Freqly Asked Qns about PhD @ IITD

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1. What is the admission procedure to the PhD program?
   As far as I know, no tests. they shortlist candidates from applications and call for an interview.

2. Syllabus for interview
   You are supposed to be clear with your basics of core CS subjects. The interview would be according to your preferred area of research. They would want you to be strong in it and also in your BTech or MTech project related concepts. They may give you papers to read and test your understanding of them. However, the strategy they adopt would probably change year to year, panel to panel and even candidate to candidate!!

3. How/What to prepare?
   Reread answer to previous question.. and may be brush up ur CS (or Electronics) basics. . concentrate on stuff you think you are strong in & want to highlight as ur research area. You must be prepared to answer application oriented questions. . expect to be asked “why/how/what would happen if” more than “define/explain/what is”.

4. Do I need to have done some research beforehand?
   I’m not sure if that is one of the expectations. . but I guess, if there is a decent “research component” in your projects. .instead of just implementing something which doesn’t need much problem solving etc. . it would work in your favor. In my case, though I had not done any formal “research”, I like to believe that my B.Tech project had a good research component to it :). In general, I believe, an aptitude towards research should be enough.

5. How do I decide which topic I should take?
   I would say pick what excites you most ;) . But then, you don’t want the topic/area to be too out of date or saturated either. .I mean, pick a topic which excites you and has scope for further contributions to be made within a reasonable amount of time.. You cant, for example, propose to prove NP = P within next 4yrs (without prior expertise)(and no offence meant if you really want to do that!!).. Reserve all the super-exotic stuff for your research career after the PhD :) There is no right or wrong topic. . and no rules to choose a topic. I would say that it is a matter of luck. .whether you choose a topic which keeps you excited through out your PhD, whether it is a current/hot topic & stays so for a few more years, whether it lets you complete your PhD quick or drags it along, whether its a paying (literally!!) area of research or not etc etc. . Thats y I say. .go by your heart. .and All the very best :)

6. How are supervisor(s) & research topics chosen/assigned at CSE, IITD?
   @ CSE, IITD, choosing a topic & supervisor(s) is largely up to the student. If you already have a topic/area in mind, find out who works in that area & get it touch with those faculty members. If not, talk to all of those working in the broad areas of research you want to work in. Look at the projects they have worked, are currently working on and propose to work on. .Talk to their PhD students. More importantly, read up on the areas they are mentioned. If you find yourself really interested in some topic. .go ahead and see if the best prof for that topic is willing to work with you. Never mind if you are still confused. .you have 3 months to decide after registration :) . Plus, if you find a particular prof approachable (all are approachable for that matter!) & easy to talk to, you can ask him/her to help you with this decision.
7. Do I approach some faculty member before the interview?
Frankly, I have no idea. But I can tell you that you don’t NEED to. because, I did not :). Of course, it might be a good idea to approach a faculty member if you have a lot of queries, or if you are already sure whom you want to work under etc.

8. Is going for a PhD in IITD instead of other IITs or universities abroad a good idea?
Of course it is. Why else do you think I am here??

9. How are the faculty members? Knowledgeable? Helpful as supervisors?
I would say the department is gifted with the coolest faculty. Of course knowledgeable. Almost all are extremely caring and fun to work with. Simply put.. they ROCK!! :D

10. What’s the difference between a PhD @ IITD and one abroad? Is IITD better than other IITs?
How am I to kno? I can tell you only about IITD. and do you really expect me to say anything other than Its the best place to be!! ?? ;)

11. Scholarship amount?
Guess it keeps changing from time to time. And I don’t intend to keep updating this page. so, check the prospectus!

12. Looow scholarship. any other source of money?
You could add up to the amount if you are involved in some industry projects. Theres a good chance of getting an industry sponsored fellowship. Now, don ask me how much that would come up to. cos neither do I kno, nor is it something fixed.

13. How long is it going to take?
Well. It depends. Ideally 4yrs. in general up to 5yrs. Entirely depends on you, your thesis topic and to a certain extent on your supervisor(s).

14. Is it going to be toooo demanding and stressful? To the level of driving one to suicide (I have heard lots of stories about suicides in IITs) ??
Hmmm. its bound to be demanding if you want to do meaningful work and complete within some reasonable amount of time. Suicide. Ill surely let you know if it ever drives me to suicide (before attempting it) ;)

15. Job opportunities after PhD
Wrong person to ask. never bothered to check out. But I presume ppl do get placed in hi-fi companies or in hi-funda universities. May be Ill be able to give a better answer in due course of time.

16. You seem to have joined directly after BTech. How is that possible?
As you see, it IS possible. if you have a good GATE score, good academic record and of course perform decently well in the interview. In fact, to my knowledge all IITs have this facility.

17. Now thats confusing. I am an MTech. Do I have to give GATE?
GATE score is necessary only for BTechs coming for a direct PhD. If you already have a good GATE score, it would just look good on your application. If you don’t, nothing to lose.

18. My CS basics are not too great. and my projects were just OK. Is there any chance of me getting in??
Sorry. It depends on you and the interview panel. I am not going to talk probability here.

19. So, should I try for a PhD @ IITD instead of elsewhere or perhaps a job?
Ahem. Thats for you to decide. And, if you are really passionate about CS research and are convinced that there is a (or is no) good group working in your preferred area of research in CSE, IITD. you really don’t care about my opinion. do you? ;)

20. Are all these answers applicable to Part-time PhD also?
HeeeHeee. I do not know :D
21. Are you happy with your experience at IITD?
   Completely.. Life could not have been better :)

22. This page doesn’t answer all of my questions..
   If your query is genuinely DIFFERENT from those listed here, you can mail me.. Ill try to answer
   to the best of my knowledge.
   
   Note : Please don’t expect any more details for the listed questions from me. .This is the best that
   I can do.
   
   Another Note : Please don’t ask if you would get admission given your marks or GATE score. . I
   am no Nostradamus to predict the future!

23. Hey. .some other source (or IITD office) has a different answer to one of those questions!!??!!
   Whatever is given here is entirely my opinion. . May be imperfect.. outdated. .or even completely
   wrong. It has nothing to do with the rules or ways or opinions of the institute!!

24. Why are you posting this in the middle of the night??
   Simply because I am fed up of answering the same questions again and again and cant stand
   another mail with these queries!! Of course, you are welcome to ask something different . .which
   can be included in this list to make it complete.