RAKSHAK
FOUNDATION

2784 Homestead Rd # 235
Santa Clara California, USA 95051
Phone: 408-329-1492
http://www.rakshakfoundation.org

About a formal course on "Citizen Participation in Nation Building"

The ability to think straight, some knowledge of the past, some vision of the future, some skill to do useful service, some urge to fit that service into the well-being of the community-these are the most vital things education must try to produce.

- *Virginia Gildersleeve*

Education and particularly higher education opens the door for success and a good life. The competition for getting in to 'good' schools, to do well in examinations and to lend a lucrative job offer has grown to such a frightening extent that the real purpose of education is all but forgotten. A vast majority of youth is kept almost completely insulated from the real life problems and the day to day struggles of common man in our country. It will not be wrong to say that this isolation is more the more 'elite' is the educational institution.

We at Rakshak Foundation feel that there is an urgent need to familiarize the youth, as they enter college, with the today's problems in our society and how the governance happens. They need to see the problems themselves at close quarters and learn about the instruments available to them to get those problems tackled/addressed. Once armed with the necessary background and information, they will be able to think, deliberate and analyze the root causes of the problems and work out possible solutions and then become a facilitator to bring about those solutions. We feel that much of the material that is being proposed as the Curriculum for such a course is not available to the college going students in one place. Whatever portions of the required information they get exposed to during their schooling is scattered and they are unable to relate it to anything worthwhile.

The vision of Rakshak Foundation is to mobilize the youth for the noble cause of national reconstruction and to act as guardians against the various ills and aberrations seeping in to our society. It is hoped that once they are formally exposed to a course on nation building with a clear purpose and focus and are availed the opportunity to research and find a solution to a problem, their whole outlook will change. They would have been sensitized to the social problems and rather than thinking that someone else has to provide a solution to a problem in their neighborhood they would try to become part of the solution. We expect that this attitude will become a part of them for the rest of their lives.
A beginning has to be made. We feel that the premier institutions like IITs and IIMs must make a beginning by introducing such a compulsory course in their curricula. This will serve as a model for other universities and colleges to follow.

Proposed Course Structure and the Course Content are detailed herein.

Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength for our nation.

- *John F. Kennedy*

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Introduction

At this point of time, Nation building courses to be taught in colleges is not just "Nice to have" it is now "Need to have".

The course will deal with political, cultural, societal, and economic issues facing the country and how to involve citizens across the country in social projects that are easy to maintain and execute.

Institute, city, state and nation will benefit from the student's creative, innovative and technically savvy solution(s) to the identified problems prevailing in the society they live in. This newly harnessed potential and the work of the students will go a long way if properly channelized by the policy makers at the local municipal corporation(s) and local government level.

On completion of the course, students will be more informed about the complex issues the Indian government and administration deals with and open their eyes towards the plethora of opportunities for them to get involved based on their abilities and their responsibilities as future earning members of the society. Students will gain an understanding of the practical, theoretical, historical, social and cultural contexts of media, information and technology and how to use it for improving their own and that of the fellow citizens' day to day life.

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Course Structure

Length of the course: 1 semester.

Summary of the structure

There is no pre-requisite for the course. If students are interested and energized after taking the course, they can start their own discussion groups; interact with faculty outside the classroom. Depending on the availability of competent faculty, slot in the curriculum and interest shown by the students, a follow up course with more hands-on experience can be designed so as to provide an opportunity to the students to try out some of their ideas and solutions to specific problems.

Course will include the following:

- **Lectures/ Guest Lectures (28)**
- **Tutorial/Discussion (14)**
- **Seminar/Workshop**
- **Field Study**
- **Project (Group of 3 to 4)**
- **Project Presentation**

What is the relationship with other subjects/courses within the Faculty? Will this course replace other existing courses or subjects?

This course is one of it's kind and does not intend to replace any other course. However, in light of the rigorous curriculum of all the departments, it may be necessary to replace or adjust current courses. The Course will be offered in both the semesters, with approximately 50% of the students taking the course each semester.

This course will not impact other faculties or their teaching load in any manner. However, faculy, Masters and Phd students are welcome to enroll into this course.

Any awards or appreciation certificate issued to boost the morale of the students taking the course?

