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DEAN'S MESSAGE

Dear students,

As we have finished mid-semester exams recently and entered post mid- semester phase, I wish you all the very best for preparing your assignments and projects this month. Dissertation is also very important part of the semester; I hope all of you have been working rigorously on it. Do meet your guide, discuss the progress and burn midnight oil to successfully complete it on time. I have full faith in your caliber and am sure of the success ahead. It is also the time for events, workshop and seminars for learning from outside textbooks. Make sure, you all attend the events lined up in April and enrich yourself.

Best wishes,

Dr. Gayatri Rai,

Associate Professor & In charge -Academic Affairs, USLM

OUT OF SYLLABUS THINK INSIDE THE BOX FIRST

(15TH APRIL, 2022)

Venue: Karnavati University Campus

Time: 10.45 am

Guest: Mr. Annu Kapoor

Interviewer: Ms. Preeti Das

Felicitating: Dr. Preeti Nakhat

It is not very often that the presence of a celebrity actor or public figure leaves a pool of audience in astounding silence not only because of their popular persona but also due to their intellect and inspirational personal story. The rolling thunder of claps and enthusiastic welcome at the beginning and at the conclusion of the session is a testament to the legacy of Mr Annu Kapoor and the tremendous impact it had on the audience of USLM, from quoting Kabir's dohas and Persian poetry to stories of Krishna and Sudama. Through an ingenious and quirky little exercise with students, he addressed and established the longevity of retro Hindi music in comparison to more recent popular Hindi songs as the former present us with a clarity of thought and meter missing in today's music.

Kick starting the day, he established his long term affinity with Gujarat in personal and professional capacity. Annu Kapoor shared his memory from January 1994, the live stage performance of antakshari and addressed the fact that something that was an integral but also a seemingly trivial part of desi culture became a blockbuster show on mainstream Television.

The session trailed on the caravan to the Indian villages as Annu sir shared his experiences of traveling globally, performing in different capacities while reliving some of his nostalgic moments.

"I never wanted to become an actor, but unfortunately the circumstances forced me to join my father's folk theatre company" he said motivating students to pursue excellence and to not be bogged down by superficial parameters of success and fame.

Various facets of his personality, such as his knowledge on plants and farming were also addressed, "I am a farmer, working for vermicompost."

It was a pleasant surprise to see Annu Kapoor the polyglot, the aspect of his persona not many are familiar with. He dedicated his fluency in languages ranging from Punjabi to Persian, to his mother's influence.

In a rather casual, conversational tone, he addressed subjects such as love, sex, and the conflict between religion and science, he explored the literary and theatrical beauty of these concepts. Along with it he opened up about his first experience with romance merely at a tender age of ten which the audience found exciting as well as relatable.

When asked about cinema, success and learning, Mr. Kapoor was unapologetic in his critique of the Hindi film industry and the superstar culture; "Never confuse success with talent", "Kai log safe khelne ke chakkar me bure actor ban Gaye hai".

Every person in the audience was in awe of Mr Kapoor's encyclopediac and eclectic knowledge of myths, stories, philosophy, and poetry from diverse sources.

Towards the end, Kapoor sir dedicated a song to the young minds of KU as a token of his blessings to the young minds and future of the country.



OUT OF SYLLABUS

(16TH APRIL, 2022)

Session 1:

Tapas Sen, Chief Programming Officer at Mirchi kicked off the session with a rather informal interaction with USLM students on popular culture and seamlessly delved into industry-related questions and concerns about the entertainment industry. He explored relevant ideas such as the psyche of the interviewer and the 'six hacks to hack the mind of an interviewer'

The session was perfectly in sync with the theme of 'Out of Syllabus' and the core philosophy of the entertainment industry which could be summed up with the following quote from Mr Sen; "Yahan chori allowed hai, boriyat nahi" as he emphasized the importance of storytelling.

The engaging and informative session familiarized the audience with the often unexplored nuances of interview and work culture in the entertainment industry.

Session 2:

Riri Trivedi is the co-founder of Wellness Space and SEE (Society for Energy and Emotions). Her session on physical wellness and mental health addressed the relationship between mind and body health and the importance of focusing on physiological changes to combat psychological complexities. The speaker talked about the often neglected biological interdependence between heart and mind. The session was not merely restricted to theoretical engagement with the above-mentioned questions but also provided several tips and everyday practices or 'hacks' in a rather simplified fashion.

For young students, who find themselves hustling in the age of extreme information and chaos, the session would be of great assistance in grappling with everyday academic, professional and personal issues and complications.

The session concluded with a calming breathing and humming exercise under the speaker's guidance which would be of great assistance to the individuals present and introduced Psychology students to various research and industry opportunities.

Session 3:

Be in touch with who you really are. Neha Gargava, who is a prominent voice actor who has had the quintessential small town to Big city success story in the entertainment industry. Her personal stories were intermingled with her experiences from the industry specific to the voice acting field. While responding to questions from students, she said that young students should always be connected with their passion or else they will lose it. Talking about inner voice she said, "keep in touch with your inner voice". The session was informative, inspirational as well as emotionally stimulating for the audience.

Session 4:

Rajani Thindiath's, former editor-in-chief, Tinkle comics session was a dynamic interaction between the students and the speaker on comic book narratives from Tinkle, Indian popular culture, and commercial presence of Indian comics

The importance of storytelling in academic and personal contexts and the significance of

integrating storytelling with modern-day learning and education.

For the Instagram and Snapchat generation that is more in tune with the visual medium, comic books have a greater value as compared to literary texts.

The speaker also highlighted the importance of diversity and representation in terms of gender and sexuality in Indian popular culture and storytelling.

