



SJUNews**bites**

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Biotechnology is not just a scientific field, but a transformative approach to solving global challenges in health, agriculture, and environment.

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Editorial

Dear Readers,

As we present this edition of our Newsbites issue, we are guided by a thought-provoking and timely theme: “Exploring Life and Technology for a Better Tomorrow.” This theme beautifully reflects the motto of the Department of Biotechnology, which emphasizes the harmonious integration of scientific innovation with the preservation and enhancement of life.

Life and technology today are deeply intertwined. From classrooms that extend beyond physical walls to innovations that reshape healthcare, communication, and environmental management, technology has become an inseparable part of human existence. Yet, at its core, technology is meaningful only when it serves life—enhancing human dignity, strengthening communities, and nurturing the world we share.

This issue explores that delicate balance. The contributions featured here reflect how technological advancement, when guided by ethical awareness and social responsibility, can become a powerful tool for positive transformation.

As a university community, we stand at a unique juncture of knowledge, creativity, and responsibility. Our students, faculties, and contributors continue to demonstrate that learning is not confined to textbooks alone—it thrives in curiosity, critical thinking, and the courage to question the status quo. This issue highlights the vibrant academic, research, and extracurricular activities of our university community.

Through this edition of Newsbites, we hope to inspire readers to engage thoughtfully with technology, to see it not as an end in itself, but as a means to create a more sustainable, equitable, and hopeful tomorrow.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all contributors and readers who continue to make Newsbites a platform for ideas, dialogue, and growth.

Warm Regards

The Editorial team



Biotechnology: Empowering Future Innovators



Dear all,

In today's fast-changing world, biotechnology has become one of the most important areas of science. It uses living organisms and biological processes to develop new products and technologies that improve human life. Biotechnology plays a major role in healthcare, agriculture, environmental protection, and industry, making it a key force in modern development.

In the field of medicine, biotechnology has brought many positive changes. New treatments such as vaccines, gene therapy, and personalized medicine help doctors diagnose diseases early and treat them more effectively. These advances give hope to patients suffering from genetic disorders, chronic illnesses, and infectious diseases. Biotechnology has greatly improved the quality of healthcare and continues to save millions of lives.

Biotechnology also supports agriculture and food security. Scientists use biotechnology to develop crops that are resistant to pests, diseases, and drought. These improved crops increase food production while reducing the need for harmful chemical fertilizers and pesticides. As a result, farming becomes more sustainable and environmentally friendly, helping to feed the growing world population.

Protecting the environment is another important contribution of biotechnology. Bioremediation uses microorganisms to clean polluted soil, water, and industrial waste. Biotechnology also helps in producing eco-friendly products such as bio-fuels and biodegradable plastics, which reduce pollution and dependence on fossil fuels. These green solutions play a vital role in protecting nature and addressing climate change.

The combination of biotechnology with artificial intelligence and computer science has further improved research and innovation. Bioinformatics tools help scientists analyze large amounts of biological data, study genes, and discover new medicines faster and at lower cost. This integration makes scientific research more accurate and efficient.

As biotechnology continues to grow, it is important to use it responsibly. Ethical practices, fairness, and care for the environment must guide scientific progress. Biotechnology should be used to benefit all people and protect human dignity.

Above all, biotechnology is more than a subject of study—it is a mission to serve society. As members of the SJU academic community, let us continue to learn, innovate, and work with responsibility and integrity. With curiosity and commitment, the future of biotechnology will be shaped by today's students and researchers.

With Best of Regards
SR. SABEENA DMI



MESSAGE FROM CONTROLLER OF EXAMINATIONS



Dear All

Greetings from the Office of the Controller of Examinations, St. Joseph University

To our aspiring scientists, dedicated faculty, and the entire St. Joseph University community, We stand at the threshold of one of the most dynamic and impactful scientific revolutions in human history: the era of biotechnology. Far more than a single discipline, biotechnology is the powerful convergence of biology and technology, where we harness living cells and molecular processes to develop solutions for our world's most pressing challenges. From healing the sick and feeding the hungry to protecting our planet, biotechnology is truly a “technology of hope”.

