

## Best Practice 2020-21

### 1. Title of the Practice: Online Teaching and Learning in the Age of Covid-19

When countries all over the world went into lockdown due to Covid-19, educational institutions had to follow suit. During the Covid-19 outbreak, the country was facing a major crisis in many sectors but the worst hit sector was the education sector as most of the exams got cancelled during the final assessment phase. Students and teachers had to struggle to access online resources over uninterrupted and seamless Internet connection. At the sometimes, the country did not want to compromise students' much-desired academic progress. Hence, educational institutions adopted smart solutions to overcome the pandemic crisis by adopting the online mode of education for the remainder of the academic year.

### 2. Goal:

During the period of Lockdown, Barasat College had set out to achieve three major goals to provide uninterrupted educational support. Here are the details:

- Completion of Curriculum: To engage students actively with online audio/video lectures, e-study materials, project works, online tests and assignments.
- Extra Support for Learning: To encourage students to join online courses, tutorial classes and online webinars.
- Counselling: Regular communication with the students to lessen their mental stress and to make them active in the learning process.

### 3. The Context:

In the wake of the crisis faced by the teachers and the students of the Colleges/Universities in India due to the global pandemic caused by the Novel Corona Virus infection, Covid-19, Barasat College adapted to face the challenge of the crisis, and provided resilient academic support. An Online Teaching and Learning Strategy framework was developed to provide an active and personalized mode of education for all the students to complete the University curriculum planned for this academic session. Various teaching and learning aids, such as e-content in the form of e-books, online journals, digital library resources, multimedia documents and various online interactive learning sites have been used extensively to enhance learning skills, introduce flexibility and options to be customized to cater to all kinds of learners and to reach a large cross-section of students.

### 4. The Practice:

To achieve these goals the Online Teaching and Learning Strategy framework was developed which involved:

**1) Methods of Teaching** Various methods were adopted for teaching different theory-based courses as well as lab-based courses by the faculty members of all the departments in the College.

- The Zoom, Google Meet platforms are used for the optimum utilization of online mode of teaching.
- Program and course-wise WhatsApp groups were created for doubt-clearing sessions.

- College LMS is used to share notes and study materials.
- Audio lectures in mp3 files were given out.
- PPTs were prepared based on the texts and commentary lectures shared to facilitate critical explanations.

## **2) Engaging Students in Learning**

- Providing access to course materials through whatsapp, google classroom, college exam portal, and college-based Learning Management System (LMS).
- Use of real-time text-based communication spaces such as WhatsApp and Zoom app, google meet app.

## **3) Modes of Evaluation**

- Internal evaluation conducted by the College.
- University examination conducted by the University.

## **4) Types of Assignments**

- An individual assignment is sent through departmental emails and WhatsApp.
- The pattern of assessments was classified as objective and essay-type questions.
- Students need to upload pdf files of their handwritten answers after the completion of the examination

## **5) Outcome of teaching-learning experience:**

During this time of crisis, the online teaching and learning experience enabled much flexibility in issues of time and place for both teachers as well as students. Both teachers and students got the opportunity to explore new and innovative online resources. Online classroom platforms were found to be effective in giving away assignments and sharing study materials. For the laboratory courses, students got to learn about some of the advanced instruments via computer simulations.

## **6. Evidence of success:**

Online Learning encourages more productive use of time. It has greater access to experts/specialists (nationally and internationally) and learners can access these 24x7 at their own pace and time. It allows geographical reach even at rural or remote locations. It is a cost-effective technology, quite affordable, and it enhances communication between teachers and students. It can accommodate more learners at a particular time. Online class sessions can be saved on the cloud for future references. For example, classnotes can be saved and distributed via the network for references by students. The digital recordings of the classes can be uploaded to the website to review later. To conduct exams, institutions may consider using online examination platforms which may help for conducting online examinations. This will prevent institutions from facing delays in their annual academic calendar for lockdown.

**7. Problems encountered and resource required:** Not all the students have the necessary knowledge, skill, and resources to access online resources. Learners from low-income families and disadvantaged groups are more likely to suffer during online learning as they may not afford high-speed Internet connection and required technical gadgets. This widens the gap between privileged and unprivileged learners. Barasat College made a coordinated effort by providing opportunities for both teachers and students to make learning more effective and relevant for protecting the academic interest of students during the Corona Pandemic.

## **2. Title of the Practice: Curriculum Enrichment Measures**

**GOAL:** This practice was implemented in order to enrich the existing curriculum and give hands on experience to our students as per industry expectations.

**THE CONTEXT** Curriculum revision takes place every four to five years by affiliating university. However, in order to keep the students in pace with the current and latest developments in the industry, additional curriculum enrichment measures have been introduced in the college.

**THE PRACTICE :**Curriculum enrichment is done by following measures :-

- Value added online courses – From the first year onwards "MS Office Basic" classes are conducted for students identified to be weak in these skills. Mainly Science students have joined in this course, it is of 3 month duration. "Language Lab" course has been introduced for Arts students ,and its of 1 month duration. Mainly Arts (Bengali, English) students have joined for it. Another course, "Business Communication Basic" has been introduced taking into account of commerce students.it is of 2 months duration. These three value added courses are conducted by the institute. Besides this 3 courses, another two -three courses have been introduced in this session, such as "Career Counselling" with 3 months duration, "Interview skills" also with 3 months duration. These courses will be conducted with professional expert for the 6th semester students.
- Mini projects – In the first year, student From the second year onwards, branch specific mini projects are done by all second and third year students.type mini projects are done by the students. Students submit a short report and give a short presentation on scope for future development in the area.
- Co-curricular based credit system (CCCBAS) - This has been introduced to motivate student participation in technical activities, value added certification courses.

**EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS:** Excellent results of our students in the examinations, student achievements in co-curricular activities and consistent placement percentages above 90% are proof of the success of this practice.

**PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AND RESOURCES REQUIRED** Some of the students are reluctant to pay additional fees for the value added courses hence, Institute provides part subsidy for the value added courses to ensure full participation. Identifying suitable resource persons for conduct of the various training activities and their monitoring requires continuous perseverance by the management and heads of departments.