



Plaksha University

UG Orientation 2024 | Report



About Us

Founded by a global community of over 100 entrepreneurs, technology and business leaders, and corporates, **Plaksha University** is reimagining technology education, nurturing and empowering the next generation of tech leaders through its innovative, cutting-edge programs.

Plaksha's vision is guided by an Academic Advisory Board of distinguished academic leaders from MIT, Stanford, UC Berkeley, and Harvard University, among others. **Prof. Shankar Sastry**, the Founding Chancellor of Plaksha University was the former Dean of Engineering at UC Berkeley, and Plaksha's founding Vice-Chancellor, **Prof. Rudra Pratap**, was the Deputy Director of the Indian Institute of Science Bangalore.

Located on a sprawling 50-acre campus in Mohali, Plaksha is deeply committed to building an inclusive and sustainable community with students from diverse socioeconomic and geographic backgrounds. Our inclusive admission policy, generous financial aid, and mentorship programs help reduce the barriers to access and allow our students to excel.



Introduction to Orientation

Plaksha's orientation program, a cornerstone event for the UG 2024 cohort, was held from **August 3-23, 2024**. This carefully conceived and curated three-week program was designed to welcome students to campus and prepare them for their transformative journey at Plaksha.

Organized by the Office of Academics and Student Life, the orientation program provided a comprehensive introduction to the university's academic ecosystem, state-of-the-art resources, and vibrant campus life.

At Plaksha, we don't just educate; we inspire, innovate, and empower the next generation of tech leaders and changemakers.

The orientation program was structured into **three distinct weeks**:

Week 01: Foundation and Acclimatization

- Introduce students to Plaksha's academic philosophy, campus policies, and student life.
- Build camaraderie and a sense of community through team-building exercises and a trip to Chandigarh

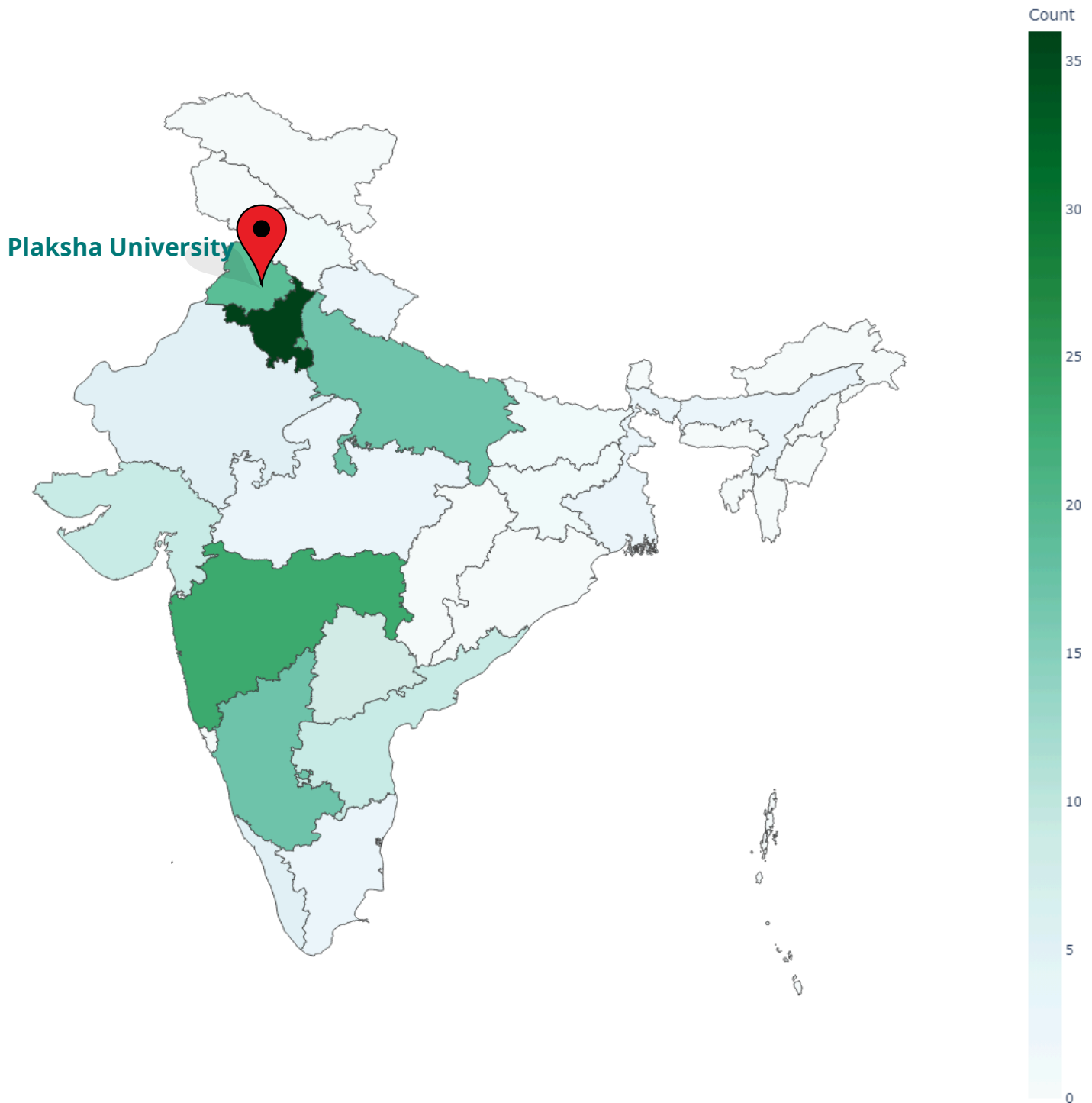
Week 02: Academic Immersion and Discovering Student Life

