

## INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

The following are some of the innovations which have created a positive impact on the functioning of the College and individual departments. It may be noted that some of these innovations could well qualify as Best Practices if they have become perfected and systematized practices.

	INNOVATION	IMPACT
1	Admission process for both UG and PG has been made completely online and paperless, including payment of admission fees. It is part of the College Information Management System (IMS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The process has become much more efficient and time saving;</li> <li>• It is more transparent and less susceptible to charges of nepotism;</li> <li>• It is system driven rather than individual driven.</li> </ul>
2	Attendance entry has been made online. SMS is sent to parents regarding absence. Hard copy is maintained as back up evidence. It is part of the College IMS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students can view their attendance on a daily basis along with percentage. There is a significant reduction in unnecessary absence.</li> </ul>
3	Online entry of internal marks into the College IMS. Consolidated reports are generated by the system. This cannot yet be called a best practice as glitches in the software are being rectified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tabulation and report creating done by the system. Standardization of process and lesser errors.</li> </ul>
4	Setting up of a butterfly garden by the Dept of Zoology, a conservation-cum – education programme. 75 species of ‘butterfly friendly’ plants were introduced. Students are in charge of its maintenance and development. It is planned to expand the butterfly garden across the college.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps to gain insight into the life history, behaviour and role of butterflies in sustaining natural ecosystems</li> <li>• Creates a self-sustaining and complex ecosystem, leading to conservation of native plants and organisms</li> <li>• Students earn the benefit of learning through doing and environmental consciousness</li> </ul>
5	Use of Smart Boards in classroom teaching. All departments have a ‘smart class’ and teachers have	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leads to better teaching as more planning is necessary;</li> <li>• Helps in the creation, digitization and</li> </ul>

	been given training in its use. They are being extensively used for classroom teaching.	sharing of learning material
6	Creation of a comprehensive question bank by the Dept of Zoology. Questions cover the entire subject area, were the same type as that used in the end semester examinations and were assigned difficulty levels. They were prepared jointly by the staff and students of the department. It is being constantly updated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It reduces exam related stress as students become aware of a wide range of questions;</li> <li>• It facilitates the preparation of any number of balanced question papers with the required types and difficulty levels</li> <li>• It helps to avoid mistakes in spelling and lack of clarity.</li> <li>• It enhances confidentiality and prevents leakage of the question paper.</li> </ul>
7	Setting up of a medicinal garden by the Dept of Botany.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps students to become aware of the medicinal property of plants</li> <li>• Popularizes the role of medicinal plants in healthy living.</li> </ul>
8	A variety of beyond-the-classroom learning activities, which include field trips, industry visits, lectures by experts, visits to research institutes, internships, etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students get the chance to apply book knowledge and understand the practical application of knowledge.</li> <li>• Develops in them a love for their subject</li> </ul>
9	Starting of a variety of skill based add-on courses (details in Criterion 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps to develop skills necessary for life</li> <li>• Creates new areas of interest for students.</li> </ul>
10	Starting of a pulse garden by the Zoology department in the context of 2016 being declared as the International Year of Pulses by the 68 <sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly. Invited lectures, Pulse Fest, Pulse Salad Competition to be held.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Created awareness about the value of pulses and their contribution to sustainability</li> <li>• Students enjoyed the planting and nurturing process and learn through doing.</li> </ul>
11	The Make Maths Fun Programme of the Department of Maths whereby students of the department taught Maths to students of nearby schools with the help of models,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maths become fun both for the teacher and the taught and increased their interest in the subject.</li> <li>• It addresses the necessity of having a sound basis in Maths in the modern world.</li> </ul>

