Shiv Nadar University: A promising start

With multi-disciplinary approach in subject combinations and four-year undergraduate programmes, Shiv Nadar University wants to provide for better academic engagement, says Kasturi Banerjee

SHIV Nadar University is a University Grants Commission and All India Council for Technological Education approved private institution that offers a carefully constructed curriculum adopting a multi-disciplinary approach. Located in Greater Noida, it claims to possess the most student-friendly campus in the country and assures students of modern facilities and required equipment. What is different about this institution is the way the courses are designed. They are one of the first private institutions in the country to have a four-year undergraduate program in all disciplines. Students can choose to major in one subject and minor in another. Examples of mixed combinations would be a major in Computer Science Engineering with a minor in Mathematics; a major in Physics with a minor in Electronics and English with Journalism or Mass communication. Director of the School of Natural Sciences, Dr. Ranjan Ghosh said this flexibility gives students the freedom to explore their areas of interest. During admissions it is possible to enter the university as an undecided candidate and that allows students to try out a number of subjects and decide on their major at the end of the fourth semester. Whichever subject is chosen, the lessons are taught to ensure specialization in it giving the learning enough depth and ultimately preparing students for jobs or research work within the institution. All programs are heavily funded with plenty of facilities arranged for students such as living accommodations. Dr. Ghosh says that excellent students are often unable to avail of research scholarships due to family obligations. They are ready to pay the students a sum of Rs. 5,000 a month for side jobs as teaching assistants.

The faculty comprises a team of well-established academicians like Dr. Ghosh, Dr. Shikhar Chandra, ex director of IIT Kolkata and Mr. Subhash Ghosh, an advisor to the World Bank. They are responsible for the schools of Natural Sciences, Management and Humanities and Social Sciences along with other internationally educated and experienced professors. Shiv Nadar University looks very good on paper but is yet to prove itself. It's a new institution and that would probably explain the fewer subjects within each discipline that are taught. They have promised to introduce subjects like Psychology. The School of Management and Entrepreneurship is also stepping into the world but a guarantee of top-notch education is yet to be validated.