



## **Institutional Best Practices 2023-24**

### **Institutional Best Practice 1**

#### **1. Title of the practice**

‘Implementation of NEP for Holistic Development of Students’

#### **2. Objectives of the Practice**

Under National Education Policy, our institution has offered 3 or 4 year undergraduate degree programmes with multiple entry/exit points, along with a multidisciplinary approach giving students freedom to shape one’s own future, it is choice based, so that students choose according to their talents & interests. Moreover, it encourages inclusive education through courses such as Vocational Skill Courses, Open Electives, Indian Knowledge System, Internship, Field Projects etc. The implementation of NEP has enabled a healthy interaction amongst faculty and students representing different disciplines, thereby inculcating an interdisciplinary/cross disciplinary approach in pursuing higher education.

The underlying principles of this policy reflect in its scope and relevance as follows:

- Undergraduate (UG) degree programmes - either 3-year or 4-year duration
- Multiple entry & exit points and re-entry options - with appropriate certifications
- UG certificate - after completing 1 year (2 semesters) of study
- UG diploma - after 2 years (4 semesters) of study
- 3-year Bachelor’s degree - after 3 years (6 semesters) programme of study
- 4-year Bachelor’s degree (honours) - after 4 years (8 semesters) programme of study
- 4-year Bachelor’s degree (honours with research) - after 4 years (8 semesters) programme of study, if the student completes a research project in major area(s) of study

#### **3. The context**

Our institution is one of the lead colleges in implementing NEP in order to foster holistic development among students. It has designed and customized curricula, assessment methods, and framed policies which align with the objectives of NEP.

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However, the challenging issues that needed to be addressed in designing and implementing this practice faced while implementing this practice were:

- ✓ During the admission process we realised that students had to be explained and convinced about the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach while pursuing higher education.
- ✓ We also faced questions and concerns from both students and parents specifically in convincing them about the relevance of Generic or Open Electives, whereby a Science student will have to study one subject from Arts/Humanities/Commerce and vice versa.
- ✓ In the context of teaching-learning and examination, we faced logistic constraints, such as preparing a timetable convenient to all students with respect to academic and examination calendar.

### **4. The Practice**

The uniqueness of implementation of National Education Policy for holistic development in the context of Indian higher education is due to the following:

- Visionary & Transformative - restructures & redesigns education system in India
- Quality higher education - promotes human as well as societal well-being
- All round development - good, thoughtful, well-rounded, & creative individuals.
- Holistic & multidisciplinary (academics & skills) - freedom to shape one's own future
- Flexibility & Choice Based - students choose according to their talents & interests
- Concept based learning - critical thinking, reasoning, problem solving ability
- Personality development - leadership, teamwork, decision-making, creativity
- Inclusive education - high quality education available to all

The difficulties incurred while implementing this best practice primarily lies in lack of awareness amongst the students and parents regarding the objectives and salient features of NEP. The constraints and challenges incurred during the implementation of NEP revolved around the fact that students had to be explained and convinced about the multidisciplinary



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and interdisciplinary approach while pursuing higher education. This was specifically experienced in convincing them about the relevance about Generic or Open Electives, whereby a Science student will have to study one subject from Arts/Humanities/Commerce and vice versa.

### **5. Evidence of success**

SIES as an empowered autonomous college has become one of the lead colleges in implementing National Education Policy (NEP), and thereby was given the responsibility by University of Mumbai to mentor and handhold other non-autonomous affiliated colleges of University of Mumbai, thus, this reflects the outreach of our sincere and dedicated efforts, it is indeed an evidence of success, whereby, we have created our own benchmark in implementing NEP.

The Implementation of National Education Policy for Holistic Development has resulted in following outcomes:

- ✓ It had a significant impact in sensitizing students about the need to create awareness regarding 'social responsibility', for example due to courses taught under NEP, the students became aware and sensitive about issues affecting the environment, community etc .
- ✓ It has made the students learn various other skills such as soft skills, making presentations and developed conversational skills.
- ✓ We could involve our Alumni to share their experience under field projects, co-curricular activities, and this has strengthened academia-alumni linkage and collaboration.
- ✓ Offering Open or Generic Electives which has given students different perspectives and has broadened their horizons. The feedback received from students validates that it has indeed contributed towards their holistic all round development.

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### **6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required**

The problems encountered and resources required to implement the practice were as follows:

- Lack of awareness amongst the students and parents regarding the objectives and salient features of NEP.
- Students need to be encouraged about the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach while pursuing higher education.
- Students and parents need to be convinced about the relevance about Generic or Open Electives.
- Students were not open to the idea that they will be comfortable with Open electives
- Students have the traditional mind set, whereby a Science student will have to study one subject from Arts/Humanities/Commerce and vice versa.

### **7. Notes (Optional)**

For adopting and implementing NEP for holistic development of students, our institution organized orientation programmes for parents, students, teachers, nonteaching staff and all relevant stakeholders, in order to make them understand this transition in higher education, moreover, we also ensured that they are open and better prepared to face the challenges and realize the opportunities for growth and development.