At its core, biotechnology involves using living organisms—or components derived from them—to create products and processes that improve our lives. Its applications are vast and are often categorized by colour. For example: Red Biotechnology stands for Healthcare. This is saving lives today. It delivers breakthrough medicines, vaccines, and innovative therapies. We now have over 250 biotechnology healthcare products available, many for conditions once considered untreatable. The field is rapidly advancing with gene editing techniques like CRISPR offering cures for genetic disorders, and personalized mRNA vaccines that train the immune system to target specific cancers.

Then there is Green Biotechnology that refers to Agriculture. This focuses on enhancing food security. By developing genetically modified crops that are resistant to pests, drought, and disease, we can increase yields and nutritional value to support a growing global population.

Further there is White & Grey Biotechnology that substitutes the term for Industry & Environment. These fields champion sustainability. White biotechnology uses microbes and enzymes to create bio-based materials, biodegradable plastics, and biofuels. Grey biotechnology deploys organisms for bioremediation, cleaning up pollutants from soil and water, exemplified by bacteria that can digest oil spills.

The pace of innovation is breathtaking. As we look to 2026 and beyond, trends like Artificial Intelligence (AI) in drug discovery, spatial biology for mapping diseases within tissues, and “one-and-done” genetic therapies for chronic conditions are moving from labs to clinical reality. This progress underscores a sector experiencing tremendous growth.

For our students, this translates into a future rich with opportunity. The field demands and rewards a diverse skill set like Technical prowess in molecular biology, bioinformatics, and data science; Engineering and analytical skills for bioprocess design and scale-up; Critical soft skills like ethical reasoning, project management, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

High-demand career paths include Bio-informatics Scientists, Gene Editing Specialists, Bio-process Engineers, and Regulatory Affairs Experts, roles that are crucial to turning scientific discovery into real-world solutions.

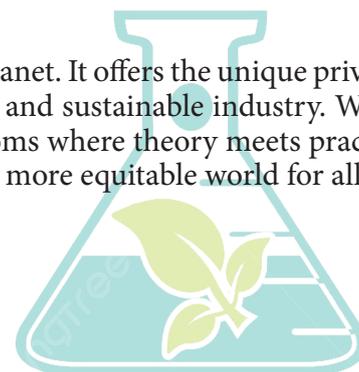
At St. Joseph University, our mission is to prepare you to be the architects of this promising future. Our programmes are designed to provide not only the foundational knowledge in genetics, chemistry, and engineering but also the ethical framework necessary to navigate this powerful field responsibly. We encourage you to engage deeply, to question innovatively, and to collaborate across disciplines.

Biotechnology is more than a career—it is a calling to serve humanity and our planet. It offers the unique privilege of writing the next chapter in human health, environmental stewardship, and sustainable industry. We invite you to explore this extraordinary field, to join us in the labs and classrooms where theory meets practice, and to become the pioneers who will shape a healthier, more resilient, and more equitable world for all.

Sincerely,

Dr Thiagarajan

The Controller of Examinations





Happy New Year,

As we welcome this New Year 2026, each of us carries renewed hope, fresh plans, and meaningful resolutions. The beginning of a new year symbolizes opportunity — an opportunity to reflect, to reset, and to recommit ourselves to our goals and aspirations. However, planning alone does not determine our success. The sincere involvement in implementation by dedication, discipline and consistent effort that we invest in execution transforms vision into achievement.

Success in life is essential because it strengthens both the mind and the spirit. It builds confidence, reinforces purpose, and motivates us to strive for higher goals. Yet, success is never an individual accomplishment alone, behind well-wishers, mentors, family, teachers, friends and the unseen sacrifices of many others.

