

IIT-Gn banks on young guns to attract new faculties

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THE first meeting of IIT-Gandhinagar's Academic Advisory Council on Thursday decided to solve its faculty crunch by tapping into social and professional relationships by engaging younger faculty members in the recruitment process.

"Young faculties are very useful in recruiting new faculties for the institute. As they are young and have a lesser generation gap with the applicants, they understand and judge them better than the senior faculties," said Prof Paul Jennings, former vice-president and Provost of the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) in Pasadena, USA, a member of the council.

IIT-Gn's director Prof Sudhir Jain said a 27-year-old faculty is his institute's "star recruiter". "Young faculties are very enthusiastic and spread around their good experiences in the institute. This helps in attracting new faculties to the institute," he said.

Apart from recruitment of faculty, the council discussed ways to evalu-

ate, manage and retain faculty. The meeting also discussed increasing the student intake and how to increase research output as well as the way forward for the institute that has given roughly a quarter of its curriculum space to humanities, rare for a technical institute.

"Institutes must adopt a customised approach in management of faculties like making individual portfolios to suit each faculty. Facilities to nurture innovative ideas and research should be created for them," said Prof Bakul Dholakia, former director of IIM-Ahmedabad who currently heads the Adani Institute of Infrastructure Management.

IIT-Gn had set a target of 90 faculty members by the end of three years post its establishment in 2008, and 250 faculty members by the end of its sixth year. Currently, the institute employs only 29 regular faculty and 20 visiting faculty.

"Getting good quality faculty is very difficult. We are working hard to find the right faculty and absorb them, and hope to recruit seven new faculty this month," said Prof Jain.