

## 7.2 Best Practices

### 7.2.1 Describe at least two institutional best practices

#### **BEST PRACTICE 1:**

1) **Title of the practice:** Swayam-Siddhah (स्वयसं िद्धः ), incorporating ‘Deeksha’ samaroh, the Morning Assembly and the ‘Deekshant’ samaroh.

#### 2) **Objectives of the Practice:**

- To create a positive outlook in the student’s mindset, improve student’s concentration and provide mental relaxation.
- To guide students towards seeking positive goals through education.
- To provide a platform for the students to gain experience in public speaking skills and keep them abreast of current affairs.
- To motivate the students to participate and build a positive competitive spirit.
- To instil patriotic spirit and encourage the students to contribute towards nation building.

#### 3) **Context:**

- College life is often interpreted by students as freedom from shackles that schools have burdened them with. This initial exuberance often results in them straying away from academic and career goals.
- The institution, therefore, felt the need to evolve a system to stimulate them towards reaching for the goals they had set for themselves when they enrolled in the institution.
- An atmosphere of self-discipline, focus and positivity, which would motivate students reach their goals, was thus envisaged.
- Along with elements of spirituality, self-motivation, and nationalism were infused into the Deeksha and Deekshant ceremonies and the Morning Assembly to awaken these noble ideas in the students’ minds and hearts.

**4) The practice:**

The attainment of wisdom begins with ‘Deeksha’, or the initiation ceremony. Here, students commit themselves to follow the path laid down by the teachers. It is a spiritual experience to the student where they are addressed by the eminent personalities from the field of education, who guide them to keep positive and creative approach for lifetime learning. Students are oriented about the institution, rules, regulations, norms and practices they must follow during their journey of learning.

The Morning Assembly is conducted every day which helps create healthy environment for teaching and learning. It motivates students as well as faculty members to focus on teaching learning process. It has an organized structure that has been designed to facilitate the holistic growth of the student, and set a positive tone for the hectic day in the life of the student.

The Morning Assembly is implemented as follows:

- Before classes begin for the day, students recite the morning prayer and the National Anthem over the public addressal system. Faculty members assist students in selecting and reading out a suitable *‘thought for the day’*. The students glean select the news of the day from newspapers available in the college library.
- Announcements of the competitions participated in or won by the students are made.

At the end of the three/four- year degree program, the ‘Deekshant’ Samaroh (ceremony indicating the end of the formal education process in the college) is conducted. Here students are asked to share the experience about their journey during the degree program. On this day, students are guided to take the first step towards their career and are urged to take every positive thing that they learned during their student life to create a footprint while walking on the path of their career, profession and social life.

### **Uniqueness**

This practice is a norm in schools, but it is adopted to focus on academic development of the students to give them a more favorable learning atmosphere in college. Hence it was felt that inculcating values along with flexibility should go hand in hand.

To achieve this aim, the college has adopted this unique practice that intends to bring discipline in a college student's campus life. The various elements of the Deeksha, Morning Assembly and Deekshant are intended to bring in discipline and instil confidence in the college students. Concentration and positivity are also encouraged. In addition, the student's potential energy is efficiently harnessed towards contributing to national growth.

The practice also prepares students for future challenges specially pertaining to effective communication- a pre-requisite for success in the jobs they will take up in the future. Thus, this unique practice of the Morning Assembly promotes, encourages and attunes the holistic development of the college student.

#### **5) Evidence of success:**

The success of any practice cannot always be quantitatively or empirically determined. It can often be gauged from the positive feedback it draws from the students and the staff alike. After the Morning Assembly was initiated, an increase in the concentration of the student is visible, improvement of their communication skill and positive contribution of the students towards nation building is observed.

#### **6) Problems encountered and resources required:**

- Some students are unable to reach on time for the Assembly as they travel from a long distance. (The other problems encountered have been mentioned in the Context section).

**Best practice 2:**

**1) Title of the practice: *Ankur* – Personalized Student Care and Support**

**2) Objectives of the Practice:**

The following are the objectives of this practice:

1. To infuse self-confidence and positive thinking in the students.
2. To motivate students to achieve their academic goals through empathy and support.
3. To address the social well-being and financial needs of the students.
4. To promote the holistic growth of the students.

