

I. BEST PRACTICES

1. Title of the Practice

Uniform Measures for Regular Quality Checks of Teaching – Learning Process

2. Objectives of the Practice

The intended outcomes of this best practice are:

- ☞ To guarantee consistent quality learning and teaching experiences across all courses and programs and across differed modes of delivery.
- ☞ To improve student's learning experiences and outcomes.
- ☞ To assist in curriculum planning.
- ☞ To identify and address professional development needs.
- ☞ To provide staff with reliable, consistent and timely evidence of the quality of their teaching and student learning which may be used in deciding appraisal and also best teacher awards
- ☞ To gather information and evidence for reporting purposes, specifically for demonstration to the University by the college of effective quality assurance processes in relation to the learning and teaching environment.

3. The Context

Quality teaching is defined in terms of effective pedagogical techniques to achieve desired learning outcomes of students. It involves several dimensions, including the effective design of curriculum through BoS (Board of Studies) in university and course content, a variety of learning contexts (including guided independent study, project-based learning, collaborative learning, experimentation, etc.), soliciting and using feedback, and effective assessment of learning outcomes. Institutions need to ensure that the education they offer meets the expectations of students and the requirements of employers, both today and for the future.

One of the most challenging paradoxes in the world of academics is the fact that while innovativeness in teaching is largely agreed upon as the most desired aspect of teaching, it is also equally a fact that innovativeness as a tangible teaching component cannot be defined or promoted. To meet the challenge of promoting innovativeness of teachers, the best way was found to be insisting on documentation of individual teaching plans/lessons which in turn help to identify the most effective methodologies /approaches that can be shared with others who are not very successful in their teaching.

Under the system of uniform measures the pedagogical tools adopted by most creative teachers get to be systematically documented and this can work as frame of reference for teachers who are not spontaneously creative.

Senior faculty or sometimes even the youngest faculty coming from diverse backgrounds like industry etc., explore alternative pedagogies or adapt student-support to varied student profiles and pedagogical competencies. Their alternative teaching methodologies can serve as training models to other teachers.

The individual performance of each faculty member is a crucial factor in quality teaching. The unit plan designed by the faculty becomes the frame of reference to make the teacher accountable for the status of syllabus completion.

In the context of teachers moving towards greener pastures / IT Sectors, the need for adopting Uniform Measures was deeply felt as transition becomes smooth when there is a switch of teachers as the former teacher's records becomes a ready reference for the new teacher.

Through constant checks of teacher's documents which include their unit planners, academic records, teaching dairies, monthly appraisal etc., the institution finds scope to identify areas of deficiencies and also take up appropriate FDP programmes for the betterment of their professional effectiveness and also for the quality enhancement of the academic programme.

4. The Practice

The procedures which constitute the implementation of the practice are as follows:

- ❧ The institution has a meticulously organized and clearly planned teaching, learning and evaluation schedule, well integrated into the total institutional scheme. At the end of each academic year, the management holds consultations with the faculty to plan the schedule for the forthcoming academic year
- ❧ The course outlines and the course schedules are drawn well ahead of the course commencement. Each faculty of the department has an individually drafted unit planner, which reflects how each unit is taught by indicating the time frame along with a mention of methodologies/ references used and modes of evaluation practiced. The course outlines are spelt out to the students by the course teacher in the orientation session.
- ❧ Self – appraisals submitted by the individual teachers gives a clear indication of the teachers' contributions in various categories - academic, administrative and extension activities. Teaching dairies which have lesson plans of the topics handled that week are meticulously maintained by the individual teachers.
 - ❧ The head of each department ensures the effectiveness of the process by weekly checks of the teaching diaries, academic records, monthly appraisals and syllabus completion statements submitted by the faculty. The effectiveness is further ensured through cross verification by the head of the institution
 - ❧ The teaching- learning process is continuously reviewed by the Additional Director/ Principal, by taking into account the feedback given by the students.
 - ❧ Each department submits an annual report on the activities comprising academic activities, research and extension activities, innovations in teaching/learning, publications, staff and student achievements, extra and co- curricular activities to the IQAC.
 - ❧ To ensure quality sustenance and enhancement, the college periodically conducts the performance audit of the departments which includes course review, Review of Teaching

– learning methodologies, Result analysis, Research output, Faculty Development Programmes attended/conducted and Extension activities, Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities conducted during the year.