When our dreams are ambitious, our commitment and hard work must exceed the scale of those dreams. Only when our efforts are greater than our aspirations, we can achieve meaningful and sustainable success. Also, we must remember that neither success nor failure is permanent but they are temporary phases of life's journey. Success makes us proud, but failure teaches us the knowledge of real world.

The real world is a dynamic blend of triumphs and setbacks. Often, it is through failure that we gain the most valuable lessons. Experience teaches us practical wisdom that extends beyond theoretical knowledge. While formal education equips us with a foundational understanding of the real-world challenges, experience lead us to adaptability, creativity, and problem-solving skills and moreover innovation.

Innovation plays a crucial role in human development. The advancement in society is the result of thoughtful effort, creative thinking, and purposeful actions of different minds. As we innovate and contribute to the progress of society, we must remain grounded in human values. Development should not only focus on technological or economic growth but also on compassion, ethics, and collective well-being.

Every individual possesses unique abilities and potential. Education serves as a tool to discover these abilities and ultimately utilized for a purpose that contributes to the well-being of society. Therefore, we must remain accountable and responsible in our role, whether in our profession or in studies or in personal lives.

As we welcome this New Year, let us be committed not only to success but also to growth. Let us work diligently, learn continuously, and contribute positively to society. Through dedication, resilience, and shared values, we can make this year truly meaningful and prosperous.

Wishing everyone a successful and fulfilling New Year.

Prof.(Dr).V.T.Vasagan
Dean of Social Science and Management

DEPARTMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY

Dr Amrita
HOD



The Department of Biotechnology, St Joseph University, Chumoukedima was established in 2017. The department offers three-year B.Sc. (Honours), four-year B.Sc. (Research/Honours), and Ph.D. programmes. In the entire Nagaland, St. Joseph University, Chumoukedima is one of the first to offer Undergraduate course in Biotechnology. The subject offers unique pool of opportunities, as it is the most demanding growing sector with tremendous employment potential and research scope. The curriculum is designed to equip students with a strong foundation in biological sciences while integrating modern technological and analytical skills. The curriculum offers interdisciplinary learning, combining subjects such as molecular biology, genetics, microbiology, biochemistry, bioinformatics, and bioprocess technology. This integrated approach enhances students' conceptual understanding and develops critical thinking and analytical ability. The practical manuals were also designed to further strengthen the student's technical competence and research aptitude.

In lieu, the department aims “to offer an innovative learning environment for learning and interdisciplinary research with focus on ethics.” At the same time the department objective is “to offer solutions to problems of local, regional, national and global scales.” In today's time of rapid technological advancement, emphasis on research ethics upholds the scientific integrity as well as social responsibility. Upholding research ethics provide a framework that respects humanity and environmental integrity, balancing the benefits of innovation for a sustainable future. The objective of the department is to move beyond the traditional learning and foster the students to showcase their innovative ideas. It encourages merging perspectives from multiple disciplines to gain a comprehensive understanding of complex issues and to transform into practical solutions to challenges. The goal signifies outcome-oriented approach, rather than purely theoretical pursuit. The mission highlights the departments initiative to act as a bridge in addressing problems by engaging with other institutions across the globe.

The department of Biotechnology envisioned to “Achieve international recognition in learning and research in technologies related to healthcare, environmental, industrial, agricultural and environmental sciences and create entrepreneurs and bio-technocrats for the emerging new world”. Research in technology plays a crucial role in addressing some of the most burning challenges faced by the human mankind. Be the healthcare sector or agriculture, each sector demands continuous research and technological innovation which is essential for sustainable development and long-term human well-being. The department is committed to nurture a strong research culture among faculty and students by encouraging innovation, ethical research practices, and continuous learning.

