ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am indebted to the following people whose advice and contributions have made the work in this thesis possible:

First and foremost, I would like to recognize and express my deepest gratitude to my Ph.D. Supervisor, Dr. Sanjay Gupta for the opportunity he gave me to join his group and work on many interesting research projects. His guidance, support, constant help, extreme patience, and encouragement throughout my research period is immensely appreciated and will always be remembered and cherished. His knowledge was paramount to my education and the completion of my thesis project. His professional advice taught me to think constructively and critically, thereby allowing me to formulate appropriate experiments and ideas for the success of my project. Over the years his mentorship has been invaluable to me. I feel very fortunate to have him as my advisor. I really enjoyed my research life under his tutelage and hope we still can work together in the future.

I would also like to acknowledge the Head of the Department, Prof. Sanjeev K. Sharma. His constructive comments, enthusiastic approach towards science and positive advice were essential and helpful not only for the completion of my thesis, but also for the life ahead. His good advice, support and encouragement have been invaluable on both an academic and a personal level, for which I am extremely grateful.

Thanks are also due to my DPMAC members, Dr. Indira P. Sarethy, Dr. Nidhi Gupta, and Dr. A.K. Agarwal for providing suggestions and guidance necessary into shaping this project. Their expert advices and critical comments were indeed helpful in keeping my research focused. I count myself among the luckiest Ph.D. Scholars in the department to have such a friendly doctoral committee.

I would like to thank the honorary group members of the University, Founder of the University Shri J. P. Gaur, Vice Chancellor Prof. S. C. Saxena, Dean Prof. Krishna Gopal, and Registrar Col. Vijay Kumar for their support.

I am also thankful to all members of the department whom I had the privilege to know and work with Dr. Reema Gabrani and Dr. Shweta Dang in particular. It was great learning experience and lot of fun interacting with them.
Special thanks to my dearest labmates – KK (Dr. Kapila Kumar), ND (Ms. Namrata Dudha) and Jo (Dr. Jyoti Rana) whose suggestions and constructive criticisms were greatly helpful in developing my research project. The ‘Original Fantastic Four’ have been there helping each other, encouraging each other, and even laughing at each other. Working with this talented group of people has been a most rewarding experience. I have learned a great deal about research and much more. Jo, no words of gratitude would suffice my thankfulness to you. Our friendship did and in fact does mean a lot to me. Hope to work with you in the future also. I have had the pleasure to work with several undergraduate students during my Ph.D., Sahil (Mr. Sahil Gulati) and Akaash (Mr. Akaash Kumar Mishra) in particular. I owe them for their constant support and help. Sahil thank you for your immense help with the bioinformatics based work and instilling in me this new found fondness for bioinformatics. During the last few months of my Ph.D., working with Neha (Ms. Neha Srivastava), Ipsita (Ms. Ipsita Nandi) and Garima (Ms. Garima Agarwal) was a great pleasure. Ipsita and Garima, thank you very much for your help in winding up my thesis.

I have been fortunate to have had the support and encouragement of so many wonderful friends particularly Sonal (Ms. Sonal Gupta), Parul (Ms. Parul Sharma), Neha (Ms. Neha Atale) and Deepak (Mr. Deepak Sharma). Thanks to all my fellow scholars from JIIT. No matter whatever I achieve, it all started here, spent the last five years with you, and I wish you all a great future. Being your friend is my great honor and I wish all of you more happiness and successes.

I would like to express my gratitude to the lab staff - Mr. Narendra Yadav, Ms. Priyanka Banerjee, Mr. Subhash Jha, Mr. Rajkumar, Mr. Kamal and Mr. Kaushal, who have graciously helped me to use the lab equipments and supplies when needed.

Much of what I have accomplished I owe it to my parents. I am deeply indebted to them for their unconditional love and support throughout my studies. Their constant unwavering support and encouragement in reaching my career goals has helped me to sail through difficult times and to successfully undertake this endeavor. They have taught me to believe in myself and never to doubt my abilities. They enriched my life with so much and for that my gratitude endless. I am sorry that for the last few years I was not always the most pleasant person to be around.
Finally, besides all, I am grateful to the almighty who gave me the strength and patience to achieve this target and for this wonderful life and great family. I dedicate this thesis to the lotus feet of Lord Radha Krishna.

SREEJITH RAJASEKHARAN