Aiding India's engineering future

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Advocating for future engineers in India --
MSU signs dual PhD agreements with two noted technology institutes in India

Michigan State University has signed agreements with two leading institutes of technology in India to strengthen the intellectual infrastructure and international collaborations at all three academic institutions.

The first dual PhD agreements with MSU will help India fill its growing need for more PhD-trained researchers and open the door to have Spartan-trained academics at two of India's finest technology institutes.

A team from MSU travelled to India's Institute of Chemical Technology, Mumbai and the Indian Institute of Technology Madras to sign dual PhD agreements with MSU. Signing ceremonies were Jan. 16 in Mumbai and Jan. 19 in Madras.

MSU Executive Vice President Satish Udpa said the participating PhD students will receive dual doctoral degrees, one from MSU and one from the Indian partner institution.

"New models are needed to educate the next generation of scholars to ensure they are globally engaged," Udpa said. "The innovative dual degree program we have launched will give an opportunity for our students to network globally through research experiences gained at the partnering institutions."

MSU College of Engineering Dean Leo Kempel said the goal is to strengthen research collaborations in India and the United States.

"The participating institutions have strong faculty collaborations," Kempel explained. "We're confident that the dual PhD students will provide the glue to unite our programs and grow research, together with industry. The talent we share will help MSU build bridges into these two acclaimed institutions of technology."
Vice Chancellor G. D. Yadav of the Institute of Chemical Technology, Mumbai, believes this inaugural program will attract many of India’s most talented students.

“This will be a win-win situation, not only for the universities but also for our countries,” he said.

PhD students from India will study at MSU for two to three years and complete degree requirements before returning to India to finish their advanced studies. Faculty members from both institutions will serve as advisors on each student’s committee. Only one thesis will be required. The students will receive a PhD from both Michigan State and their institute in India when they graduate.

Students in the dual-enrollment program will have access to some of the best science and technology resources and facilities in two countries. As these newest Spartans begin to fill key academic positions in India’s developing science infrastructure, MSU will have strengthened recruiting opportunities inside India’s famous institutes.

“This unique program with Michigan State University is our first in the U.S,” said Dean R. Nagarajan, International and Alumni Relations Dean from the Indian Institute of Madras. “It is built on a solid foundation of a decade of close research-based collaborations between our faculty and many student exchanges. As this week’s Workshop showed, we are ready to hit the ground running.”