Apart from regular classes, the students are exposed to various training programs and workshops to develop their skills and innovative ideas. The department creates a research environment to the students and scholars by engaging them in various academic and co-curricular activities such as organizing seminars, workshop, and skill-based training programs such as Mushroom cultivation. Department also organize Entrepreneurship awareness camp to promote students' self-employment and entrepreneurship in the field of Biomedical, rDNA technology and Plant tissue culture. Field trips or field study are conducted every year for the students to provide hands-on experiences, enabling them to observe, explore, and understand advanced technologies, laboratory instruments, and industrial processes that are the essential element of biotechnology.

The motto “Exploring Life and Technology for a Better Tomorrow” reflects the department’s commitment to impart knowledge to address the challenges and improve quality of life. It suggests that a combination of innovative ideas and advanced technology can build a more efficient, equitable, and sustainable future. It motivates students to explore scientific methods, to understand real-world challenges, and apply technology responsibly. The department strives to provide students with research exposure, interdisciplinary learning opportunities, and practical experiences that help them connect the classroom knowledge with societal needs. The department motto empowers students to become problem solvers and leaders who shape a better tomorrow for society.

The scope of biotechnology is vast and rapidly growing, offering diverse career paths in the field of medicine, agriculture, food industry, energy and environment. Key areas include genetic engineering, forensic science, drug discovery, stem cell research, genetically modified crops, biofuels, and environmental waste management. Biotechnology, apart from teaching job offers many opportunities in research and development sector. In Government, major research institutions, laboratories such as Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and regulatory bodies like the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) offer various positions namely like scientists, technicians, policy analysts, food and quality analyst etc. Biotechnology also plays a significant role and contributes substantially in rapidly growing entrepreneurial landscape. Moreover, the Government of India also takes Initiatives in empowering the entrepreneurs by launching Schemes like “Make in India” which provides a significant support for startups and R&D.

DEPARTMENT MEETINGS

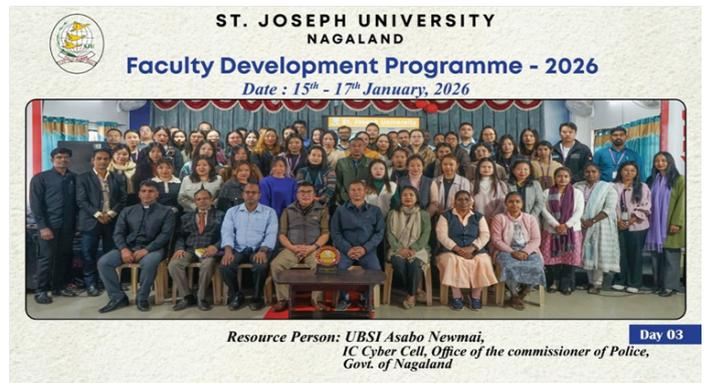
The Department of Biotechnology conducted a staff meeting on the 29th Jan 2026
The Department of Chemistry, held Staff Meeting on 29th Jan, 2026
The Department of Physics, held Staff Meeting on 30th Jan, 2026
The Department of Management held Department meeting on 29th Jan 2026
The faculty of JMC Department held the meeting on 27th Jan. 2026
The Department of Education held its meeting on 23rd Jan 2026

THREE-DAY FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2026

The Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), St. Joseph University, successfully organized a three-day Faculty Development Programme (FDP) from 15th to 17th January 2026 at the SJU Auditorium. The programme aimed to enhance faculty competencies in the key areas of Teaching & Learning, Artificial Intelligence, and Cyber Security, in line with the university’s commitment to academic excellence and quality assurance.



The FDP commenced with a session on Teaching & Learning, chaired by Dr. Patrick Praveen. The resource person, Dr. T. Soundara Pandian, Associate Professor, Modern Institute of Teacher Education, Kohima, delivered an inspiring talk titled “Leading with Passion: Igniting the Teacher Within.” He emphasized reflective teaching, learner-centric pedagogy, the constructivist approach, and the use of the ADDIE instructional design framework. The session encouraged faculty members to build meaningful teacher-student relationships and adopt dynamic, student-centered teaching practices.