	puzzles and games.	
12	A special programme in project writing conducted by the Journalism department. Students have workshops in research methodology, review of literature and selection of topic through analysis and discussions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students got a clear idea of the research process.</li> <li>• Lot of research ideas were generated, discussed and finally selected.</li> <li>• Created enthusiasm for the research project.</li> </ul>
13	Creation of 'Third Eye', a forum for debate, discussion and quizzes in the Journalism department which meets under the supervision of a faculty every Thursday at 1.30 pm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved the analytical ability, soft skills, and presentation skills of students</li> <li>• Gave them different perspectives, helping to understand the role of objectivity in journalism</li> <li>• Vastly improved their grasp of current events</li> </ul>
14	Students of MA English were asked to do the Certificate in Teaching of English course of IGNOU as they had a Teaching of English paper. 75 % of the students completed the course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students got a more broad and thorough perspective on the subject, giving them a higher proficiency in the subject</li> <li>• It helped them earn an additional degree while in college.</li> </ul>
15	Two teachers of the College have their own websites through which they provide details about the courses they teach and/ or transact courses. Dr Mary George also provides all course material for the Open Course in Maths on her website ( <a href="#">Dr Mary George</a> ; <a href="#">Dr George Mathew</a> ). The Electronics Materials Research Laboratory (EMRL) also has a website, <a href="http://www.emrlmic.in">www.emrlmic.in</a> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It gave the student easily accessible learning material from a single point.</li> <li>• It opened up communication channels between the teacher and the student.</li> </ul>

## Other Best Practices

### 1. Exposure of students to real-life experiences of Print and Television Journalism: Production, Publication and Exhibition of *Netra* Newspaper and *Netra* Television

#### *Objectives*

##### a) Print

- To cultivate the habit of generating ideas for content making and production of a newspaper.
- To impart practical knowledge in reporting events and stories and in editing its content.
- To familiarize the students to page design software, help them apply theoretical aspects of design and to produce final pages of a newspaper.
- To train students in areas such as news judgment, writing for media, photo journalism, info graphics and page design.
- To develop skills, team work, innovation, creative thinking and to keep deadlines.

##### b) Visual

- To nurture creative thinking in visual communication and to familiarize the tools of news broadcasting.
- To make the students experts in visual grammar and to master the art of making Short Fictions, Public Service Advertisements, TV news stories and Documentaries.
- To master the art of visual editing and to use Final Cut Pro.
- To train the students to 'write to pictures' and to improve their 'on-screen presence'.
- To motivate students to engage in team work and to improve their communication skills.

#### *Context*

The Department of Visual Mass Communication in Mar Ivanios College was established in 1999 with a unique UG programme in the discipline in self- financing mode. Since then, many students who have passed this course were placed in leading newspapers, TV news channels and in other forms of mass media institutions. Some students also started their careers in the film industry in various states. Many students have also entered into institutions of higher learning and are pursuing the academics.

In 2011, University of Kerala has approved this UG programme as a regular-aided course. During this period, Journalism and Mass Communication has undergone tremendous changes in content and structure. Media institutions have started looking for trained and employable candidates for recruitment. These changes were to be captured in the training modules of JMC&VP. Although the prescribed syllabus has not stipulated the hands-on-training in print and electronic media, the department has started these exercises since 2012.

## ***The Practice***

### **Print**

The second year students (Semester 3 and semester 4) of B A JMC&VP have been engaged in the production of '*Netra*' journal.

A team comprising of 5-6 students have been assigned with the task of making the newspaper. Initial meeting of the team brain storms the ideas for news stories, visual content and graphics in the presence of the faculty members. After the finalization of the blue print, student reporters are engaged in the process of news gathering. Submitted stories are edited by the supervising teachers. The second meeting aims at finalizing the placement and allocation of stories to pages and to form an idea for the page design. The designing and lay-out of the journal are also the responsibility of the students. The journal goes to print after getting the approval from the faculty. Although there are financial and infrastructure constraints for continuing this exercise, the '*netra*' issues are being published by the students regularly.

### **Visual**

The final year students (Semester 5 and Semester 6) of B A JMC&VP have been engaged in the production of '*Netra*' TV news bulletin, Short Fiction Film making, Public Service Advertisements and Documentaries.

Teams comprising of 5-6 students are asked to complete the video productions as per the directions of the supervising faculty. '*Netra*' TV news bulletins are produced after an eight step process. Obtaining approval from the faculty after submission of story ideas, discussion of content, visuals and treatment, shooting, editing, selection of anchors, studio production, compilation and exhibition are the steps involved in the bulletin production.