- Guest lectures and inspiring talks from industry leaders and eminent academicians
- Sports events, and cultural activities, culminating in the Independence Day celebration

Week 03: Student Well Being: Holistic Development and Cultural Integration

- Emphasize emotional and physical well-being, culminating in the Freshers' Party and various student-led competitions.

Diversity at Plaksha



Uniting Regions, Shaping Futures: Plaksha's Incoming Batch from Across the Nation

Plaksha's Unique Approach to Orientation

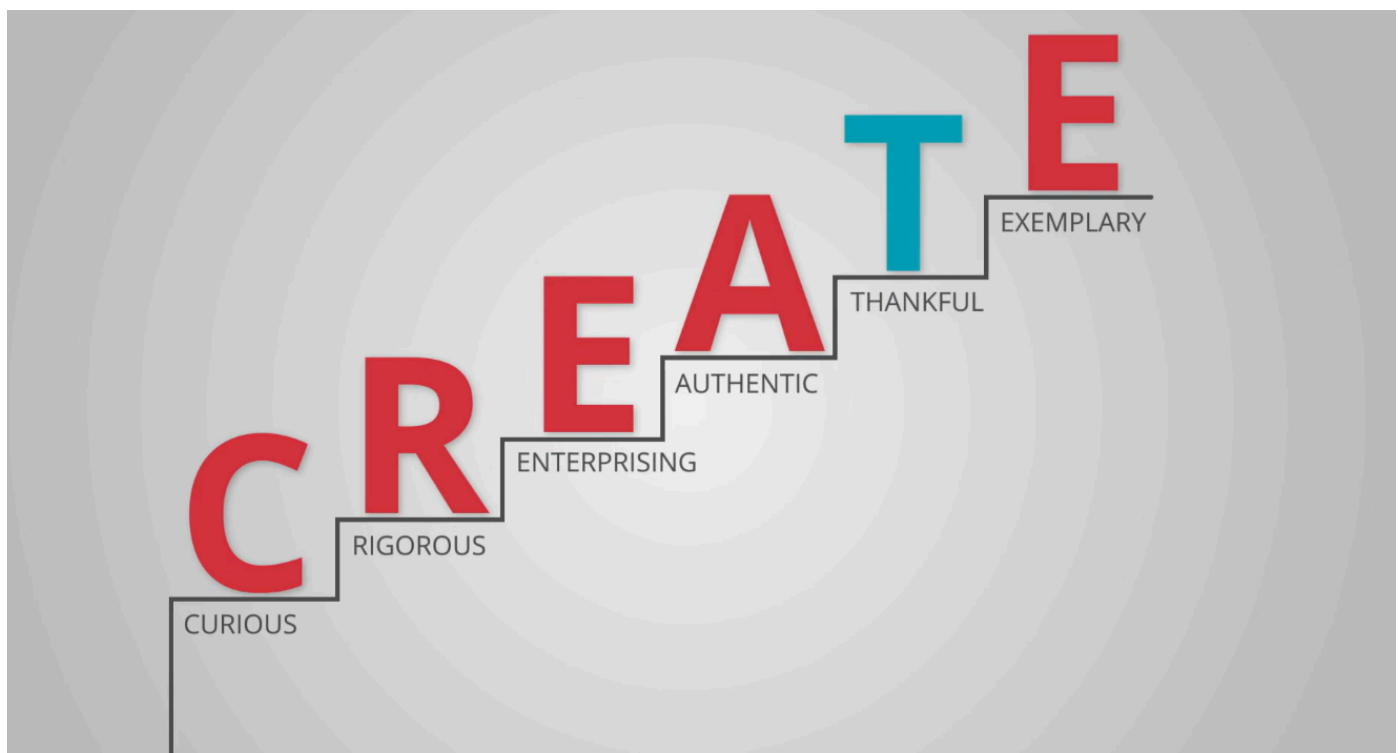
The orientation began with an inspiring speech by **Prof. Rudra Pratap, the Founding Vice-Chancellor of Plaksha University**. His address set the tone for the next three weeks and beyond, touching on key themes central to Plaksha's mission: Innovation and Interdisciplinary Learning, Role of Students in Shaping the Future, Expectations and Academic Rigor, Community and Collaboration.