The final day addressed Cyber Threats in Educational Institutions & Data Protection, chaired by Dr. Shonreiphy Longvah. The resource person, Mr. Asabo Newmai, IC Cyber Cell, Government of Nagaland, highlighted cyber risks such as data breaches and phishing attacks, and outlined preventive measures and best practices for ensuring cyber safety in educational institutions.

Overall, the FDP was highly enriching and informative, equipping faculty members with updated pedagogical insights, technological awareness, and cyber security knowledge, thereby reinforcing the university's commitment to quality education and professional development.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Dept. of JMC

Photography Workshop

The IV Semester students of Department of JMC along with HOD, Dr. Naorem Nishikanta Singh have attended a Workshop on Photography and Filmmaking at Patkai Christian College (Autonomous), Chumoukedima. The workshop was conducted by Department of Mass Communication in collaboration with SONY on 22nd January 2026. Saroj Kumar Dora, SONY Alfa Specialist was the resource person on Photography and Photojournalism and Md. Noor Alam, SONY CPRO Specialist took the session on filmmaking which were followed by hands-on training.



Dept. of Computer Science

Advanced IT Skills Training Course on Artificial Intelligence

The Department of Computer Science at St. Joseph University in Kiske Model Village, Nagaland, in collaboration with IBM and ICT Academy organised Three Days Skills Training Programme on "Artificial Intelligence" from 28-30th Jan, 2026. In this programme, a total of 68 students from the computer science department have participated. The Training session began at 9:30 am and ended everyday at 2.15 p.m. Through this programme the students have learned about the evolution of AI, how AI is implemented almost in everything nowadays. The trainer has explained about the cycle from Programming to Machine Learning, Natural Language Processing, Deep Learning to transformer architecture then to Large language models, Computer vision models. In the lab session the students used Microsoft Azure portal and learned about the different services provided by Microsoft Azure. They have implemented different models and performed several tasks.



PG II semester students of the Department of History, SJU visited DiezepheCraft village on 23rd January, 2026.



PG II Sem, Dept of History, SJU visited Chumpo Museum at Sovima Village on 30th January, 2026.

UG IV Sem, Dept of History, SJU visited the Tribal Old Age Home cum Day Care Centre, Thilixu Village, Chumoukedima on 23rd January 2026.

ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

Mr. Pikato V Awomi, a student of UG History 2nd Sem, has won the National Senior Muay Thai Championship 2026 held in Hyderabad, Telangana on January 22-25.



COLUMNS

TIPS FOR HEALTH: NEED OF SOUND SLEEP FOR GOOD HEALTH

Sr Dr Thianes DMI



Sound sleep is a fundamental pillar of good health, alongside proper nutrition and regular physical activity. Adequate and quality sleep plays a vital role in maintaining physical, mental, and emotional well-being. In today's fast-paced and technology-driven lifestyle, sleep is often neglected, leading to serious short-term and long-term health consequences. Understanding the importance of sound sleep and adopting healthy sleep practices are therefore essential tips for achieving overall health.

Sound sleep refers not only to the number of hours slept but also to the quality and regularity of sleep. Adults generally require 7–9 hours of sleep per night for optimal functioning (Hirshkowitz et al., 2015). During sleep, the body undergoes critical restorative processes such as tissue repair, muscle growth, immune system strengthening, and hormonal regulation.

Lack of sufficient sleep disrupts these processes, increasing vulnerability to illnesses and chronic health conditions.

One of the most significant benefits of sound sleep is its impact on physical health. Research indicates that inadequate sleep is associated with obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and weakened immunity (Walker, 2017). Sleep deprivation alters the balance of hormones that regulate appetite, leading to increased hunger and unhealthy eating behaviors. Moreover, consistent poor sleep has been linked to high blood pressure and increased risk of heart disease, emphasizing the role of sleep in maintaining physiological balance.

