

IIT-Gandhinagar students learn about Indian philosophy

Chitra Unnithan, TNN | Mar 29, 2014, 06.57 PM IST

AHMEDABAD: Students of the Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar got an insight into Buddhist philosophies at a session addressed by professor William Waldron of Middlebury College on 'Yoga-ca-ra Buddhism and Cognitive Science: Constructing and Deconstructing Dualistic Experience'.

Prof Waldron told the students that Indian philosophy, particularly that of the Buddhism, can impart deep understanding and knowledge to the field of cognitive science.

Drawing commonalities between Buddhist philosophies and cognitive science in their understanding of cognitive processes, Prof Waldron said, "People in cognitive science should learn more of Indian philosophy. At the moment they are not taking it very seriously."

Citing an example of scientists learning from Indian knowledge, Prof Waldron said that various neuroscientists have been looking at Indian meditators for about 20 years. However, they are not that interested in the Indian philosophy, which is partly because they are scientists and not philosophers.

"Cognitive science is a broad field. Some of the people in cognitive science are philosophers and those people ought to study Indian philosophy and some of them are starting too. They should study Indian philosophy because it is a view which is similar to their approach. Both of them are interested in causality. Indians have thought about causality and causal models of mind for 2000 years where as cognitive science has been dealing with it for about forty to fifty years. So there is a lot more depth in the Indian philosophy," Professor Waldron said.