Teams were given themes such as 'love and hatred', 'restlessness and relief', 'waiting', 'crime and punishment' etc. and they were asked to develop a story thread based on the themes. After a rigorous process consultation, evaluation and approval, they were allowed to develop the story board and shooting script. Then the actual shooting takes place. The rushes were edited to make short fictions which are of 1-3 minutes duration.

Teams were given specific themes to develop ideas for Public Service Advertisements. Some of the themes were 'under age marriages', 'ant-dowry', 'promotion of agriculture', 'bike racing and accidents', 'against religious fanaticism' etc. After going through the steps mentioned in above exercises the production of PSA's were completed.

Documentaries were also followed the same process of production. Some of the documentaries completed were 'marginalisation of fishermen due to Vizhinjam Port Infrastructure Project', 'plight of tea workers of Bonacaud estate in Thiruvananthapuram' and 'the murder case in Kollam district which mistakenly convicted a migrant laborer from West Bengal'.

The video productions are uploaded in the You Tube channel of the department, [\*Netra TV\*](#).

## ***Review and Evaluation***

The *netra* journals after its publication has to undergo a critical scrutiny in terms of quality and news worthiness of stories, innovation in captions, quality of photographs and illustrations, page design and quality of language. All the students of the department are participating in this exercise and are encouraged to express their opinions.

ThenetraTV news bulletins, Short Fictions, PSA's and documentaries are getting evaluated by two experts from the TV or film industry on a competitive basis. The best productions are ranked by the invited experts and they were given a token of appreciation.

## ***Evidence of Success***

Students were challenged to bring in the best and innovative concepts. The process of approval is the most difficult part in all the exercises. Thrust given to the idea generation in these exercises helped the students to think 'out of the box' and to come up with novel ideas.

- The skills such as page design, photography, videography, video editing, lighting etc. were acquired by some of the students.
- Before completing the UG programme, the students are getting credits and by lines for visual and print productions and these are complementing their portfolios. These exercises have helped some of them to secure admissions in prestigious universities such as Central University of Hyderabad and JamiaMiliaIslamiya Central University, Delhi.
- The most important achievement of these exercises were inculcating the habits of team work, communication skills, research and planning among students.

## ***Problems encountered***

- The print and visual training requires robust infrastructure and technical support. The department is facing lack of equipments, trainers and other resources to sustain this process.
- The department is facing difficulties in completing these exercises within the limited time available in the academic hours. Thus students are forced to work over-time and this at times affects the quality of work.

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P.S: In this context it may be noted that the English Department also regularly brings out a creative journal called Imprint, showcasing the literary and creative skills of the students of the department. Issues of the journal are accessible from the College website

## **2. Science Facilitation Centre (SFC)**

### ***Objectives of the Practice***

- To inspire, motivate, and promote the curiosity and creativity of students and equip them for applying their scientific talent for the development and effective manpower utilization of our nation.
- To motivate students of UG, PG and School level students in understanding scientific principles through hands-on training.
- To train UG and PG level students in explaining scientific ideas
- To identify students with hidden / unknown scientific talents and to support them in their pursuit of excellence
- To provide the students with adequate opportunities for self-development in science
- To enable the students to take up project activity and carry out scientific investigations according to their innovative ideas.
- To activate the school authorities for creating a scenario in which the students can freely sense, touch and taste the ambience and will receive hands on experience in science.
- To offer a very active platform for all science loving students to come up to levels of excellence in science.

### ***The Context***

The Science Facilitation Centre (SFC) started at Mar Ivanios College in the year 2007 is on its 9th year now. It was established with a view to inspire the educationally brilliant youngsters at the high school level, with special focus on the economically marginalized. The centre imparts training in both theoretical and practical aspects of Science in a stress-free, highly interactive, and creative ambience.

The major objective of the Centre is to lead the young promising minds beyond the constraints of the curriculum into the exciting world of science whereby they gain deeper insights and learn to apply the knowledge they have garnered in an ingenious and inventive manner for constructive follow up in the higher classes.