Welcome to Plaksha University—where innovation meets purpose, technology drives change, and you are empowered to shape the future!

CREATE at Plaksha

Creators First - Every student and staff at Plaksha embodies certain values.

We are Curious, Rigorous, Enterprising, Authentic, Thankful and Exemplary (CREATE).



Academic Philosophy and Expectations

Students were introduced to the Plaksha academic ecosystem

- **Interdisciplinary Learning:** All undergraduates follow a unified path immersing themselves in foundational STEM subjects and technical core courses. The Freshmore curriculum kindles exploration through communication, design thinking, economics and social science.
- **Teaching Philosophy:** Student-centric approach to teaching and assessment fostering curiosity, creativity and instilling the joy of learning. Through experiential learning, real-life group projects, and peer-learning, Plaksha emphasizes transdisciplinary integration. Assessments focus on active learning, moving away from rote memorization.
- **Research and Innovation:** Through sessions on the research and innovation ecosystems, students were encouraged to think beyond the classroom and contribute to grand challenges such as climate change and healthcare.

Plaksha Undergraduate Mentorship in Action (PUMA)

Each student was paired with a mentor under PUMA, a program designed to provide continuous academic, career, and social support. The mentors, who are senior executives and faculty members, play a critical role in ensuring the smooth transition of incoming students into university life.

Learning Beyond Academics

Plaksha's orientation highlighted the university's commitment to holistic student development. Beyond academics, students were introduced to:

- **Office of Global Engagement (OGE):** Students were made aware of various international exchange programs and collaborations.
- **Info Edge Center for Entrepreneurship (CFE):** Committed to transforming student entrepreneurial aspirations into reality, CFE provides a vibrant ecosystem where constant support, resources and guidance are provided during every stage of a student's entrepreneurial journey.
- **Office of Corporate Partnerships & Careers (CPC):** The office discussed different career paths for the students and the support available through various interventions to empower students on their journey towards successful careers.

Five River Groups of Punjab

To foster a sense of regional connection and team spirit, the students were divided into five groups, each representing one of the five rivers of Punjab—

Beas

Chenab

Ravi

Jhelum

Sutlej

These groups competed and collaborated throughout the orientation, fostering healthy competition, teamwork, and leadership.

Fun and Student Life

Student life at Plaksha goes beyond the academic realm, and the orientation gave students a glimpse of this through:

- **Campus Life Activities:** From treasure hunts to social events like the Senior Social and the Freshers' Party, students experienced the vibrant community at Plaksha.
- **Introduction to Student Clubs:** Plaksha has a vibrant student life which includes student-run clubs and spaces to thrive and grow.
- **Sports and Competitions:** Inter-house sports events like volleyball, football, and basketball fostered team spirit and physical well-being.

