with the artisan and it took me around three hours to finish the models. Next day, being happy with the work, I was handed over the project under his supervision and was given the brief that the memento was to be presented to the President of the USA by the Prime Minister of India on his visit to Ahmedabad, India on 24th February 2020. I did not quite take it seriously initially and thought it must be a backup option. Nevertheless, it was supposed to be delivered in two days and thus started the hustle.



Final artwork 3D scanned, marble cut on CNC machine, details manually carved, polished and assembled to perfection. It was manufactured by Trivedi Corporation; Image credit- Bhavi Shah

Surviving the Monday blues, I was casually working on my graduation project at the office when my phone started beeping with a stream of messages from my parents and family to see the news on the television. The picture and video of Mr. Narendra Modi presenting the memento, Gandhiji's 3 Wise Monkeys to Mr. Donald Trump and the First Lady, Melania Trump surfaced on the television and the internet. Seeing your hard work is appreciated and that too by the most powerful man in the world, definitely feels good.

The knowledge I acquired at UID gave me confidence in my skills and helped me bag this opportunity. It gave me a tiny sense of accomplishment even though this is just the beginning and there is yet a long way to go.

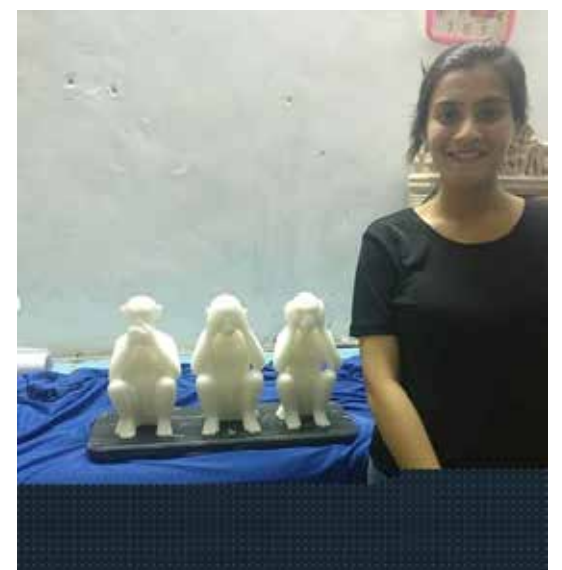
Truly said, opportunities knock when you least expect it and this was definitely one of those.



Hon'ble Mr. PM Modi gifting Mahatma Gandhi's iconic 'Three Wise Monkeys' memento to Hon'ble US President, Mr. Donald Trump Donald Trump during Sabarmati Ashram visit; Image credit-rediff.com



Karigar doing further finishing of the Marble model; Image credit- Bhavi Shah.



Co-‘vid’ – ‘To Reason Upon’ Collaboratively

-By Vivek Karmokar, HOD Foundation Department, UID

‘Vid’ is a Sanskrit word meaning ‘to reason upon’ and ‘understanding’. Since the past 5 years, an enduring inquiry that has frequented design educators, instructors, heads, chiefs, officials and proprietors is whether design could be taught online? The cherry on the top came all of a sudden; as the incredible wave swept everyone off their feet, rattling all on the expanse of on the web.

In any case, there exists a gullible perspective on the connection among teaching and learning. Albeit, an educator could introduce material clearly and effectively to understudies who hold tight every word and still have the students learn nothing significant. We all have learnt things, which were not explicitly taught to us, thus, we often realize that students too learn a lot by themselves, even that they are not explicitly taught. Even though teachers may think that students have learnt what was poured into them, they often learnt something quite different. Thus, there are things that can be learnt without being taught and things that can be taught without being learnt. So, the question then is “can anything be taught”? Or is it that nothing worth learning can be taught.

Learning is a creative process, like an act of discovery. What the teacher does has an influence on what is learned. This influence neither can be easily described, nor can be quantified. Considering, learning is, in some sense potentially infinite and what is taught is finite, then in that case, what is learned goes beyond what is taught. Which implies that what is learned, greatly depends on the student and the contribution of the student is considerably more important than that of the teacher.

Most design educators are skeptical that design subjects could be delivered fully online. It arises from design’s iterative process based, f-2-f feedback and dialogical approach to teaching and learning. It is also due to its studio culture, action and reflection, project based, hands- on activities as its core pedagogy. Interestingly though, having thrown off guard, to teach online, helped us to pinpoint which aspects of the studio environment could be translated into successful online learning experience. While we observed that majority of the students attended and liked the online learning experience, despite experiencing unprecedented times, students also had a difficult time understanding the iterative process of design while presenting design assignments and projects. The positives were flexibility of online delivery, students getting to create their own study schedules, learn and complete assignments at their own pace, focus on the learning, especially when modules were well designed, organized and presented well. Faculty, obviously with the experience so far in conducting f-2-f sessions felt that they missed facial/ body language/ non-verbal communication/ dynamic peer interaction/ collaboration and teamwork, which demonstrate student comprehension of subject.

In certain context, online design education is possible and does produce positive results, like the introductory design subjects based on projects that can be created digitally with design software. However, it may not be suitable for a course, which requires the creation of a physical object, coordinated effort with collaboration and teamwork. Since we are all in it, we have to investigate, learn by doing and perceive how advanced innovation in digital technology keeps on reshaping the manner in which higher education design discipline subjects are taught.



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