Sound sleep is equally crucial for mental and emotional health. Sleep plays a key role in brain functioning, memory consolidation, learning, and emotional regulation. Insufficient sleep negatively affects attention, decision-making, and problem-solving abilities (Altevogt & Colten, 2006). Chronic sleep deprivation has also been strongly associated with mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and stress-related disorders. Individuals who sleep well tend to exhibit better emotional stability, resilience, and overall psychological well-being.

In addition to health outcomes, sound sleep enhances daily performance and quality of life. Well-rested individuals show improved productivity, better interpersonal relationships, and reduced risk of accidents and errors. In contrast, sleep deprivation contributes to fatigue, irritability, reduced concentration, and decreased efficiency at work and school (National Sleep Foundation, 2020).

To promote sound sleep, several practical health tips can be adopted. Maintaining a regular sleep schedule, creating a calm and comfortable sleep environment, limiting screen exposure before bedtime, and avoiding caffeine or heavy meals at night are effective strategies. Engaging in regular physical activity and practicing relaxation techniques such as meditation or deep breathing can further improve sleep quality.

In conclusion, sound sleep is not a luxury but a biological necessity for good health. It supports physical restoration, mental clarity, emotional balance, and overall well-being. Prioritizing healthy sleep habits is therefore an essential tip for leading a healthy, productive, and balanced life in the modern world.

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BIOTECHNOLOGY AS A TOOL FOR FUTURE ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Dr. Monjit Roy

Assistant Professor, Research Supervisor & NSS Program Officer
Department of Commerce, St. Joseph University



Biotechnology involves using biological systems and scientific knowledge to create products and processes that enhance human life and help protect the environment. In today's fast-changing world, biotechnology has become a crucial tool for achieving long-term economic sustainability. As economies deal with issues like increasing population, climate change, limited resources, and higher healthcare costs, biotechnology provides new and effective solutions that promote steady economic growth while keeping the environment in balance. By connecting life sciences with technology and business, biotechnology plays a key role in building a more sustainable and strong global economy.

The history of biotechnology has developed slowly, starting from old methods like fermentation and choosing which animals or plants to breed, and moving towards modern approaches such as genetic engineering and molecular biology. As time passed, these scientific methods spread out of research labs and into the business world. Now, governments, big companies, and new startups are putting a lot of money into biotechnology because it can bring in a lot of money and help solve big global issues. Many industries, including farming, medicine, power, and the environment, rely more and more on biotechnology to increase output, cut down on waste, and work more efficiently, making it a very important part of today's economy.

Biotechnology plays a key role in ensuring long-term economic sustainability by helping use natural resources more efficiently and encouraging environmentally friendly ways of producing goods. In farming, biotech crops allow for better harvests, help plants fight off pests, and cut down on the need for chemical fertilizers, which lowers farming costs and boosts income for farmers. In the energy field, biofuels and biogas offer clean, renewable energy options that replace traditional fossil fuels, helping to cut pollution and make energy supplies more reliable. In medicine, biotech helps create vaccines, diagnostic tools, and innovative treatments that enhance public health, cut down on long-term healthcare costs, and keep workers healthy and productive. Together, these uses help build a more stable economy and create jobs in areas like research, production, sales, and distribution.

Biotechnology encounters many issues and obstacles that stop it from reaching its full potential. One big problem is the high cost of research and development, which needs a lot of money and takes a long time before a product becomes available for sale. Strict rules and approval processes often slow down product launches and raise running costs. Ethical worries about genetic changes, cloning, and keeping personal data can cause people to resist it and make it less popular in the market. Also, a lack of knowledge, poor facilities, and limited access to technology in poorer countries stop biotechnology from being widely used. Issues like owning patents and monopolies can prevent small businesses and farmers from getting the same benefits.