The Plaksha Difference

At Plaksha, student well-being is as important as academic success. With a strong focus on mental, emotional, and physical well-being, activities and sessions are carefully developed to enable students to thrive holistically. Our orientation goes beyond academics, focusing on every student's overall growth.

One such initiative is **Scribble, Dreams & Doodle**, where students were provided with journaling diaries and encouraged to express their thoughts, ideas, and creativity through writing, drawing, or doodling.

Week 01 - Key Highlights

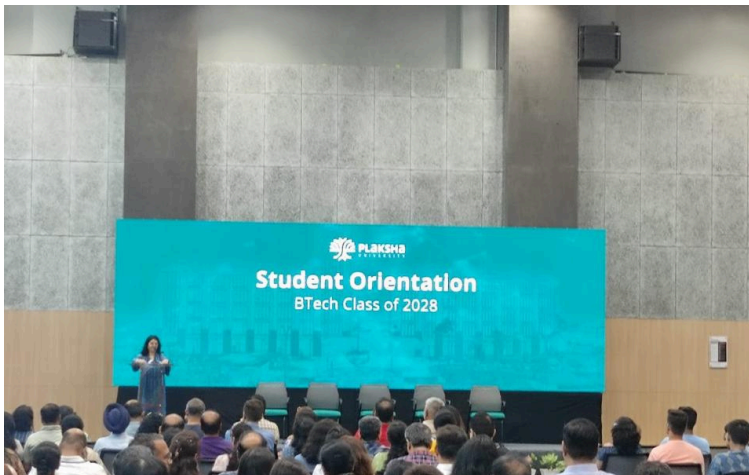
Welcome and Introduction: The program began with a welcome address by Prof. Rudra Pratap, Founding Vice Chancellor, setting a positive tone for the freshmore batch.

Academic Orientation: Students were introduced to the Plaksha academic ecosystem through sessions led by various deans and faculty, highlighting the curriculum, research opportunities, and course structure.

Student Life and Policies: Several sessions were conducted to acquaint students with campus life, including student life policies, anti-ragging policies, and the code of conduct. These sessions aimed to ensure a safe and vibrant campus environment.

Interactive and Fun Activities: Various activities, such as quizzes, social media challenges, ice-breaker sessions, and treasure hunts, were organized to encourage interaction and engagement among students.

Exploring Chandigarh: Students participated in an offsite trip to explore Chandigarh, fostering camaraderie and a sense of belonging to the city they will call home.



Welcome, Batch of 2028



Discovering the City Beautiful!



Guiding the Future! Vice Chancellor addressing the cohort

Week 01 - Overview

The inaugural week of the orientation program for the Class of 2028 marked the beginning of an exciting journey. This meticulously planned week was designed to provide a comprehensive introduction to academic life, campus culture, and the surrounding community.

Activities:

Welcome and Introduction: The orientation commenced with a grand welcome address delivered by Prof. Rudra Pratap, the Founding Vice Chancellor of Plaksha University.

Prof. Rudra Pratap's speech touched upon several key points:

- Three Parallel Transitions at Plaksha - Personal, Social & Professional
- Plaksha Graduate Abilities: Solve complex problems, create new ideas, empower and lead, empathize with others, and aspire to ambitious goals.
- Core Values: Curious, rigorous, enterprising, authentic, thankful, and empathetic.

In a separate session, the VC engaged with parents to discuss effective communication and support strategies during their child's university experience.

The welcome address was followed by a Q&A session, allowing students to interact directly with the Vice Chancellor and gain deeper insights into the university's philosophy.

Academic Orientation: A comprehensive session was conducted to introduce students to the Plaksha academic ecosystem:

- Office of Academics Affairs provided an overview of the program structure, highlighting the unique aspects of Plaksha's curriculum.
- All Faculty members presented brief introductions to their respective fields of study, giving students a taste of the diverse academic offerings.
- A detailed explanation of the credit system, grading policies, and academic expectations was provided to help students understand the rigor of the program.
- Introduction to various research centers & research ecosystems at Plaksha
- Information session by Office of Global Engagement, InfoEdge Center for Entrepreneurship and Office of Corporate Partnerships & Careers

Student Life and Policies: Multiple interactive sessions were conducted to familiarize students with campus life:

- A dedicated session on anti-ragging policies was conducted, featuring: clear definitions of ragging and its various forms, zero-tolerance towards ragging and drugs at Plaksha campus, reporting mechanisms and support systems for students
- Introduction to Student Life Team, annual events and student clubs: Plaksha has a vibrant student life which includes student-run clubs and spaces to thrive and grow. The campus is a sports lovers' paradise with provisions for multiple indoor and outdoor sports and activities. Other facilities like dance room, yoga studio, music room, and wellness center are also available.

