

7.2 Best Practices

Best practice: 1

Title of the practice: Aspire: A Drive to Excel

Objectives of the practice

- To create an awareness among students about great personalities and their achievements
- To inspire students to have great academic aspirations
- To spearhead an academic achiever's drive
- To help students in identifying role models to emulate in academics
- To instill sustained interest in academics

Intended outcomes

- Enhanced academic interest in students
- Triggered achiever's drive in students
- Improved self esteem of rural girls, first generation learners and advanced learners

Underlying Principle of the practice

- ✓ To remove all possible self imagined mental barriers of rural and first generation learners to achieve and excel in their chosen field
- ✓ To actuate achiever's orientation in advanced learners

The context

In the current era of technological explosion, access to information is made easy. Using this to tap the bubbling potential of youth, Aspire: the Drive to Excel was evolved and is practiced.

The practice

- Every year globally or nationally recognized contributors in the respective fields of knowledge are chosen by the students of all the departments.
- Power point presentations, quiz competitions, essay writing competitions, discussions etc are conducted focusing upon the achievements of the chosen personalities.
- The students are motivated and supported by the faculty to participate and also to organize the events.
- Prizes are given to the winners in the competitions.
- Year wise records of the events are maintained in all the departments.
- The power point presentations made by the students are collected and reports and photographs of the events are also maintained by the departments.
- This practice helps the students to know about the contributions made by the

great personalities in their respective fields.

- Further from the life history of the great personalities, students come to know as to how a common man by his dedication and hard work becomes a great achiever. This helps in removing the low self esteem of some students and motivating the advanced learners too.

By this practice, the students get motivated and develop a spirit to participate in activities organised.

Evidence of Success

The success of this drive is evidenced by the enthusiasm of students to

- present papers in seminars
- participate in subject wise competitions conducted outside the colleges and win prizes and overall shields
- publish articles in national and international journals
- publish in house journal
- take up summer fellowships and training programmes in reputed institutions

Problems encountered and Resources Required

Initial hesitation of girls to participate due to lack of confidence and fear.

Counseling and motivation helped to remove their hesitation.

Best practice: 2

Title of the practice: Experiential Learning – The modern gurukula

Objectives of the practice

- To provide student centric learning for a sustained future
- To employ teaching practices suited to different types of learners in order to give heuristic learning experiences
- To encourage and promote self learning and lifelong learning in students
- To develop new skills, new attitudes and new thinking patterns in students suited to any given context
- To kindle critical thinking, problem solving and decision making skills in students

Intended outcomes

- Enhanced analytical and application skills of students
- Enjoyable learning experiences yielding a genuine understanding of the contextual and conceptual purport
- Good critical thinking, problem solving and decision making skills
- Better involvement of students in the process of learning

Underlying Principle of the practice

To expose students to all possible self learning avenues related to knowledge acquisition, skill development, personality development, value education, community orientation and entrepreneurial development

The context

Taking a slight deviation from the existing traditional class room teaching and an isolated ICT based teaching, a blended learning pattern focusing on experiential learning is very effective in the present context to impress and invite the focused attention of students in the process of learning.

This will open up widened learning avenues that provide interesting and true learning experiences to students that result in capacity building and transform them to potential human resources.

The practice

- Experiential learning is integrated in all possible learning areas ranging from gaining subject knowledge to developing values and social commitment.
- In-campus and off-campus experiential learning programmes are planned, supervised and assessed well by the faculty.
- The in-campus practicals in Science subjects and practicum in all subjects provide good experiential learning to students.
- Conducting exhibitions, maintaining museums and explaining about them to visitors, role playing, games, presentations, group activities like cottage day in which students of Home Science make room arrangements and meal preparation of their own enrich their learning based on experience and develop their analytical, problem solving and decision making skills.
- This also provides an opportunity to work in teams and develop leadership qualities.
- The off-campus internships, field trips, field research, summer training courses etc also enrich experience based learning of students.
- Almost all the departments take their students to field visits. These visits help the students to acquire practical knowledge that makes their theoretical knowledge meaningful and functional.
- The field trips of history department relating to epigraphy, temple architecture etc., is a rare opportunity for the students to have experiential insights into the

rich cultural heritage of the country and regional historical facts.

- Mock parliaments organised are effective in promoting an understanding of the working of government and develop national commitment in the minds of students
- Though few in number, the students from the departments of Physics and Chemistry selected for summer projects and trainings in reputed higher education institutions like Indian Institute of Sciences, NCL, Pune, IIT, Chennai, ICT, Mumbai, Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research, Kalpakkam, Institute of Mathematical Sciences, IITM, Chennai, IIT, Bhuvaneshwar, Kuvempu University, Karnataka etc gain great learning experiences in knowledge acquisition and skill development.
- The student union and the allied association activities organised by students provide great learning experiences to them. They develop life skills and personal skills.
- Student organised cultural fests, food melas, seminars, workshops, entrepreneurial development initiatives like sale of bakery and millet preparations, herbal preparations, surf powder, phenyl, pencil torches, solar mobile battery charger etc provide great experiential learning experiences and practical training to adopt customer service strategies.
- The extension activities like visits to old age homes, orphanages, special schools etc bring in a great change in the attitude of the students and infuse service orientation in them. The community learning experiences bring in great transformations in their personality.
- Students involved in village services, health services, educational assistance to schools etc through NSS, NCC, YRC, Red Ribbon Club and departmental extension activity wings experience a great transformation in them.
- The employment trainings programmes and campus placements experiences shape the career goals of the students.

Thus experiential learning programmes yield direct, involved, rich and transforming learning experiences to students.

Evidence of Success

The involvement and readiness of the students to participate in experiential learning programmes and their positive feedbacks are evidences to success. Further explicit

transformation in them in

- identifying the practical relevance of their academic learning
- consolidating new ideas and all-round skills
- developing a deep commitment to community and society
- shaping their own personality by observation and analysis
- experiencing empathy
- improving inter-personal relations
- learning to manage things alone etc are also visible

Problems encountered and Resources Required

Less focus, limited attention & less effort in some students. Motivation helps to improve focus, attention and effort.