

INSTITUTIONAL DISTINCTIVENESS

The Institute focuses keenly on the holistic development of students and provides them with every opportunity and resource to facilitate their holistic development. This is one of the most distinctive features the Institute, whose details are given below in brief.

1. Peace & Conflict Transformation Studies

NEISSR is the only Master of Social Work Institute offering specialization in Peace and Conflict Transformation Studies. This distinctive feature of the institute springs from **Peace Channel's** almost a decade experience of working with youth and communities promoting a culture of peace in a society characterized by culture of violence, characterized by the protracted armed Naga movement. This foundation for peace building as an academic discipline was laid with the founding of Peace Channel in 2006. Thus, at present, Peace Channel serves as the outreach wing of NEISSR where students trained in peace building can have field and hands-on practical experience by volunteering at Peace Channel as interns. Peace Channel works closely with the school going youth and children across the state in an effort to integrate peace education in school education system. Building on this foundation, NEISSR came into being as academic institution to provide knowledge, methods, tools and techniques of working with violent system for conflict transformation as an integrated subject in the social work post-graduate programme, preparing youth leadership competent of handling violent conflict situation for sustainable peace and development.

Apart from the specialization in Peace and Conflict Transformation studies, **Peace and Development Studies (BSW 303)** is offered in the third semester as a compulsory paper in the BSW programme, and **Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies (SW 201)** is offered as a compulsory paper in the MSW programme.

2. Youth Development Specialization

NEISSR is one of the few institutions in the country integrating youth leadership development in peace building as part of social work programme. The Institute developed a blend of social work professional curriculum with youth leadership and peace building by addressing structural and cultural issues that support social and political violence. Another area of its unique identity is in its efforts to design and organize the students' community to respond to real life situation: application of classroom teaching into practice in real life situation within and outside the campus based on the principles of social and gender equality and equity. Students are organized at different levels for this purpose.

3. Peace building and Promotion of Ecumenical Collaborations through Peace Channel – NEISSR partnership

Peace Channel-NEISSR promote interfaith culture in the fast growing commercial town of Dimapur where people of faith, religious traditions, cultures and ethnic identity come together to negotiate their own living space with unique identities. This programme has been able to mobilize inter-faith group at inter-community levels and Peoples Forum for Peace (PFP) in strategic communally sensitive locations. These forums effectively manage and respond to any communal tensions and violence on time and educate people for mutual appreciations, cooperation and coexistence. Peace channel provide immediate opportunities for present and out-going NEISSR students to develop their professional competencies as spring board in launching their future professional careers. Students working with Peace Channel get involved in several areas of project development, management, monitoring and evaluation, etc. Peace Channel with its many projects brings in huge experiences from the ground. Besides, this program for inter-community harmony is another area of unique identity for Peace Channel-NEISSR partnership.

NEISSR is one of the few social work institutes to have an in-campus registered NGO as an outreach wing.

4. Student Centric Pedagogy

In NEISSR, teachers ensure that their role is to facilitate the learning process of the students. Thus, the students are encouraged to speak, to share and to express their views in the classroom. Assignments in the form of individual presentation, group discussions in the classroom, group presentation, research presentation etc are the various ways in which the learning process is facilitated. NEISSR strives for excellence in each individual students and the collective growth of all. Thus, *Sarvodaya* (the daily morning assembly) is a distinctive feature through which the institute seeks to achieve excellence of each individual students and collective growth. Students are given the opportunity to hone their skills by taking part in giving thought of the day, sharing, meditation and prayer.

The institute follows an '*Open and Easy Access*' policy where any students can approach the Principal/Vice Principal or the faculty members to clarify doubts or sort out their personal grievances. The institute also ensures that students are included in the decision making relation to extra-curricular activities, by inviting the students' council members to all meetings relating to such activities. There are also two faculty members designated as students' welfare officers to liaison between the management and the students.

5. Peaceful, Spacious and Green Campus for conducive learning

NEISSR believes in a 'peaceful and a fun filled environment for effective learning'. Thus, the institute takes concerted effort in greening the campus with active involvement of the students. The students are divided into **4 forums and 7 clubs**, of which **Green Club** takes the initiative in planning and carrying out activities to "**greening the campus**". Thus, regular tree plantation and cleanliness drive are carried out. An hour is set aside on First and Fourth Saturday of the month for cleaning and beautifying the surrounding. NEISSR also follows "**no bell**" policy. It is to inculcate self-responsibility and awareness among the students. Classes continue without the need of a bell to remind the start or end of a period, with the teachers and students being aware of the time and their duties. In order to enhance the greening of the campus:

- a. NEISSR actively discourages the usage of single use plastics in the campus
- b. NEISSR is an institution that actively promotes the concept of 'no tobacco zone' in the college premises.
- c. Clean and green energy in the form of solar power for the power requirements of the institute.