Session 5:

In an age where social media platforms are flooded with humour from memeworthy content, Faisal Mohammad's Garbage bin comics is a more old-school brand of humour that coincided with the internet/smartphone revolution in India in early 2010s.

The speaker the session by talking about the inception of the Garbage bin comic along with a visual representation of some of his content which left the audience in splits.

His dry, deadpan humour, insights into the industry and aesthetics of online comic humour were the highlights of the session.



OUT OF SYLLABUS

(17TH APRIL, 2022)

“All creativity is memory”. An important and relevant takeaway from the most awaited session of the day, playwright, screenwriter, and theatre personality Soumya Joshi. The speaker talked about the fundamental aspects of creativity and creative process. There are a number of young students who wish to pursue creative writing but are unable to consistently write without any external distractions and the speaker addressed these conundrums and emphasized on the need to be comfortable with boredom and on the art of ‘not doing anything’ if one is to come up with new ideas. Conflict between aesthetics and craft was also discussed along with a few pointers such as ideation, breaking shackles of time and place and entertainment or relativity.

The interactive session was informative and inspirational for young students who have the ambition to work in theatre and cinema in different capacities.

Session 1:

“All our shoes tell a story”

Passion, Determination and Grit, are the three words that define the brand OCD shoes as elucidated by the co-founder Anshul Sood himself. The speaker talked about his journey that started in 2010 from dejection, disillusionment and random binge-watching to running a fancy, customized shoe brand.

The story of OCD shoes is a story of struggle, hustle, creativity and the spirit of entrepreneurship. He opines that it has certainly become easier to start and run a business in India than it was perhaps more than a decade ago because of changing economic environment.

From his experience at Ferma, he talks about the importance of guerilla marketing and how it eventually lead to the Indian global shoe brand, OCD shoes.

While addressing questions on branding, he discussed the importance of catering to consumers between luxury and mass space.

Session 2:

The next speaker Hemang Gharekhan in his characteristically humorous and dramatic fashion talked about the symbolic significance of the brand.

In an interactive audio-visual session, the

Emotional and rational benefits of a brand. The importance of perception in advertising was explored through several advertisements.

The speaker analysed the post-pandemic marketing scene and the challenges that the industry is facing along with the emergence of the social media domain in marketing.

Brands reside in our mind, they differentiate your brand from others, it promises something and it generates loyalty. Advertising creates a perception, in most cases a false perception.

In advertising two things are always sold; a kid and a puppy.

He ended the session by making a rather fascinating cricket analogy by saying that if you cannot have the innate brilliance of a Kapil Dev or a Tendulkar, inculcate the sheer accuracy or discipline of someone like a Madan Lal.

Session 3:

National Award Winner, one of the finest actors in the country and Shri Pawan Malhotra began on a subtly political note where he emphasized the significance of staying in touch with one's cultural roots and the inherent rationale behind them.

The session explored several themes that revolve around dynamics between theatre and cinema from the actor's point of view, and the differentiation between star and actor in the Hindi film industry.

"agar ap artist hai to failure aka Haq hai"

The speaker spoke candidly about his recent projects such as Tabbar and Grahan, and his experiences of working with legends like Hrishikesh Mukherjee and Dadamuni (Ashok Kumar). When asked about his body of work over the past three decades including classics such as Nukkad, Salim Langde pe Mat Ro, and Black Friday; he elaborated on his preparation for the iconic characters such as Tiger Memon and Salim Pasha. His interactions with filmmakers like Saeed Mirza, Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra and Anurag Kashyap were enlightening and gave the audience a perspective on the process of filmmaking.

On the whole, it was another inspiring story of an all-time great actor for the audience including young students and cinema/theatre aspirants as the speaker shared his wisdom as a film industry veteran and urged the acting students to enjoy the process while following a pragmatic approach.

Session 4:

Anand Narasimhan

Astonishing journalist and news anchor Anand Narasimhan graced the stage on the last day of "Out of Syllabus" – USLM annual event. He is a well-known journalist and news anchor at CNN, News 18, Noida, India. He was very diverse in his speech and discussed various topics and points to enrich the audience. As per him, Covid has taught and reiterated the significance of being in touch through digital space. Digital space is also creating competition and he told the youth to always be students and try to learn as much as possible. Knowledge is Power. As a journalist, he focused on how one needs to get your storytelling right and its impact on the audience. A smart journalist is the one who creates reasons for viewers to watch - A well said statement by Shri. Anand Narasimhan. hilariously, he discussed the power of camera. The moment one tries to hide, the camera catches. In his conversation, he emphasized on Indian media and said, don't think that west media is better than Indian. His charming personality made the session very interactive and students' participated throughout. It was indeed one of the most influential session of the event.

Session 5:

Rajan Lodha

A very interesting session covering various dimensions of creative advertising and brand strategy. He took the audience through very interesting ads from the 90s to the recent ones. His discussion was mainly around how creative strategies in advertising require not only a good understanding of society, but also a sense of purpose. This idea was the main theme of his talk. He reinforced this idea through many national and international ad campaigns. The audience was mesmerized with the old Bajaj scooter ad which reflected India of 90s when the country was experimenting with new economic and social ideas. One international ad that captured the audience and students' attention, was of a company called Avis, which is in car rental services. The Avis campaign creatively spoke of their commitment to their customers, and how being a challenger brand motivates them to work harder to get more business.

He left the students wanting for more from the session, and helped them to gain a nuanced perspective on creativity in advertising, and other walks of daily life.





USLM

Karnavati University

A/907, Uvarsad-Vavol Road, Uvarsad,
Gandhinagar – 382422, Gujarat

Tel: 079 3053 5083, 3053 5084
www.karnavatiuniversity.edu.in/uslm

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