

Some points to remember about ragging.

What Constitutes Ragging?

Ragging constitutes one or more of any of the following acts:

- a) Any conduct by any student or students whether by words spoken or written or by an act which has the effect of teasing, treating or handling with rudeness a fresher or any other student.
- b) Indulging in rowdy or undisciplined activities by any student or students which causes or is likely to cause annoyance, hardship, physical or psychological harm or to raise fear or apprehension thereof in any fresher or any other student.
- c) Asking any student to do any act which such student will not in the ordinary course do and which has the effect of causing or generating a sense of shame, or torment or embarrassment so as to adversely affect the physique or psyche of such fresher or any other student.
- d) Any act by a senior student that prevents, disrupts or disturbs the regular academic activity of any other student or a fresher.
- e) Exploiting the services of a fresher or any other student for completing the academic tasks assigned to an individual or a group of students.
- f) Any act of financial extortion or forceful expenditure burden put on a fresher or any other student by students
- g) Any act of physical abuse including all variants of it: sexual abuse, homosexual assaults, stripping, forcing obscene and lewd acts, gestures, causing bodily harm or any other danger to health or person;
- h) Any act or abuse by spoken words, emails, post, public insults which would also include deriving perverted pleasure, vicarious or sadistic thrill from actively or passively participating in the discomfiture to fresher or any other student.
- i) Any act that affects the mental health and self-confidence of a fresher or any other student with or without an intent to derive a sadistic pleasure or showing off power, authority or superiority by a student over any fresher

- **Ragging is an act of aggression** committed by an individual or a group of individuals over another individual or a group of individuals where the first group, by virtue of their being senior to the second group, somehow get the authority and audacity to commit the act and the second group, by virtue of their being new to the institution are automatic victims. Any interaction which is aggressive and asymmetric (not on equal footing) is ragging.

- **Ragging is not harmless fun-** In an institution like IIT Dharwad, students come from diverse social and cultural backgrounds, and what may be harmless fun for some may turn out to be serious indignity for some others.

Nationwide, ragging cases are reported. For some students, ragging (or interaction) gets intolerable and they suffer loss of self-esteem and even commit suicide. It is often found that seniors, being young students themselves, do not realize where to draw the line and when to back off – the risk is simply not worth it.

- **Ragging does not increase smartness or make a fresher bold.** Quite to the contrary it forces an individual to accept subjugation and conform; perhaps even rationalize it later (with the drinks and samosas at the end of the interaction period). This loss of individuality suppresses talent and reduces self-worth. In turn, forced homogeneity precludes free flow of new ideas, creativity and the spirit of enquiry. Also, the attempt of the seniors to break the self-esteem of a newcomer and revel in their shame and fear engenders feelings of bitterness and revengefulness, which is often taken out on juniors next year.
- **Ragging does not help bring people out of their shells and bring out their talents.** Talent in human beings is varied and multi-faceted. Identifying and recognizing talent is difficult business and one person cannot unilaterally decide that another needs “bringing out”. It is also regressive to make some people feel that they are talent-less or that they lack social skills.
- The courses in IIT Dharwad are designed so that for every credit registered for an average student requires to put in an hour of study/work. Denying the freshers the time to put in this work often results in poor academic performance.
- A premier institution like IIT Dharwad provides many opportunities for a newcomer to excel, in both academic and extracurricular activities. Forcing a predetermined set of ideas onto a fresher diminishes his/her chances of self-discovery.
- It is a matter of shame that a “Google search” on “ragging” returns most of the top few items related to ragging in India. Ragging, in most other countries, has become a thing of the past, and this has in no way reduced the sense of belonging to their institutions.

- It is neither possible nor desirable that high-handed proctorial discipline and punishments be used to stop ragging. If this social evil has to be eradicated it must happen through the understanding and efforts of the student body. Not only should they not rag others but should actually prevent ragging from happening. We make an earnest request to all students to play an active role in stopping ragging.

Dean, Student Welfare