- ☞ Result analysis is submitted by the departmental head. The result analysis of each department is submitted to the Principal after each exam.
- ☞ Syllabus completion statements are also periodically submitted by the individual teachers in order to ensure timely completion of the syllabus.
- ☞ Feedback is taken from the students at the end of every annual /semester for teacher evaluation.

Thus the regulatory mechanism of timely checks on teacher quality has the double advantage of improving not only teacher but also student performances.

II. BEST PRACTICE

Title of the Practice

Faculty Development Programmes with an Interdisciplinary Approach

Objective of the Practice

The Management periodically organizes **Faculty Development Programmes** for promoting teacher quality through a pronged strategy that aims at personal, profession and holistic development of teachers thereby facilitating their role as educators and mentors responsible for grooming the future citizens with right knowledge, attitude and skills.

The institution conducts Orientation Programme apart from conducting various faculty Development programmes with the following objectives:

- ☞ To update their knowledge
- ☞ To inculcate professional ethics
- ☞ To promote technical expertise
- ☞ To orient them towards quality research
- ☞ To enhance their effectiveness in content designing and delivery
- ☞ To sensitize them towards social responsibilities

The Context

A number of factors have brought quality teaching to the forefront of higher education policies. Almost every education system has experienced substantial growth of student numbers in recent decades and the student profile has become more diverse. At the same time, higher education faces greater challenges and expectations from students, parents, employers to account for their performance and demonstrate their teaching quality.

Experience showed that fostering quality teaching is a multi-level endeavour. Support for quality teaching takes place at three inter-dependent levels:

- ☞ **At the institution-wide level:** includes the right policy making like setting up of Internal Quality Assurance Cell.
- ☞ **Programme level:** comprises actions to measure and enhance the design, content and delivery of the programmes.
- ☞ **Individual level:** includes initiatives that help teachers achieve their mission, encouraging them to innovate and to support improvements to student learning and adopt a learner oriented focus.

These three levels are essential and inter-dependent. However, supporting quality teaching at the programme level is key to ensure improvement in quality teaching at the discipline level and across the institution.

Support for quality teaching can be manifested through a wide range of activities that are likely to improve the quality of the teaching process, of the programme content, as well as the learning conditions of students.

Institutions engage in fostering quality teaching essentially for the following reasons:

- ☞ To respond to the growing demand for meaningful and relevant teaching. Students as well as employers want to ensure that their education will lead to gainful employment and will equip them with the skills needed to evolve professionally over a lifetime.
- ☞ To demonstrate that they are reliable providers of good quality higher education, while operating in a complex setting, with multiple stakeholders, each with their own expectations

Current factors influencing the quality of teaching include:

- ☞ The internationalization of higher education
- ☞ The increasingly broadening scope of education and greater diversity of student profiles
- ☞ The rapid changes in technology, which can quickly make programme content and pedagogies obsolete
- ☞ The demand for greater civic engagement of graduates and regional development of higher education
- ☞ The increased pressures of global competition, economic efficiency
- ☞ The need to produce a skilled workforce to meet the challenges of the 21st century.
- ☞ Encourage teachers to link innovations in their teaching practice to the institutional teaching and learning goals.

Education at present is undergoing tremendous change that demands from the faculty a need to update and keep abreast of the latest developments. The institutions are therefore keen to provide professional development to faculty. But the reality is that professional development for teachers is often disconnected from the educational objectives of the programmes – even though the support provided may be in response to specific requests received from faculty. Thus a well-designed professional development programme needs to be an outcome of a collaborative reflection on the quality of teaching and learning that is aligned with university values, identity and faculty expectations.

