

BEST PRACTICE 2014-2015

Title of Practice: Educate and Empower the economically disadvantaged students and the first generation learners.

Objective of the practice:

This project is aimed to create an opportunity for the economically disadvantaged students and first generation learners to be empowered with educational and life skills in order to level play with other students in their campus and face competitions both within the campus and outside.

The Context:

The College gives priority to admitting students who are first generation learners and students from the economically weaker category. The present system of education equates all students on the same platform without understanding whether these students learn to cope with the understanding of the concepts and communicate in English during their tenure in college. Besides, these students are vulnerable as they come from a section of community who lack basic facilities at home which hinder them to go through their studies without obstacles. Such students suffer severe psychosocial and emotional problems which most often are not addressed in the college campus due to the presence of large number of students and the constraint of the teacher to balance between academic delivery and personal attention to students.

The Practice:

The Patrician College adopts specific strategies to identify the first generation learners, hand hold them during their study period and follow up their progress after completion of their studies. The helping relationship begins soon after the identification of such category of students and an integrated approach is adopted to assist the student from his personal and professional fronts.

Academic Help

- Assessment of the performance of the student and offering remedial or enabling classes.
- Helping the student to complete academic assignments such as helping him to prepare for the class seminar or presentation.

- Coaching him for class tests and end semester exam by providing previous question papers and enabling him to answer the questions.
- Reinforcing the lessons, breaking down difficult concepts in to simpler understanding.
- Bilingual classes after the regular working hours to facilitate the understanding of concepts.
- Peer mentoring is allotted to these students who are guided by an understanding and willing class mate who acts a peer mentor. The decision is voluntary and the student and the peermentor choose each other as per convenience.

PsychoSocial Help

- Mentoring to address his personal and psychological problem
- Building confidence and boosting self image through addressing his issues related to inferiority complex such as his family background, inability to converse in English.
- Motivating the student to take part in different sport and cultural events so that he can promote his leadership and social skills.

Financial Help

- The student is supported by scholarship by the management.
- Waiver of fees is given to those from economically weaker sections.

Evidence of Success:

There is a great change in students' academic success as time progresses. The students learn to set goals and accomplish it. This gives them a sense of achievement. This has created confidence, responsibilities and commitment in the students. The peer mentors and faculty in charge give them a positive influence to face any challenges in life. The pass percentage of these students is more than 90 as can be evidenced from the following description.

Problems Encountered and Resources required:

- The difficulty of the students to remain encouraged when academic activity needs more effort and their inability to cope with it is a challenge.
- To create a sense of equality before students with greater academic success.
- To bring them out of their cocoon to stand up for what they have decided to pursue.

Though, this practice has created a very strong impact on student community as a whole, still few students are not able to come out of their personal inhibition. The mentors (faculty in charge) work with them on individual basis to understand their needs.

BEST PRACTICE II

Title of the practice: Leadership Development through Associations and Clubs.

Objective of the practice:

This practice is aimed at enhancing student's leadership through Association and Clubs.

Context:

There is an abundance of leadership potential among the youth of today. Their energies are diverted into degenerative practices. This is due to the unavailability of channels to capture their energies. The need of the hour is to create avenues and channels whereby the student can focus on his skills and abilities to self development in reaching higher altitudes and engage himself in positive and constructive engagements.

Practice:

Patrician College attempts to provide the right opportunities for channelizing the energies of the youth and creating leaders among them. The College has initiated various forums by which the students can participate in leadership positions. The College sets up a student council where members are nominated by the faculty and elected by the student representatives. The student council consist of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. Leaders are also elected for various clubs and associations. Exemplary students with good academic record are the candidate pool from which the office bearers are chosen. This policy motivates the students to prepare well academically and hone their skills toward social service and other talents throughout their initial years of study so that they may be elected to the student council in the capacity of core council member or association/club officer.

Evidence of Success:

The council leaders, the clubs and associations officers are given opportunities which enable them to formulate action plans for core curricular and extracurricular activities. They work as a team thus learning the values of collaboration, cooperation and conflict management. They get the opportunity for decision making, mobilization of resources and networking through the organization of various programmes under their leadership.

Some of the concrete evidences of leadership training is presented below.

- Balaji .E, III B.Com C.S is the present student Director of the Leo Club. He is a first generation learner yet the College has provided opportunities for him to become a capable leader and he is an organizer of many events and also has a first class percentage of 68 in his academic pursuits.
- Jothi Priya, a student of III B.Com CS is the Chess captain and a platform for sports activities has enabled her to become a good leader in managing crisis situations.
- Mr. Joshua Sathyaraj. G.M., a student of III B.Com is a first generation learner who has excelled both in academics and extracurricular activities is currently the Rotaract Club President and a member of the library committee
- S. Mohan Raj of III B.Com has beaten all odds from being a first generation learner to be the President of the Literacy Club and has been taking many initiatives on behalf of his club. His leadership skills have been fine tuned through active participation in club activities in addition to an excellent academic record.
- Shanti. M is the carrom captain of the College currently and has a decent first class percentage in spite of her sports activities and active participations in cocurricular activities. The college has helped her to achieve her goals.

Problems Encountered:

- Even though the clubs and associations provide opportunities for leadership development, the college has a long way to go to ensure the participation of all students from the first generation learners and students from economically weaker section.
- The observation of the college is that these students are inhibited to come forward to actively take part in the leadership development programme due to several impeding factors like lack of encouragement from family and external peer groups. Their confidence level is low

despite the college handholding and encouraging them to take the first step to enroll themselves in the leadership development programmes.

- New strategies need to be worked out to promote such candidates with additional inputs that will enable them to make use of every opportunity that is provided by the college.