**3) Context:**

When the college was instituted, faculty members, with their experience in previous colleges, foresaw several student-related issues that were likely to surface. To take preventive measures, the institution implemented a series of steps. These measures, while aiming at achieving common goals, however, seemed disparate. The IQAC, formed in 2015, recommended that these measures be streamlined and a structured approach be adopted for their implementation. And thus, was born *Ankur*– a personalized student care and support program.

*Ankur* is aimed at handling and resolving the issues listed below:

- Students enrolled in the college represent a diverse socio-economic background. A number of students are first generation learners; parents of several students have an agrarian background or belong to the working class. There are also students with single parent or no parents, who needed special care and sustenance beyond academic support.
- A few students work part-time, while attending college either to pay for their education themselves or due to a financially weak background. Several students are unable to pay the entire tuition and examination fees or pay the amount in one instalment.

- Some students lack motivation, which is reflected in poor class attendance, lack of interest in activities and poor performance in academics.
- A number of students seem to lack command over the language of instruction resulting in them developing an inferiority complex. This in turn reduces their interactions with faculty during lectures.

#### 4) The Practice:

The execution of the program is divided into three distinct parts:

1. Personalized Counselling
2. Value Education
3. Fostering a Conducive Environment

#### **PERSONALIZED COUNSELING**

- Counselling and guidance of the students runs concomitantly with the teaching-learning process. Faculty members are designated primary counsellors and act as '*in loco parentis*' to the student, in consonance with the firm belief that teachers are the first and the most suitable counsellors for the students.
- The class mentors as well as other faculty members counsel the students whenever necessary. If need be, the services of a qualified counsellor, who visits the college at regular intervals, are availed of.
- A number of touch points have been identified for **Personalized Counselling** of the student and parents:
  - a. At the time of admission
  - b. Deeksha Samaroh
  - c. PTA meetings
  - d. Result distribution
  - e. Declaration of monthly attendance of the students
  - f. Keeping a watch over late comers

- g. Performance feedback after the ISAs
- h. Individual attention during lectures
- The institution has adopted a ‘No Complaint’ policy, in which counselling focuses on improvement of student behaviour, rather than punishment for misbehaviour or indiscipline. Similarly, rather than complaining about the ward to her/his parents, the teachers focus on the positive qualities and aspects of the student’s behaviour during parent-teacher interactions.
- Individual attention is provided, where the student’s issues are addressed on a priority basis, and timely home visits are conducted to ensure student welfare.

### **VALUE EDUCATION**

- Value education is imparted through measures such as morning prayers and motivational talks.
- NSS Special Camps focus on holistic development of students.

### **FOSTERING A CONDUCTIVE ENVIRONMENT**

- The institution strives to create an ambient atmosphere right at the start of the day with the conducting of the morning assembly.
- The institution follows an open-door policy, and students have open access to teachers.
- With payment of tuition and examination fees in one instalment becoming difficult for many students, the college permits students to pay the same in instalments.
- The college has also instituted a Student Welfare Fund, which is in addition to the Student Aid Fund, for students, who need financial aid.
- The college office, along with the ICT laboratory and Library, is open from 8:00 am to 6:00 p.m., allowing students to use the facilities beyond their lecture timings.
- Periodic orientation talks on various activities like examination and importance of attendance are conducted.

- Success stories of students such as prizes in events and competitions are acknowledged and appreciated during the morning assembly.

**Uniqueness:**

The uniqueness of this project lies in its intention to create a student-centric learning environment. The introduction of this unique practice facilitates better understanding between the teachers and the students, and gets reflected in their academic performance and behaviour.

**5) Evidence of Success:**

- Motivation levels of students have improved, as can be seen in their participation in activities and academic improvement.
- Students are more oriented towards learning.
- Students are very co-operative and they approach the teachers freely.
- The inhibitions of students are weeded out and they express themselves more freely.

**6) Problems encountered and resources required:**

- Frequent follow ups become difficult.
- Hesitation in the students and parents in discussing personal matters with teachers.
- Some students stay over large distances. This does not permit regular visits to every student's home.
- Financial liability for the home visits.
- Scheduling the home visits.
- Lack of interest and unwillingness in students for the **Ankur** program.