The Practice

It's a long tradition at SSMV Junwani Bhilai to begin the academic year by hosting faculty Orientation Programme before the classes commence, not only for their own staff but for the entry level students as well. The collaborative process not only provides a firm foundation for determining the pedagogical competencies that teachers need to develop and the support they will require but also helps to build collective commitment across faculty to the objective of improving teaching quality. The two-three days staff orientation programme includes workshops, interactive sessions and motivational lectures from eminent persons on topics like Role of information and Communication Technology in Teaching, Sharing Best Practices, Spiritual Qualities of Teacher, Team Building of Teachers in Global Perspective , Interpersonal Effectiveness, Holistic Transmission of Knowledge, etc. which acquaint the teachers with updated Teaching –Learning Practices and also the need for cultivating right attitude apart from instilling a research aptitude for promoting personal and professional effectiveness.

To sustain high teacher quality the teachers are regularly sent to orientation, refresher courses international seminars, conference, workshops to track the latest developments in their domain

areas. Constant encouragement are given by the management to upgrade their qualification and enrich their research profiles through publication of books, articles and paper presentations.

The college also conducts National Seminars to gather the best of academic and industry perspectives on current topics. Faculty also benefits from regular workshops/guest lectures by National academicians on topics like IPR, NPTEL lectures, Case Studies and Teaching Methodologies, Research Insights, Statistical Applications for Research Methodology etc., Eminent people from community like IAS officers, distinguished research scholars are invited to enrich the staff on multidimensional roles that they need to play as teachers and role models. FDPs are also organized with in-house faculty, for instance faculty from Department of English conduct Communication Skills/Presentation Skills sessions for their peers; Department of Computer Science too has the tradition to hold a workshop for all the staff of the College to train them in the use of computers for e- content development. Experienced academic/ administrative peers from University and other colleges are also invited to initiate the staff into the processes of Autonomy-Curriculum designing, Examination system, etc.

Evidence of Success

The two best practices adopted by the college - Uniform Measures for Regular Quality Checks of Teaching – Learning Process and Faculty Development Programmes - which span twenty years of the college history, are indicative of the rich academic culture of the college. The positive outcomes of these programmes are reflected through the various initiatives taken by the faculty and the management towards a relevant, enriched and holistic teaching -learning process.

The evidence of success is also seen in achieving the targets / benchmarks / distinctions mentioned below:

- ❧ NAAC accreditation with B Grade (Cycle-2) of CGPA 2.59
- ❧ Availability of increased options with diversification of courses.
- ❧ Industry relevant curriculum with thrust on employability skills like TISS.
- ❧ Word of mouth publicity through successful Alumni.
- ❧ Increased college reputation with Mega Annual Youth Fests like Team Pratibha, Team SSMV etc.
- ❧ Enhanced reputation among academicians with regular conduct of seminars/guest lectures.
- ❧ University ranks
- ❧ The college has been ranked among top colleges in central India.
- ❧ The College has emerged as a trusted name for discipline & value-based /holistic education.

Problems Encountered and Resources Required

Being a self financed college the financial constraints in implementation/adoption of high quality Teaching–Learning and Evaluation resources pose a major challenge.

The college management nonetheless has given faculty Development its due priority, releasing the critical significance of Faculty Development Programmes in achieving its vision.

Apart from financial challenges, availability of adequate time, human resources and infrastructural facilities are the other limitations. Improvement of teacher quality has psychological dimensions like individual teacher's self-motivation and openness to the development programme. The right attitudes/response to the FDPs not only depends on individual teachers but also deans, heads of programmes and other team leaders who are drivers of change.

The Management apart from spending substantial amounts on FDPs from its own funds, also arranges for quality FDPs drawing upon its goodwill with eminent scholars, Industrialists and university Professors who are on its Statutory bodies and otherwise.

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