

CRITERION 7- INSTITUTIONAL VALUES AND BEST PRACTICES

7.2. Best Practices:

A] Title of the Practice: Inclusive Student Admission Process and Financial Support Schemes

Goal: To ensure that meritorious or needy students from different social, economic, and religious backgrounds are provided admission to the college, especially the first-generation learners.

The Context: Although the college is a Jain minority institution functioning under the aegis of Shree S.S. Jain Sabha, the admission process is an inclusive one. The institution believes in providing meritorious students access to high-quality education and a conducive environment for gaining knowledge irrespective of their caste, class, or economic background. Shree S.S. Jain Sabha has taken this initiative to make it easier for students especially from Howrah, Hooghly, and North 24 Parganas, to get access to higher education in an affiliated degree college so that they have a better chance of gaining employment in the future.

The Practice: Students from various economic, social, and religious backgrounds applies for admission and the final selection is done on the basis of academic merit. A distinctive feature of the college is that it has attracted several first-generation learners over the years who have later become rank holders in college.

Another aspect is that the college focuses on to make the admission process inclusive; by providing financial support in the form of concessions to students who are not so privileged and scholarships to those students who have secured a high percentage in their class 12 board examinations and University examinations.

In the current session, 372 students (from all three years) were given ‘scholarships’ in the form of ‘Concessions’ or ‘Scholarships’ (based on marks obtained). The concession amount is deducted from their fees and for Scholarship, a partial refund of fees are paid to their bank account.

The details of the concessions and scholarships given to students are as follows:

Year	Number of students	Type
I	104	CONCESSION
II	97	CONCESSION
III	106	CONCESSION
I	51	SCHOLARSHIP
II	11	SCHOLARSHIP
III	3	SCHOLARSHIP

TOTAL STUDENTS BENEFITTED = 372

Students are also given access to government-sponsored scholarships like ‘Hon’ble Chief Minister Relief Fund’, ‘Kanyashree’, ‘Aikyashree’, ‘Swami Vivekananda Merit-Cum-Means Scholarship’, SC-ST-OBC scholarships; based on their eligibility. This type of support is meant for giving an incentive to students to excel in their studies at the undergraduate level and become equipped to pursue post-graduation or join the professional world after graduation.

Evidence of Success: It is very evident from the student database that the college attracts students from the general as well as reserved category, privileged as well as underprivileged milieu, and Hindus, Jains, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians etc. As mentioned earlier, first-generation learners are also a part of the student strength. One such student from the department of Commerce is a first-generation learner and has been a college topper in the University Examination scoring 75% marks. Many students are joining reputed universities, even in other states for higher studies. This shows that the college has managed to make its mark in achieving its goal of providing quality education to all categories of students.

Problems encountered and resources required: As the institution is a self-financed one and does not receive any grant from either the central or state government, concessions in admission fees are provided to students selectively based on their economic background or merit. However, the college has applied for acquiring the 2 (f) and 12 (b) status under the UGC Act, 1956 so that more financial aid can be given to the students by utilising the grant from the government to make higher education more affordable for all.

Notes (optional):

Contact details:

Name of the Principal: Dr. Mausumi Singh Sengupta

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B) Title of the Practice: Extending the ambit of student support to promote holistic development

Goal: To provide all kinds of support to students to ensure their physical and mental well-being as well as skill development.

The Context: In the current scenario, mental well-being has become as important as physical well-being because mental health issues are becoming very frequent among students. Post- pandemic it has become even more important to provide counselling to the students. Along with this, skill development is another area that needs to be focused on to ensure that students graduating from college are equipped to deal with challenges that await them in the future.

The Practice: To address the issue of mental well-being, faculty members have one-to-one interactions with the students of their department so that they can share the problems that they face in their academic as well as personal life. Rather than having just one counsellor, faculty members take the initiative of counselling and mentoring the students. The students were encouraged to interact freely with their teacher and discuss their problems.

Many students complained that they were unable to focus or even lost interest in their studies. To bring back interest amongst students, several course-specific and general webinars/lecture sessions/activities were organised by the departments, NSS and Womens' Cell, to keep the students engaged and connected.

The college provides conveyance support to the students in the form of free bus service to and from the nearest auto stand, bus stand, and metro station. This bus service was also available for educational tours, field trips, industrial visits, and excursions organised by various departments of the college for their students.

Coming to skill development, the college ensures that students develop leadership qualities, the ability to work in teams, communicate with students of other colleges and organise large-scale events like annual fests and other cultural and interactive programmes. They are encouraged to participate in intra-college as well as inter-college events of academic and non-academic nature to facilitate their holistic development. Students of other colleges are invited to participate in events organised by the institution to increase interpersonal interaction and exposure. The college offered several certificate courses in the current session, so that students could learn new skills and get a better chance of gaining employment in the future.

Evidence of Success: So far the efforts of our faculty members to connect with the students on a personal level have proved successful. All the students are connected to the different subject teachers through dedicated Google classrooms (under G-suite Education). The WhatsApp groups have been created as well for easier communication. The students interact with the teachers, receive notifications, and submit their assignments through these platforms.

The bus service was availed by hundreds of students and several trips were conducted in the morning and the evening so that maximum students of both the shifts get the benefit of this service. All the departments of the college regularly availed the bus service for taking their students for field trips, educational excursions, and industrial visits. Due to this facility, an increased number of initiatives were taken by the department to plan more such visits.

Problems encountered and resources required: To encourage students to develop a diverse skill set, more certificate courses need to be introduced for the students in the upcoming academic sessions. Proper planning has to be done and the required set-up needs to be arranged for conducting such courses. More classrooms/spaces are required for conducting more activities required for growth and development of students.

Notes (optional)

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