Interactive and Fun Activities: A variety of engaging activities were organized to promote interaction and build relationships among students:

- Social Media and Ice-breaker Sessions: Students participated in small group activities like "Two Truths and a Lie" and "Human Bingo" to get to know each other, while also being encouraged to share their first-week experiences on social media.

Plaksha Treasure Hunt: An elaborate, campus-wide treasure hunt that helped students familiarize themselves with various university facilities while working in teams.

Exploring Chandigarh: Students participated in a carefully planned offsite trip to explore Chandigarh. The excursion served multiple purposes:

- Fostering camaraderie among students through shared experiences
- Helping students familiarize themselves with their new home city and its amenities
- Providing insights into the local culture, history, and lifestyle

The carefully curated mix of on-campus events and off-campus exploration helped students begin to form meaningful connections with both their peers and their new environment. The emphasis on academic excellence, coupled with opportunities for social interaction and cultural immersion, set a positive tone for the weeks to follow.

Week 02 - Key Highlights

Guest Lectures and Fireside Chats: The program included inspiring talks from distinguished speakers and industry leaders, providing valuable insights and perspectives to the new students.

Introduction to Student Clubs: Plaksha has an active and diverse student body. Students have come together to form clubs to pursue their interests and passion.

Cultural and Social Events: Events like the 'Senior Social' allowed students to enjoy the cultural aspects of campus life and build connections with seniors and faculty members. The week also featured a celebration of **Independence Day on campus.**

Sports and Recreation: Inter-house competitions and sports activities, such as volleyball, football, and basketball, were conducted to promote physical well-being and team spirit. The campus is a sports lovers' paradise with provisions for multiple indoor and outdoor sports and activities. Other facilities like dance room, yoga studio, music room, and wellness center are also available.



Flag hoisting ceremony led by the Vice Chancellor



Cultural Splendor in Celebration of Independence!



Industry Insights by Ken Singer, Managing Director, SCET, UC Berkeley



Conversation with Mr. Ganesh Sambasivan, Cofounder & CSO, Anthem Biosciences Pvt. Ltd.



Conversation with Mr. Rajesh Uppal, Senior Executive Director, Maruti Suzuki India Ltd.

Week 02 - Overview

The second week of the orientation program for the incoming batch was marked by a rich array of activities designed to broaden students' perspectives, foster connections, and celebrate both academic excellence and national pride.

Activities:

Guest Lectures and Fireside Chats: The week featured a series of inspiring talks from distinguished speakers and industry leaders, offering students valuable insights into various fields and career paths. These sessions were designed to motivate students and provide them with a broader perspective on the applications of their studies.

Students attended talks by:

Industry Leaders:

- **Mr. Rajesh Uppal**, Senior Executive Director, Maruti Suzuki India Ltd.
- **Mr. Ganesh Sambasivan**, Cofounder & CSO, Anthem Biosciences Pvt. Ltd.

Eminent Academicians

- **Prof. Anil K. Roy**, Dhirubhai Ambani Institute of Information & Communication Technology (DA-IICT) - Talk on "Conformity, Convention and Creativity"
- **Prof. G. K. Ananthasuresh**, IISc Bangalore - Talk on "Engineering Temper"
- **Ken Singer**, Managing Director, SCET, UC Berkeley

Cultural and Social Events:

This week's events were designed to immerse students in the vibrant campus culture and foster connections across the university community:

Senior Social: An event to facilitate interaction between freshmen students and their seniors. Activities included:

- Speed networking sessions
- Interactive games designed to break the ice and encourage communication
- Discussions where seniors shared their experiences and advice

Independence Day Celebration: A special event to commemorate India's Independence Day on campus. Activities included:

- Flag hoisting ceremony led by the Vice Chancellor
- Rendition of the national anthem by the university choir
- Cultural program featuring traditional dances and music by the incoming batch



Sports and Recreation: This week concluded with a series of sports activities designed to promote physical well-being, team spirit, and friendly competition among the new students.