Our future plan is to continue, exploring the salient features of National Education Policy, so that as an Empowered Autonomous Institution we can contribute in 'Transforming the higher education landscape' of our country.

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### **Institutional Best Practice 2**

#### **1. Title of the practice**

‘JIGNYASA’ – Research Hub

#### **2. Objectives of the Practice**

Research Hub’ – ‘Jignyasa’ (curiosity) serves as a platform/forum to encourage research scholars/students to participate, discuss and share their views on ideas, concepts, research articles, research papers, book reviews, current affairs among others. It also enables a healthy interaction amongst faculty and students representing different disciplines thereby inculcating an interdisciplinary/cross disciplinary approach in pursuing higher education. The relevance of this forum is to inspire and motivate students especially undergraduates to be innovative, creative, explore topics/subjects beyond the curriculum, stimulate ‘out of box’ thinking, brainstorm over ideas/concepts, propagate the news of current scenario in different fields etc.

#### **3. The context**

The idea of creating ‘Jignyasa’ was to

- ✓ Motivate students to ask questions and brainstorm over ideas and concepts.
- ✓ Create awareness about current scenario in different fields of education.
- ✓ Promote an interdisciplinary approach towards education.
- ✓ Help them ICT tools to make posters and presentations.
- ✓ Enable students to present ideas concepts and research findings confidently before an audience.

However, the challenges faced while implementing this practice were:

- ✓ To get the student from all faculties (Arts, Science and Commerce) together on the same platform for all the activities planned, due to timetable constraints.
- ✓ To organize guest lectures and activities that would be appealing alike to students



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from all disciplines.

- ✓ During the academic years 2020-21 and 2021-22 the activities had to be shifted to an online platform which saw a reduction in active participation

### **4. The Practice**

Teachers have been long relying on traditional classroom lectures in educating students. It is unrealistic to expect students to understand all things by listening to them for the first time. To improve students' learning, the teaching methods may be changed from teacher-centred paradigm to student-centred paradigm, as students will be able to remember and understand more things when they are actively involved in the learning process. Hands-on lab work, seminars and project-based learning are among the teaching methods that lead to active learning. This would enable learning by giving control of the process to the learner.

To promote critical thinking and problem-solving ability, we encouraged our UG and PG students to try out small research projects and present its outcome in the form of a poster presentation. Inter-collegiate research meets have been held regularly under the aegis of Jigyasa regularly for this purpose. During the years when the pandemic swept the country, we were successful in keeping the young minds ignited by taking Avishkar Research Convention of Mumbai University under the wings of Jigyasa.

The difficulties incurred while teaching research methods to undergraduates primarily lies in engaging the students in a subject which they are not basically interested in. Exposing undergraduates to research can increase the likelihood of creating successful researchers in the future. Some undergraduates are unsure of their future goals and proceed to graduate school thinking that it is the only next logical step after their undergraduate studies. Exposing them to undergraduate research helps them to understand their aptitude for research. In some cases, the passion for research is kindled, which otherwise would have remained unknown.

The implementation of this practice can vary across institutions and programs, but in general, it can be viewed as an iterative process made up of first, a problem analysis phase, a



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period of self-directed learning and lastly, a reporting phase.

### **5. Evidence of success**

The implementation of this best practice led to the following outcomes:

- SIES College of Arts, Science and Commerce, Sion (W) bagged Overall Championship Award in Avishkar-2019-2020 from Mumbai university in Zone-II.
- As mentioned above, during the years of pandemic, an online competition on research- proposal writing was conducted, and the winners were selected for zonal round of Avishkar Research Convention of Mumbai University 2020-21. Four students were successful in reaching the final round.
- During the year 2021-22 also, an online competition on research- proposal writing was conducted, and the winners were selected for zonal round of Avishkar Research Convention of Mumbai University 2021-22. A total of eight Research Proposals were selected for the Zonal Level Final rounds, and the following students secured ranks in the final round. Ms. Mansi Rawat secured third rank in Agriculture and Animal Husbandry category, PG level and Ms. Akshaya Ajay Bhosale secured third rank in Pure Sciences category, PG level.
- SIES College of Arts, Science and Commerce, Sion (W) was awarded Overall Championship in the 16th Avishkar Research Convention 2021-2022 from Mumbai University in Zone-II.

The results clearly indicate that the students are benefitted and equally motivated to write as well carry out independent research proposals.

### **6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required**


Project based learning, as clearly demonstrated above has had an impact on the learner with respect to improving their abilities pertaining to critical thinking, oral and written communication skills which eventually would help them in their studies ahead. However,



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students need motivation and incentives in terms of credit for their constructive contribution to the activity along with the use of new technological pedagogies. Therefore, to encourage increased and dedicated participation we require to increase the credits associated with project-based learning. A significant number of undergraduate students are overwhelmed by the academic process and do not even know that research is an option for them, let alone how to get involved. Therefore, project-based learning is a tremendous challenge for the teacher mentor to ignite a passion for research. Hence, Jigyasa may have to be revamped in the coming years by rendering it appealing to the students such as inclusion of debates, presentations, seminars etc.

### **7. Notes (Optional): Nil**



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