To deal with any misunderstandings and conflicts arising among students or students and teachers or students and management, the institute lays great emphasis on mediation and dialogue. Thus, students are trained in 'peer mediation' to capacitate them with the knowledge and aptitude of resolving misunderstanding and conflict in a peaceful manner.

6. Ensuring quality and continuous involvement of all students in the activities of the institute

NEISSR has mechanisms in place to ensure that no student is left behind in the activities or the decision making processes. At the first level, students are divided into pairs known as '**Buddies**' to constitute a system known as **Buddy System**. The buddies are to look out for each other and help each other integrate into the activities and programmes of the institute. The buddies keep the other buddy informed about the happenings in the institute, in case of the other buddy being absent from class for various reasons. At the second level, the classes are divided into smaller groups for easy coordination and also to work as a unit in classroom activities and assignments. These groups also take the initiatives to lead the *Sarvodaya*. In the third level, all the students are divided into clubs. Each student should be a member of one of the seven clubs. The clubs are represented through convenor and co-convenor of the clubs in meetings and discussions related to extra-curricular activities. In the fourth level, students are divided into four forums, namely, **Peace Forum, Community Development Forum, Youth Development Forum, and Social Entrepreneurship Forum**. These activities of these forums are aligned to the four specializations offered at NEISSR. Students are also exposed to the different aspects of the specializations offered before they chose their specialization in the third semester.

At the fifth and the highest level is the **NEISSR Students' Council for Social Change (NSCSC)**. This is an elected body of students' representative to represent the interests and the requirements of the students to the teaching faculty and to the management. The students' council is assisted by two faculty members who are designated as **Students' Welfare Officers**. The President and the executive members are part of meetings and discussions relating to the activities of the institute.

7. Integrated stakeholders' involvement

Apart from the involvement of the students, NEISSR also encourages and solicits the involvement of other stakeholders like the Alumni and the parents/gaurdians, through regular correspondences in the form of mails and also our tradition of sending out a circular to all parents at the end of each semester. The circular keeps the parents/gaurdians updated about the activities of the institute while also making them aware about the upcoming plans and activities of the institute. Yearly and periodic Parents-Teachers Association meeting are also convened regularly.

The Alumni has a strong elected body through which they carry out their activities in consultation with the management of the institute. A day is marked as ALUMNI DAY where alumni gather and plan out their activities for future, while also reviewing the activities carried out. Alumni are also invited to interact and address the students based on their area of expertise and their experiences of being in the social development sector.

8. Ample opportunities for extracurricular activities

There are seven clubs, namely, **Green Club, Red Ribbon Club, Social Media** (*please add the clubs*). Through these clubs activities, students are provided with ample opportunities to develop their skills and potentials outside the classroom. Inter club competitions and activities are also organized to inculcate healthy competition and also a sense of appreciation for diversities and differences.

Students are also encouraged to participate in inter-collegiate activities and competitions to further hone the skills and knowledge obtained from their classroom learning. The institute also encourages physical and mental development by providing opportunities for both indoor and outdoor games, including table tennis, badminton, football, basket ball, volley ball and cricket etc.

9. Promotion of networking and collaborations with other institutes of higher education, government agencies, and NGOs

NEISSR promotes interdisciplinary approach of learning. Thus, NEISSR has about 50 MOUs signed with institution of higher education, government agencies, NGOs and other

organizations working in various sectors, at the state, national and international levels. The expertise of these networking organizations is shared to the students through placements, observation visits, discussions, workshops and seminar, and research collaboration.

10. Regular exposures to field settings through rural camps, fieldwork, observation visits and study tours.

Rural Camps, Fieldwork, observation visits and study tours are requirements of the course curriculum. Students of each batch have to go through this experience to be qualified as professional social workers. Thus, organizations and institutions of national repute, outside of the state of Nagaland are identified and chosen for the students to visit and learn during the study tours, thereby providing exposures to the students.

The regular field work provides the students the hands on experiences of applying the theoretical learnings of the classroom. The Rural Camp also provides a group living experience for the students, while providing their services to the people in the rural communities.

11. Inclusiveness through multiculturalism

NEISSR is characterized by the presence of students from various Naga communities and also other communities from different North Eastern states. NEISSR also has students from different states of India. NEISSR inculcates the value of respecting differences and diversities through NEISSR Cultural Festival, which is celebrated with the objectives of **preserving one's culture, promoting respect for others' culture, and preventing cultural conflicts through understanding cultural diversity.**