

**REPORT ON Guest Lecture Series by  
Dr. P. Chitra Rajalakshmi**  
Organized by  
**Institutional Research Board  
and Medical Education Unit**  
**Trichy SRM Medical College Hospital and  
Research Centre, Tiruchirapalli**

**13.08.2018**



**Guest Lecture Series 3: Risk Management in Academic Institutions**

# **Report on Guest Lecture on “Risk Management in Academic Institutions”**

## **Background**

The risk management in each process allows for greater possibilities for its successful implementation. A company which incorporates the risk management into a management system can achieve better results and make more rational strategic decisions. This paper was created as a result of increasing awareness of employees to the importance of the risk management in the company they work for. By developing a risk management system in the occupational health and safety area (OHS), the Higher Education Technical School of Professional Studies in NoviSad (HETS) created a team of experts consisting of teachers from different vocations. The school created a document about the risk assessment in the OHS area from hundreds of companies. Risk management in the workplace, and in the work environment in relation to people’s health and safety was considered by all of the companies. The companies varied, as well as the workplaces and environments, so various vocational education teachers were involved. By observing and analysing work conditions in various companies, the teachers obtained experience and routine in their risk assessment for certain workplaces. They gained a deeper understanding and greater confidence in decision – making -- thanks to the exchange of their experiences and method of assessment. Besides the OHS area, the risk assessment of this team expanded to other areas as well, for example, fire protection, environmental protection, protection of the information technology system, etc.

Institutions of higher education are home to large populations of students, faculty and staff, ranging from many hundreds to thousands and even tens of thousands of people. Colleges operate utilities (electricity, steam, water, sewers, phone and internet), provide police protection, maintain housing ranging from faculty houses to high-rise student dormitories and apartments, care for miles of streets and walkways, offer media communications, and run dining facilities— all in addition to their core mission of educating the next generation. In fact, while negotiating my university’s insurance coverage, an underwriter once observed that the university had “all the risks of a city.”

In order to create awareness among complexity of the issue and to understand the inter-country research issues related to risk in academic institutions, the Institutional Research Board and Medical Education Unit, Trichy SRM Medical College Hospital and Research Centre, Tiruchirapalli took initiative to address.

## **VENUE & TIME**

The programme was held at Dr. B.C. Roy Hall, Second Floor, Hospital Block, from 2.00 to 3.30pm on 13.08.2018.

## **INAUGURAL FUNCTION**

Mr. M. Ismail, Research Coordinator, Institutional Research Board (IRB) welcomed the gathering. Dr. M. Muhil, Coordinator, Medical Education Unit (MEU) and Associate Professor of Physiology introduced the topic.

The gallery of participants was welcomed by Mr. M. Ismail, Research Coordinator. The Guest lecture was inaugurated by the Dean Dr. S. Vinayagam with his inaugural speech followed by Chief guest introduction by Dr. A. Uma, Professor and Head of Microbiology

## **Chief Guest of the day**

Dr. P. Chitra Rajalakshmi,  
Associate Professor of Microbiology,  
Oman Medical College,  
Sultanate of Oman.

## **STATUS OF PARTICIPANTS**

A total of 60 participants included clinical, pre, para clinical teaching faculty and postgraduates participated.

## **TECHNICAL DELIBERATIONS**

The deliberations by Dr. P. Chitra Rajalakshmi was highly interested and thought provoking. She initiated her presentation with the basic infrastructure needs and issues. She highlighted the importance of improving the quality of institution's risk assessment thereby the institutions can exploit higher education's willingness to collaborate on academic and administrative issues. Unlike a corporate environment where protecting information to keep a competitive edge is tied to the bottom line, tend to share what they know if it will help a colleague. In serving its mission to advance the discipline of risk management in higher education, a separate cell have to be facilitated the sharing of risk information.



She presented the institutional risk management with risk inventory areas of risk into 23 groups. Each category has specific risk areas that reflect circumstances that give rise to risk. The risk inventory lists 290 such risk areas. For each risk area, the inventory then lists “risk factors” that may make the circumstance more or less risky depending on the institution. Below is an alphabetical list of the risk categories and a sample of

the associated risk areas.

1. **Affiliated entities:** independent academic organizations, student and alumni organizations, commercial partners
2. **Athletics:** conferences, facilities, academic issues, graduation rates, injuries and resulting medical care, NCAA compliance, spectator control, terrorism, trademarks and licensing, weather
3. **Brand and reputation:** academic excellence, academic freedom, alumni relations, constitutional challenges, free speech and expression, relationship with key supporters
4. **Business continuity and emergency planning:** breadth and currency, emergency response, international activity, National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliance, coordination with public agencies
5. **Community:** economic development, use of institutional facilities by community members and organizations, service
6. **Competition:** diverse education providers, college rankings
7. **Conflict of interest or commitment:** faculty, especially in research

8. **Demographics:** declining number of college-age students, increasing enrollment by international students
9. **Enterprise risk management:** effective program design, assessment and mitigation plans
10. **Financial:** budgeting, capital sufficiency, construction management, contracts, deferred maintenance, economic conditions, energy availability and cost, food crisis, fundraising, grant procurement and compliance, infrastructure, investment management, liquidity, tuition
11. **Gender-related issues:** equality, sexual harassment and assault, LGBTQ issues
12. **Governance and institutional management:** access and affordability, authorized activities, competency-based education, institutional culture, decentralized authority, educational technology, leadership and strategic planning, shared governance and academic freedom
13. **Government support of higher education:** financial aid, government financial support, sponsored research
14. **Human resources:** code of conduct, diversity, employee productivity, employee benefit management and ERISA, employment, workplace safety and injury, unionization, volunteers, wage and hour compliance
15. **Intellectual property:** legal compliance and defense, lost opportunity
16. **International:** asset protection, competition, compliance, emergency response, ethical violations, global trends, locality risk, U.S. policy
17. **Local, state and federal regulation:** compliance, environmental, facilities, Higher Education Act, research, tax
18. **Operations:** auxiliary business such as bookstore and publishing, library and art collections, distance learning (especially online), outsourcing, premises, transportation, travel, student health services
19. **Property:** physical damage, depreciation and obsolescence, inadequate design, naming
20. **Public safety:** active shooter and terrorism, building access and security, crime, Clery Act requirements (stipulates that all schools that participate in financial aid programs must disclose information on campus crime), minors on campus
21. **Safety:** fire and life safety, laboratory safety, pandemic, research, training, vehicles
22. **Students:** academic standards and graduation rates, Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, admission and enrollment, alcohol/substance abuse, at-risk students, code

of conduct, diversity, experiential learning, financial aid, healthcare, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requirements, sexual assault

23. **Technology:** access, business continuity, changing technology, governance, mobile devices, performance capacity, security and cyber liability, system design

The risk inventory also classifies each risk area into one or more of the following types of risk:

- **Strategic:** High-level goals, aligned with and supporting the mission
- **Operational:** Effective and efficient use of the institution's resources
- **Reporting:** Reliability of the institution's external and internal reporting
- **Compliance:** The institution's compliance with applicable laws and regulations
- **Reputational:** Damage caused by any of the above that spills over to how the university is valued or perceived

The technical session was followed by an open discussion in which the doubts raised by the participants were clarified by the speaker.





**Honoring Dr. P. Chitra Rajalakshmi**

**Vote of Thanks**

Dr. N. Prabhusaran, Research Faculty proposed vote of thanks.

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