

**Vivekanand Education Society's
College of Arts, Science and Commerce (Autonomous)**

Best Practises 2021-22

1. Title of the Practice

Student Connect (VESASC Mentoring Program)

2. Objectives of the Practice

- To provide a mentoring system for the students involving personal interactions with their mentors
- To provide academic guidance to the students to improve their grades
- To provide emotional support and guidance to the students, especially in stressful times
- To motivate students to be confident and constructive members of society and good citizens of the nation
- To obtain feedback from the students about college initiatives and activities, thus providing a means for constant improvement and improvisation

3. The Context

Students who enter degree college are often confused about their career goals and lack the motivation to pursue their academics with focus and dedication. Besides, many students face financial difficulties and emotional problems. Student Connect is a mentorship program conceived with the objective of identifying the challenges faced by students and helping them navigate through these. It aims at providing students with individual guidance and support so that they have a safe platform to express their thoughts and doubts. They are given academic guidance, career counseling as well as emotional support. Those facing mental health issues are identified and directed to professional counselors. Besides, Student Connect is a medium through which students are made aware about the various activities of the college, and their feedback on the same is taken, so that these initiatives can be constantly improved according to the changing needs of the students.

4. The Practice

Each teacher was designated as a Mentor/Class Coordinator (CC) and allotted a small group of students whom they were required to mentor through personal

interactions. Since the classes were partially online, Whatsapp groups of the mentees were created for ease of communication. Each CC conducted two online meetings with his/her mentees through which information was obtained about their academic potential, interests, aspirations and family background. Advanced learners were encouraged to join ACP and take up research projects/internships, while the weak academic performers were instructed to participate in remedial coaching. Students were also encouraged to participate in Sports and cultural activities depending on their interest and talent. At the end of the academic year, feedback on all college activities and facilities was obtained through Google Forms. The feedback was scrutinized by the mentors and helped them to gain insight into the needs of the students and the effectiveness of the program.

The Student Connect initiative is a unique practice in the Indian Higher Education context, since students of most colleges in India do not have the benefit of personal mentoring and guidance. The highly personalized support offered by the Student Connect initiative makes it a valuable resource for the all-round development of the students. The feedback received from the students helps the college to improve its facilities and activities according to the needs of the students.

The main challenge faced in implementing the process last year was the lack of direct face-to-face interaction between the mentors and mentees in the first term due to lockdown. The mentors tried to compensate for the same through online sessions and Whatsapp messages. The lockdown also threw up new challenges for the students, many of whom faced increased financial problems and emotional disturbances. Another challenge in carrying out this process is the uneven distribution of students in different courses, leading to some mentors having to deal with a relatively large number of students.

5. Evidence of Success

The feedback obtained from the students as a part of the Student Connect process included questions about the effectiveness of the mentorship process. The responses were overwhelmingly positive, with the majority of students responding that they had received academic and career guidance, as well as help with administrative matters and technical issues associated with online teaching. A large number of students said that they had received motivation and encouragement, as well as emotional counseling, which helped in improving their overall learning experience in the college. The comments about the process were strongly indicative of the success of the process in achieving its objective of

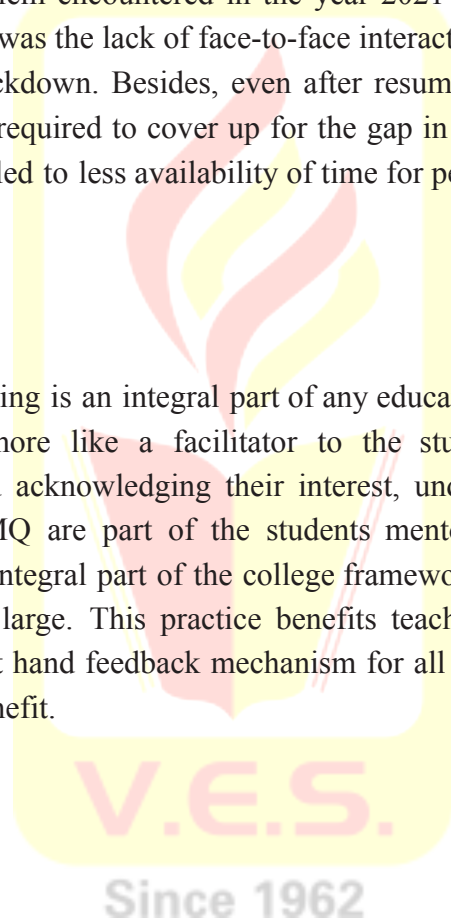
personal improvement of the students. Several students who were not attending physical classes due to fears of contracting Covid, or not having taken the vaccine, or being occupied in jobs, were persuaded by their mentors to start coming to college. Some students were extraordinarily benefitted. For example, a student of M.Sc (Microbiology) who had decided to leave the course due to financial difficulties and emotional problems was persuaded to continue and complete the course due to the counseling rendered by the mentor.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

The main problem encountered in the year 2021-22, which was unique to the last two years, was the lack of face-to-face interaction for an extended period of time due to lockdown. Besides, even after resumption of physical classes, the extra teaching required to cover up for the gap in the students' learning due to the lockdown, led to less availability of time for personal interaction with every mentee.

7. Notes (Optional)

Student mentoring is an integral part of any educational institution. We believe, teachers are more like a facilitator to the students and mentoring them, identifying and acknowledging their interest, understanding and honing their IQ, EQ and MQ are part of the students mentoring program. Having such practice as an integral part of the college framework is beneficial to the student community at large. This practice benefits teachers and administration as it becomes a first hand feedback mechanism for all policies planned or executed for students benefit.