Inter-house Competitions. Students were divided into houses to foster a sense of belonging and healthy competition, and took part in sports tournaments such as:

- Inter House Volleyball, Football and basketball competitions
- Inter House Firsbee was also organized

Each event was organized under the supervision of the sports faculty with adequate safety measures.

Introduction to Student Clubs: Plaksha has an active and diverse student body. Representatives from various student clubs gave short presentations, encouraging freshmen students to get involved in extracurricular activities.

- Some Clubs:
 - Athleda: the students sports club
 - GWiST: Girls and Women in STEM
 - Kartavya: to reimagine education and society through social good
- Following the presentations, an interactive session was held where freshmen students could:
 - Meet club representatives personally,
 - Sign up for club mailing lists,
 - Participate in mini-workshops or demos conducted by each club

The combination of intellectual stimulation through guest lectures, cultural immersion via social events, Independence Day celebrations, along with physical engagement through sports activities, created a dynamic and engaging week.

Week 03 - Key Highlights

Wellness Sessions: This week focused on promoting emotional well-being and holistic health. We organized a session with YourDOST, which emphasized emotional wellness and online counseling support. Additionally, a session by RoundGlass highlighted the importance of a holistic approach to overall wellness.

Scribble, Dreams & Doodle: Students were provided with journaling diaries and encouraged to freely express their thoughts, ideas, and creativity through writing, drawing, or doodling.

National Space Day - Star Gazing Sessions: A Star-Gazing Session in celebration of National Space Day was organized in collaboration with Astronomy Club, IISER Mohali.

Freshers Party & Talent Night: Social events designed to welcome new students and foster community spirit.



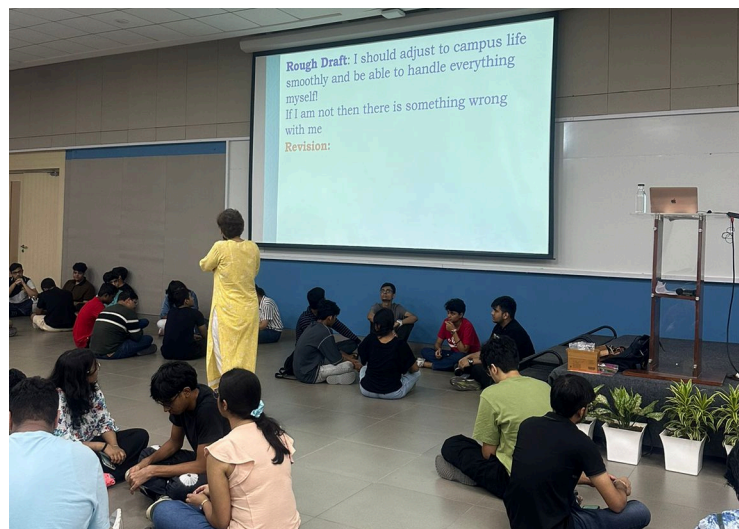
Unleashing the Competitive Spirit!



Sing, Play, Conquer! Inter-House musical talents are in action



Music in Motion!



Wellness in Practise

Week 03 - Overview

The third and final week of the orientation program focused on promoting student well-being, fostering social connections, and celebrating the diverse talents within the fresher batch. This week was designed to equip students with tools for maintaining their mental and emotional health, while also providing opportunities for social bonding and creative expression.

Activities:

Wellness Sessions: The week commenced with a strong emphasis on holistic health and emotional well-being, recognizing their crucial role in student success.

- **YourDOST** Session on Emotional Wellness
 - Introduction to online counseling support services
 - Strategies for managing academic stress
 - Q&A session with mental health professionals

- **RoundGlass** Holistic Wellness Workshop
 - Areas covered: Mindfulness and meditation techniques, Sleep hygiene and its impact on academic performance
 - Practical sessions: Guided meditation exercise, Introduction to simple yoga poses for stress relief

Dance & Music Competition: A vibrant showcase of talent and cultural diversity among the freshmore students. The event fostered:

- Appreciation for India's rich cultural heritage
- Cross-cultural understanding among students from different regions
- Confidence-building through public performance

Scribble, Dreams & Doodle: Students were given journaling diaries and encouraged express their thoughts, ideas, and creativity through writing, drawing, or doodling. This activity was aimed to inspire self-reflection, creative exploration, and personal growth, fostering a safe space for them to articulate their dreams and ambitions without boundaries.

