

Education USA Information Session on pursuing graduate studies in the United States

In a remarkable event, students from the Department of Biotechnology and Bioinformatics at JSS Academy of Higher Education & Research (JSS AHER) had the distinct privilege of engaging with Mr. Arvind Sivamani, a distinguished Education Adviser at the United States-India Educational Foundation (USIEF) in Chennai. This exceptional interaction occurred on January 25, 2024, as Mr. Sivamani visited JSS AHER to provide invaluable insights, share his experiences, and impart knowledge to the next generation of students and researchers.



Dr. Ramith Ramu extended a warm welcome to Mr. Arvind Sivamani, accompanied by the Head and Dean, as well as the Course Coordinator of the School of Life Sciences in Mysuru.

Mr. Arvind Sivamani's educational and content writing journey commenced at Kumara Rani Meena Muthiah College of Arts and Science, where he dedicated himself from 2010 to 2013. During this time, he honed his skills in content creation, social media management, and event organization. Transitioning from 2013 to 2018, Mr. Sivamani played a pivotal role in the academic sphere, particularly through his involvement in student mobility programs at the Indian Institute of Technology Madras, focusing on semester exchange initiatives. Continuing his commitment to fostering international educational relations, he served as the International Relations Officer at Vellore

Institute of Technology from 2018 to 2023, overseeing admissions for NRI and foreign students. Since 2023, he has continued to excel in his endeavors

Mr. Arvind Sivamani, in his role as an Education Adviser at USIEF Chennai, has provided invaluable guidance to students aspiring to pursue graduate studies in the United States. During a recent engagement, he delivered a comprehensive presentation on the U.S. Higher Education System, offering insights into essential aspects that prospective students must consider. His presentation covered a wide range of topics, including academic intakes, variations in Master's degree programs, the significance of thesis tracks, opportunities within Ph.D. programs, professional degree options, and stressed the importance of selecting accredited institutions for application.

The U.S. Higher Education System boasts a rich diversity in its academic intakes, extending invitations to students for both Fall (mid-August to September) and Spring (January) semesters. This report delves into the intricacies of master's and doctoral degree programs, as well as professional degree offerings, providing illuminating insights into the dynamic educational landscape. Master's programs exhibit a spectrum of durations, ranging from the conventional 2-year structures to more condensed 1-year formats, with thesis tracks playing an integral role in equipping students for prospective doctoral studies. Doctoral programs, spanning 3 to 6 years, frequently offer funding opportunities to support students throughout their academic endeavors. Additionally, the system accommodates professional degree programs, facilitating specialization in fields such as law or medicine. Prospective students are strongly encouraged to target accredited institutions, ensuring access to high-quality and reputable education. Accreditation stands as a pivotal benchmark for upholding educational standards within the system



Mr. Arvind interacts with the students and provides informative details for the future enrollments.

Mr. Arvind offered invaluable insights into the essential components of the U.S. Graduate Application Package, highlighting the varying admission standards across institutions. Prospective graduate students are urged to conduct thorough research on individual schools to grasp their specific requirements. Critical elements include the submission of comprehensive academic records, standardized test scores (such as GRE, GMAT), English proficiency tests (such as TOEFL, IELTS), well-crafted application essays, letters of recommendation, a detailed resume or curriculum vitae, and the completion of designated application forms alongside the requisite fees. Mr. Arvind underscored

the importance of meticulous preparation of this package, tailored to meet each institution's unique criteria, to enhance the prospects of successful admission to U.S. universities.

Mr. Arvind offered valuable perspectives on the varied admission procedures of universities, underscoring the distinctive application timelines they follow. While certain institutions embrace rolling admissions without fixed deadlines, others adhere to specific schedules. Upon acceptance, students are issued an I-20, serving as a certificate of eligibility. Those admitted to full-time programs can subsequently apply for an F-1 (Student) visa. Mr. Arvind underscored the significance of selecting a college or university that harmonizes with individual requirements, spanning academic, financial, and personal objectives. The focus was on identifying the optimal fit to ensure a rewarding and successful educational journey.



Mr. Arvind provides valuable insights into the diverse admission processes of universities.

Mr. Arvind conveyed that financial assistance for international students in U.S. universities is highly competitive, with the nature and amount of aid varying across institutions, departments, levels of study, and policies. Colleges and universities may offer scholarships, financial aid, or assistance in different forms. Common avenues for financial support include Teaching Assistantships (TA), Graduate Assistantships (GA), and Research Assistantships (RA). It is noteworthy that doctoral candidates receive priority for funding across all schools and departments. Additionally, students have the option to seek external funding sources, and Education USA at USIEF centres provides a comprehensive list of available opportunities. Overall, Mr. Arvind emphasized the dynamic and varied landscape of financial assistance, urging students to explore multiple avenues to secure support for their academic pursuits.

Mr. Arvind emphasised that U.S. institutions carefully assess a student's complete application package when identifying potential candidates for financial aid. He noted that students significantly enhance their chances of securing financial assistance by showcasing various qualities. First and foremost, demonstrating a high level of academic achievement and unwavering commitment and motivation in the intended field of study is crucial. Additionally, achieving high scores on standardised tests is a key factor that institutions consider favourably. Crafting a compelling and well-justified Statement of Purpose is another vital aspect that can contribute to a student's success in obtaining financial aid. Outstanding letters of recommendation, highlighting the student's capabilities and potential, further strengthen the application. Moreover, having prior research or teaching experience can be a valuable asset, showcasing the applicant's practical involvement in their academic pursuits. In summary, Mr. Arvind underscored the importance of presenting a comprehensive and compelling application that reflects both academic excellence and a genuine passion for the chosen field of study.



A brief details on the Universities and opportunity that they provide for the foreign students

The presentation aimed to do more than just introduce students to the latest advancements in fostering commitment and motivation within their chosen field of study; it sought to ignite a genuine passion for their future profession. Mr. Arvind urged students from JSS AHER to showcase their practical involvement in academic pursuits, emphasizing the importance of hands-on experience. His visit not only enriched the academic journey of the students but also underscored JSS AHER's unwavering commitment to providing a holistic education. Both faculty members and students expressed profound gratitude for the opportunity to interact with such a prominent figure in the field. The event was expertly coordinated by Dr. Ramith Ramu, Assistant Professor in the Department of Biotechnology & Bioinformatics at JSS AHER.



A token of appreciation to Mr. Arvind Sivamani on behalf of the Department of Biotechnology & Bioinformatics