**Vivekanand Education Society's
College of Arts, Science and Commerce (Autonomous)**

Best Practises 2021-22

1. Title of the Practice

T to T ITP (Teacher-to-Teacher Sharing of Innovative Teaching Practices)

2. Objectives of the Practice

- To share new innovative methods of teaching and learning adopted by the teachers (online) during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- To deliberate and discuss innovative ways to retain students interest during the lectures held online
- To identify certain practices which can be continued as a blended learning model for add-on and certificate courses.

3. The Context

- Holistic staff development is one of the primary responsibilities of the Internal Quality Assurance Cell of our College. Being a multi-faculty college offering courses from UG to PhD, sharing of teaching-learning ideas in an informal set up was always seen among the staff members. But full time online teaching and conducting exams was never imagined by any.
- Lockdown led the transition to online teaching which was a mammoth task. With the support of management in timely procurement of learning management systems and the staff's willingness to adapt to demanding circumstances, the teaching fraternity at VES College of Arts, Science and Commerce began its journey into the unexplored area of online curriculum transaction.
- Soon it was realized that E-learning and online learning in a blended mode is the future of education and the staff needs to adapt to this E which does not only mean 'Electronic' learning but also it needs to be effective, efficient and engaging learning as experience in an offline setup.
- There was a sudden mushrooming of LMS, apps and web tools to support the teachers in these testing times. IQAC felt the need that a formal session on exchanging teaching-learning ideas will help the teaching community at VESASC.

4. The Practice

IQAC plans the faculty development program as per its vision for the academic year and feedback received from the staff members. As per the domain expertise, the task is assigned to a specific committee to overlook the planning and execution of the event under the supervision of an IQAC member. Staff members are informed well in advance to participate in such events. Feedback of events are analyzed to judge the outcome of the activities and plan future events. For this activity, Criteria 2 led from the front and invited staff to present their teaching ideas. Google Meet was chosen as the means of communication and with overwhelming response, three days were kept for exchange of ideas. Each speaker was allotted 10 minutes for the presentation and 5 Minutes for the Question & Answer session. Every session was followed by questions, comments and discussion.

No.	Date	Brief Details
1	Day-1 Session 1: Monday, 19 th July 2021	Presenter: Mrs. Vaishnavi Bagul: Current(live) market updates through websites and presentation by students
2	Day-1 Session 2: Monday, 19 th July 2021	Mrs. Minal Gandhi: Preparation of Crosswords instead of MCQ (crosswordlabs.com)
3	Day-1 Session 3: Monday, 19 th July 2021	Presenter: Dr. Dona Joseph: Collaborative Learning
4	Day-1 Session 4: Monday, 19 th July 2021	Presenter: Dr. Pooja Jagasia: Padlet
5	Day-1 Session 4: Monday, 19 th July 2021	Presenter: Dr. Shweta Patil: Use of Flip classroom, POGIL & Screencast-o-matic
6	Day-2 Session 1: Tuesday, 20 th July 2021	Presenter: Dr. Devidas Gulwade : Chalk & Board to Pen & Tablet

7	Day-2 Session 2: Tuesday, 20 th July 2021	Presenter: Mr. Kunalkumar S.: Mentimeter, Comic book
8	Day-2 Session 3: Tuesday, 20 th July 2021	Presenter: Mr. Shrikant Ghodke: Introduction to OpenBoard
9	Day-2 Session 4: Tuesday, 20 th July 2021	Presenter: Dr. Malay Shah: Developing video content
10	Day-3 Session 1: Thursday, 12 th August 2021	Presenter: Mr. Suman Ganger: "Content Dissemination through Google doc, Personalized website etc."
11	Day-3 Session 2: Thursday, 12 th August 2021	Presenter: Dr. Sarla Rathi : "Monte Carlo Simulations"
12	Day-3 Session 3: Thursday, 12 th August 2021	Presenter: Dr. Sadhana Singh: "Engage students with Pear Deck Interaction".
13	Day-3 Session 4: Thursday, 12 th August 2021	Presenter: Mr. Chirag Pagaria: "Office 365"

5. Evidence of Success

- The Faculty development program on online sharing of innovative teaching ideas helped in meeting the challenges posed by the online delivery of lectures. The staff felt more connected in the times of disconnect and uncertainty.
- In the digital era, the environment of knowledge exchange too requires more than simple material sharing and monotonous assessments. E-learning & online learning as a blended mode is the future of education. Hence to equip ourselves to make teaching more effective, efficient and student centric such practices helped our teachers to be a better facilitator to our primary stakeholders.
- The practices were well accepted by the students and some of them were continued in Term II when college went completely offline.
- Some certificate courses under Autonomy were designed considering the expertise achieved because of such sessions and practices.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

- Semester pattern results in a packed academic year of teaching and multiple examinations. To find a common time for conducting such internal faculty development programs is difficult.
- Inability to judge the student response in online mode remains the main hindrance.
- Some of the online tools require the need to purchase them

7. Notes (Optional)

A vibrant and learning environment envisages a continuous exchange of ideas. As an educational institution, a continuous learning process is needed not only for the students but its other important stakeholders like teachers and administrators. Having formal forums to discuss and brainstorm such ideas is very enriching and inspiring. As a part of the academic calendar, such events push us to raise our bar of excellence.