Even with these problems, biotechnology has a huge and important role. The increasing need for sustainable products, eco-friendly solutions, and better healthcare has made the biotech industry grow around the world. Biotechnology helps the economy by bringing in foreign money, encouraging new businesses, and promoting the export of valuable goods. For students studying business, it's where new ideas, money, trade, and sustainable practices meet. Its help with food security, protecting the environment, and improving public health shows how important it is both economically and socially.

To deal with these challenges, good solutions are needed. Governments should spend on education, training, and research facilities to support innovation. Working together between public and private sectors can lower financial risks and help bring new products to the market. Clear rules and ethical standards can build trust and make sure biotechnology is used in a responsible way. Giving financial help and access to technology to small companies and poorer regions can encourage fair growth.

Recent trends show more attention is being paid to the bio-economy, sustainable manufacturing, precise farming, and new biotech startups using digital tools and data analysis. These trends show how important biotechnology is in shaping future economies. In short, even though there are some issues, biotechnology is a strong tool for future economic stability. With smart policies, ethical behavior, and smart investments, it can help create growth, new job opportunities, and a better future.

BEYOND THE BEACH

Ikali, Counsellor , Saludem, SJU

Beyond the Beach: (The Honest Struggle of Finding Your Way Back to the Desk)

We've all been there. You're sitting at your desk but your mind is still somewhere else—maybe with your friends or loved ones spending your holidays, or a Carnival or just the quiet comfort of your bedroom back home.

The transition from a long vacation back to student life isn't just a schedule change; it's a total identity shift. One day you're a person with zero deadlines, and the next, you're expected to be a high-functioning academic machine.



If you're feeling a bit lost, you aren't "lazy"—you're just human. Here are some ways to help you:

1. The Grief of the "End"

It sounds dramatic, but there is a genuine sense of loss when a great break ends. We miss the version of ourselves that was relaxed and present. The first step to coming back is acknowledging that it's okay to miss your time off. You don't have to be "excited" to be back to be productive. You just have to show up.

2. Finding Your Rhythm (Not Someone Else's)

Social media often tells us that "getting back to work" means waking up at 5:00 AM, drinking green juice, and studying for ten hours straight. In reality, a personal comeback looks much messier:

3. The "One Small Thing" Strategy: Yesterday, my only "win" was buying the notebook I needed for class. Today, it might be reading five pages. Give yourself credit for the small gears turning before the whole machine starts running.

4. The Gentle Routine: Instead of a rigid schedule, try a "rhythm." I like to start my mornings with the same song or the same breakfast. It acts as a mental bridge between "vacation me" and "student me."

5. Turning Memories into Fuel

Instead of viewing your vacation as something that is over, try to see it as something that filled your tank.

6. Bring a Piece of it With You: Keep a photo from your vacation or use a souvenir. It's a reminder that the world is big, and your studies are the bridge that helps you explore it even further.

7. Study with Friends: Don't isolate yourself. The best way to ease the "responsibility blues" is to realize you aren't doing it alone. Grab a coffee with a classmate and admit that you're struggling to focus—chances are, they are too.

Coming back to your responsibilities is a process of re-learning. Be patient with your brain while it remembers how to focus. You got into this programme for a reason, and that capable, driven version of you is still there—they're just a little jet-lagged.

'You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.' - Martin Luther King Jr.

A CRITIQUE OF HUMOUR AS A PEDAGOGY

Prof Fr Sunny Joseph

Humour has long been celebrated as a pedagogical tool capable of enhancing student engagement, reducing anxiety, and fostering positive teacher-student relationships. From the witty Socratic dialogues of classical philosophy to modern "edutainment" classrooms, humour is often viewed as a shortcut to effective learning. However, while humour can enrich pedagogy, an uncritical or excessive reliance on it raises important theoretical, ethical, and instructional concerns.