The course will include the following awards and certificates:

- **Best Presentation**
- **Best innovative solution**
- **Best project award**
- **Best long term strategy for a problem**

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Course Content

Course Name: "Citizen Participation in Nation Building"

Course content is proposed to be structured under the following 12 headings/sections.
It is likely to be difficult to cover all of them in a one semester course. Therefore, **it is suggested that for a one semester course only sections II, VI, VII, X, XI and XII need be dealt with.**

I . Historical Perspective
II. Cultural and Sociological Perspective
III. Economic Perspective
IV. Political Perspective
V. Law and Social Change
VI. Law and Governance
VII. Role of Education
VIII. Role of Science and Technology
IX. Development Process and Communication
X. Citizen Participation
XI. Nation Building
XII. Where Do We Go From Here?

I HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

A Historical Overview
Nation Building and Development Process: Towards a Renaissance
Aspects of Colonial Era
Developments of 20th Century

II CULTURAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Cultural Roots of our National Character
Social and Cultural Diversity of our Nation
Deprivation and Development of the Tribal People
Role of Media in promoting cultural harmony
Socio-Cultural Roots of the Contemporary Crises
Socio-Cultural Forces in the Formation of the policies in India
Reformists, leaders and noble souls who have shaped this country

III ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE

Nation Building: Reflections on the Economic Perspectives

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Nation Building: Retrospect and Prospect: Indian Reality
Nation Building: Developmental Planning in India
Economic Growth with Equity: The Need for Restructuring Planning Process
The Nature of Agricultural Development in India since Independence
Regional Dualism, Regionalism and Development Process in India
Decentralized Planning: Prospects in India

IV POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

Political System in India
Distortions due to Regionalism, Caste and religion
Weaknesses of our Election System
Distortions in Development: Origins of Naxalism and Extremism
Degradation of the Political Class – Nexus with Mafia and Criminals
Role of Youth in Politics
Towards a Political Renaissance

V LAW AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Role of Law in Social Change
Social Discontent arising from weak Justice System
Corruption – Roots in Weak Laws and Weaker Implementation
Corruption – A National Shame and a Drag on Development
The Bitter Reality - Laws applied to Poor and underprivileged only
Need for Citizen Friendly Laws

VI LAW AND GOVERNANCE

Laws to promote Transparency and Accountability
Rule of Law and Access to Justice – Imperatives of Good Governance
Multi-layered Governance – Local, State and Central

VII ROLE OF EDUCATION

Issues in Indian Education
A Holistic Approach to Human Development
Nation Building, Development and Education
Education-An Instrument of Change
Need to promote entrepreneurship through education

VIII DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND COMMUNICATION

The Press in India's Renaissance

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Role of Media in strengthening democracy
Pivotal Role of Communications in Nation Building
Media: Far From Free
Communication and Social Transformation: The Indian Perspective
Rural Communication
Issues of Language and Communication in Nation Building

IX SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

From 1947 to 2010: The Vision-Reality Gap
Role of Science and Technology in Rural development
Choice of language for teaching of science and technology
Science and Technology and the Development Process: Bridging the Vision-Reality Gap
Science and Technology for A Sustainable and Equitable Development
The Scientific Temper and the masses
Science and Technology Policies: Some Issues

X CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Why citizen participation?
What is Citizen Participation?
Citizen participation as citizen power
Citizen Participation Strategies
Role for Citizens in Developing and Implementing Public Policy

XI NATION BUILDING

What constitutes Nation Building?
Nation Building and Civil Society
Role of non-governmental organizations
Role of youth in Nation Building
Reduction in Poverty, Unemployment and Inequality - Measures of Development

XII WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE

There are several possibilities for involving in socially relevant activities during and after college, such as:

- Help stop examination malpractices and cheating, expose perpetrators
- Use and help others use the facility of RTI for local development
- Register and vote in the Elections and collaborate and mobilize other youths to vote
- Assisting in promoting ethically and morally responsible citizenry
- Organize and participate in citizen watchdog groups, citizen panels
- Get involved in Adult Education efforts and in educating the underprivileged

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- Join local efforts for cleaner environment and maintenance of parks and public places
- Join hands with local authorities for better and novel solutions to problems
- Facilitating good governance and supporting civic action
- Supporting human rights and reporting its violations
- Use social media (facebook, twitter etc) to create awareness for socially relevant causes
- Spare a few hours each week for voluntary work to improve the lot of weak and poor

Please send your suggestions and comments to vbansal@rakshakfoundation.org