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Ankur Kulkarni, PhDIE 2010

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 11/4/2015 Emily Scott 3 min read[f](#) [t](#) [in](#)

IE alumnus Ankur Kulkarni has recently been selected as an Associate of the Indian Academy of Sciences.

He received his PhD in Industrial Engineering in 2010 from ISE, studying game theory, and completed postdoctoral research at the Coordinated Science Lab. Since receiving his degree, he has been an assistant professor in the Systems and Control Engineering group at the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, in Mumbai, India since Jan. 2013.

“Today I do research and guide students on problems in game theory, variational analysis, stochastic control and information theory,” he said. “I am particularly interested in foundational questions and in emerging paradigms such Big

Data. I also teach graduate-level courses on optimization and game theory.”

Kulkarni said he at first had a “sense of disbelief” when he learned he had been selected to his associateship with the Indian Academy of Sciences.

“The Indian Academy of Sciences is extremely selective and they are looking at a large talent pool. Also, historically, engineering-theoreticians such as me have usually not made it,” he said. “I am grateful to those who nominated me and to the selection committee.”

The Associateship program was created in 1983 with the intention of encouraging young scientists. A small number of scientists below the age of 35 are selected for the program.

Kulkarni said that his selection is a reassurance for his career.

“It tells me that, although my choice of areas and problems has been somewhat unusual, I have not lost my way and perhaps I am even on the right track,” he said. “I hope that this recognition will also help me attract greater opportunities for career growth.”

In his current position as an associate professor, Kulkarni said he is making use of convex analysis and optimization-based arguments that he used in his PhD to understand and solve problems from other areas.

He said he hopes his career continues the way it has been so far.

“I will continue to work on core questions, enjoy the joys of discovering something new and hopefully earn the respect of my peers,” he said.

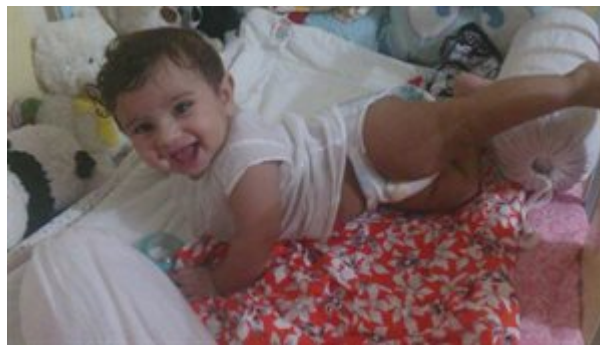
Kulkarni said he has fond memories of working with his advisor Uday Shanbhag, Professor Jong-shi Pang, and Professor R.S. Sreenivas during his time at ISE.

“I shared many happy times with [Sreenivas]. We had a shared interest in Indian classical music and philosophy, and have had some memorable — sometimes all-night long — chat sessions at his home.

“I also fondly remember the old-world charm of the Transportation Building — especially the railway motifs,” he said.

Kulkarni’s best advice for current ISE students is to take advantage of the opportunity they have to develop skills.

“Take lots of courses,” he said. “Work hard on fundamentals and develop strength in them.”



Ankur's biggest reward has been being father to Ananya. She turns one next month.

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