National Space Day – Star Gazing Session: In celebration of National Space Day, a Star-Gazing Session was organized in collaboration with the **Astronomy Club of IISER Mohali**. Students had the opportunity to explore the wonders of the night sky, and engage in discussions about celestial bodies, constellations, and the vastness of the universe.

Freshers Party: A much-anticipated event designed to welcome the new students by the sophomore batch at Plaksha Campus. The theme of the evening was **Oscars Night**.



New Beginnings & Lasting Bonds



Freshmore Celebrations: Where Friendships Begin



A Night of Memories and Friendship



Floor for students to socialize and unwind

As the orientation program concluded, students were equipped with a strong foundation of knowledge about university life, a toolkit for personal well-being, and a sense of belonging to the vibrant Plaksha community. This holistic approach sets the stage for a successful and fulfilling academic journey ahead.

Annexure I

Date	Activity
5 August, 2024 Monday	Welcome Address by Vice Chancellor
	Understanding Plaksha Academic Ecosystem - Learn about curriculum, research opportunities, and academic structure.
	Lunch with Faculty
	The Crazy Ones - Fun and Interactive Quiz Session
	Information Session: Administration - Get familiar with the administration and safety guidelines
	Understanding Student Life Policies, Anti Ragging Policies and Code of Conduct - Learn about policies that ensure a safe and vibrant campus life.
	Evening Snacks - Tea/Coffee, and snacks with faculty and executives.
	Student Life Activity - End the day with fun team-building activities.
6 August, 2024 Tuesday	Foundations Assessment: Baseline Test - A test in mathematics tailor your learning experience.
	Represent Plaksha!: Social Media Challenge & Brand Guidelines - Learn about Plaksha's brand guidelines and join an exciting social media challenge.
	Deep Dive into Freshmore Curriculum: Get detailed insights into the Freshmore curriculum.
	Lunch with Puma Mentors
	Shake it off! - An ice-breaker session to help you get to know your peers.
	Research Ecosystem at Plaksha
	Learning beyond Academics - Information session by Office of Global Engagement and Center for Entrepreneurship
	Information session University's Library Resources
7 August, 2024 Wednesday	Gedi Around Chandigarh: 'The City Beautiful' - Embark on an exciting offsite to explore the vibrant city of Chandigarh. Get acquainted with the city you'll call home.
8 August, 2024 Thursday	Information session - Tech Enablement
	Campus Quest: The Ultimate Treasure Hunt - Embark on an adventure across the campus with challenges and hidden treasures
	Jingle Bells (Ad-Libs Competition) - Showcase your humor and creativity in fun activities with seniors
Friday, 9 August, 2024	Fireside Chat with Distinguished Speakers - An inspiring session with industry thought leaders

Date	Activity
12 August, 2024 Monday	Invited talk by Dr. Anil Roy (DAIICT)
	The Senior Social - Know your seniors
13 August, 2024 Tuesday	Invited talk by Prof. Ananthasuresh
	Introduction to Universal Human Values - Well Being
14 August, 2024 Wednesday	Club Orientation - Get introduced to various clubs and their activities at Plaksha
15 August, 2024 Thursday	Flag Hoisting - Independence Day
	Discover shared experiences and connections as participants step forward in response to questions in this dynamic ice-breaker.
16 August, 2024 Friday	Session with Ken Singer, Managing Director, SCET, UC Berkeley
	Inter House Volleyball
18 August, 2024 Sunday	Inter House Football
Date	Activity
19 August, 2024 Monday	Emotional Wellness & Online Counseling with YourDOST
20 August, 2024 Tuesday	Holistic Well-being with RoundGlass: A Path to Wellness
	Inter house dance competition
21 August, 2024 Wednesday	Inter house Frizbee competition
23 August, 2024 Friday	Scribbles, dreams, and doodles inside
	Inter house music competition
31 August, 2024 Saturday	FRESHER'S PARTY

Annexure II





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