

MOOC Workshop 10 March 2016 by Ashwani Sharma, Country Head, University Relations,  
Google India Pvt. Ltd.

Mr. Ashwani Sharma, Country Head, University Relations, Google India Pvt. Ltd. conducted a workshop on MOOCs on 10.3.16 at the ILLI for ILLI Fellows and staff. He shared valuable information about the initiative taken by Google in collaboration with various institutions such as IITs, IISc and NITs. They have created the NPTEL platform--National Program on Technology Enhanced Learning which offers online courses in a range of subjects, including humanities. The faculty of these institutions is actively involved not only in designing the courses but also certification of the students. Other than video lectures and assignments, which are the routine features of online courses, NPTEL has web only discussion forums, "Hangouts on Air," a live class for which students can submit questions in advance, inputs from faculty/ teaching assistants which provides the scope for changing the course material if it is graded too high or too low and the certification examination at the end of the course. Currently, about 150 such courses are being offered by different institutes across the country with around 7 lakh enrolments so far.

The speaker talked about the advantages of the online, open-learning model of education and emphasized the idea of self-motivation for learners and instructors alike. He suggested that the faculty should not let itself be confined by the curriculum and instead focus on dissemination of knowledge among the learning community. He also shared details about the types of courses being run on the NPTEL platform, their duration, methods of assessment and certification.

"Coursebuilder" is provided uniquely for NPTEL by Google. Above all, Mr. Sharma inspired and motivated members of the audience with the generosity and lucidity of his presentation to think beyond curricular demands and institutional constraints and to reach out to thousands of interested and committed learners of all ages and backgrounds situated both inside and outside the classroom.