Proponents argue that humour lowers affective filters and promotes cognitive openness (Banas et al., 2011). A familiar classroom anecdote illustrates this: a mathematics teacher explains probability by joking, "The probability of homework being forgotten is always 1." Students laugh—and remember the concept. Yet critics caution that memorability does not necessarily translate into conceptual depth. As Kant

(1790/2000) warned, laughter arises from "the sudden transformation of a strained expectation into nothing," suggesting that humour may momentarily entertain without sustaining intellectual rigor.

One central critique concerns cognitive distraction. Research in educational psychology indicates that humour unrelated to instructional content can overload working memory, diverting attention from learning objectives (Sweller, 2011). For instance, a lecturer who opens every class with stand-up-style jokes may become memorable, but students might recall the punchlines more clearly than the theoretical frameworks. A well-known academic quip captures this risk: "Students rated the class highly, but failed the



exam spectacularly.” The humour worked; the pedagogy did not.

Another critique lies in cultural and ethical sensitivity. Humour is context-dependent and deeply shaped by culture, language, and power relations (Billig, 2005). What elicits laughter in one classroom may alienate or embarrass students in another. An anecdote from higher education illustrates this point: a professor jokingly compares procrastinating students to “endangered species—always disappearing near deadlines.” While some laugh, others experience shame or disengagement. Such humour, though unintended, can reinforce hierarchies and marginalize vulnerable learners.

Furthermore, humour risks trivializing serious content. In disciplines such as ethics, trauma studies, or religious education, excessive levity may undermine the moral gravity of the subject matter. Freire (1970) cautioned against pedagogical practices that reduce ed-

ucation to performance rather than conscientization. When humour becomes performative, the teacher risks becoming an entertainer rather than a facilitator of critical reflection.

That said, a complete rejection of humour would be neither realistic nor desirable. The critique is not against humour per se, but against its unreflective use. Effective pedagogical humour is purposeful, inclusive, content-related, and sparingly applied (Garner, 2006). As one seasoned teacher humorously admitted, “I use jokes like salt—enough to enhance the dish, not enough to ruin it.”

In conclusion, humour as pedagogy occupies a paradoxical space: it can illuminate learning or obscure it. A critical approach demands that educators ask not whether humour is funny, but whether it is educationally justifiable, ethically sound, and cognitively meaningful.

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IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Rency Sebastian

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REG.N025052002

Higher education institutions play a crucial role in shaping knowledgeable, skilled, and responsible citizens. In the present academic climate characterized by rapid technological advancement, increased competition, and growing societal expectations professional ethics have become fundamental to the credibility and purpose of higher education. Ethics provide a moral framework that guides teaching, research, governance, and interpersonal relationships within academic institutions.

Professional Ethics in Higher Education: Professional ethics refer to the moral principles, values, and standards that regulate the conduct of educators, administrators, and institutions. These include honesty in teaching and research, fairness in evaluation, respect for learners, accountability, transparency, and commitment to academic excellence. Ethical practices help establish trust and strengthen institutional credibility.

Ethical Role of Educators: University teachers are not only transmitters of knowledge but also role models. Their ethical behavior influences students’ academic growth and moral development. Fair assessment, respect for diversity, avoidance of favoritism, and adherence to academic integrity are essential responsibilities of educators.

Academic Integrity in the Digital Age: Digital technologies and artificial intelligence have introduced ethical challenges such as plagiarism, data misuse, and academic dishonesty. Professional ethics guide institutions in promoting responsible use of technology and maintaining academic integrity to protect the quality and authenticity of education.

Institutional Ethics and Social Responsibility: Ethics also guide institutional governance through transparent administration, fair recruitment, accountable leadership, and inclusive practices. Ethical institutions promote equity, respect diversity, and contribute positively to social development.

Conclusion: In today’s dynamic academic environment, professional ethics are indispensable. They ensure quality education, institutional credibility, and social relevance. By upholding ethical values, higher education institutions prepare competent, morally responsible citizens.

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