### ***The Practice***

Every year 40 talented students of standards VIII and IX are selected for the training based on merit, from 40 Public and Private Schools in Thiruvananthapuram District.

College students are given initial training to act as Teacher-Facilitators to the school students and they help the students to carry out experiments in the laboratory of the Department of Physics. Thus this is a dual programme in which both the college students and schools students are benefited.

The duration of the course is one year and the programme is conducted on every second Saturday of the month from 9.30 AM to 4 PM.

The programme starts with an interactive session with an expert in the field of science and technology and it is scheduled for one hour.

Then student groups are formed and training on 5 different topics including Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Botany and Zoology are given. In between, students can perform demonstration on scientific experiments. At 3.30 PM the students gather and they record their feedback on the day's activity and disperse.

### ***Evidence of Success***

The programme has attracted public interest and every year we get more applications than we can accommodate. This programme has been continuing for the last nine years with sufficient number of students. We are collecting feedback from all the students and it shows the growing enthusiasm and interest in the students on the completion of one day's programme.

### ***Problems Encountered and Resources Required***

- Problems: As programme enters into the 9th year most of the initial problems have been overcome.
- Resources: The fee collected from the participants is sufficient to cover the expenses relating to training, experimentation, certification and supply of study materials needed. Facilities in the department of physics and other science departments are being utilised for the conduct of the programme. Currently, DrJohn Jacob PhD of the department of physics and DrSuju Joseph PhD of the Department of Chemistry serve as the Co-ordinators of the centre. Selected Post-graduate and Graduate students from other departments serve as teacher facilitators.
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## **2. Cambridge University Business English [Vantage] Certificate Course**

### ***Objectives of the Practice***

- To enhance the communicative skills at an international level
- To focus on the use of English in real-world business situations.

### ***The Context***

One of the major problems identified by modern day employers is the lack of communication skills and therefore the unemployability of otherwise very qualified



candidates. This is especially true of Kerala. In this context there was a genuine need for a course which would not only improve the English communication skills of students, but which be beneficial in the long run with its international appeal. Understanding this need of students, the College became a test centre of the Cambridge University Business English (Vantage) Certificate Course.

### ***The Practice***

The practice adopted in the training comprises of an initial screening of the students on the basis of a test where they have to demonstrate their interest in improving their communicative skills. This small group consisting of 30-40 students is given personal attention to take the international examination while in their second year at college. The course has a flexible structure where the contents are result-oriented and designed accordingly by the teacher-trainers. The sessions are student-focused and are totally devoid of lectures, submission of assignments etc. They consist of language skill-building activities within a global context.

### ***Evidence of Success***

The growing demand for the course, response from the participants and the overwhelming results on one side, plus the welcoming attitude of high quality educational institutions and companies all over the world to this degree provides evidence for the success of the programme. The Cambridge University accredited Business English Certificate programme, running since 2007, has benefited more than 250 of the brightest students on campus. It produces a high number of distinctions [A grade] in every batch. While the national average pass percentage for BEC Vantage stands in the range of 60-65% that of the College centre is in the 80-85% range. The 100% pass in the last two years also indicate the success as well as the confidence instilled in the students when it comes to taking examinations and facing job-interviews. The College has now been accepted for registration on the Cambridge University website, providing access to global placement opportunities for students who have passed the exam from the Mar Ivanios College Training and Exam Centre for the BEC.

### ***Problems Encountered and Resources Required***

As the programme is into the 11<sup>th</sup> year the large share of initial problems have been overcome. However, the major problems are limiting the number of participants in a course to 40 and managing the teaching sessions on Sundays. The resources required include a well furnished room with audio-video equipment, projector/ smart board for the training and conduct of the examination and well-trained teachers with good communication skills.

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## **4. Introduction of Online courses in Master of Tourism and Travel Management Programme**

### ***Objectives of the Practice***

- To create awareness among the students about various online courses available in tourism and its uses for future prospects.
- To enhance the student's knowledge by supplementary reading/ references

### ***The Context***

Tourism is a rapidly growing and dynamic industry which is connected to many other aspects of human life like economy, politics, environment, socio-cultural, etc. This makes it highly complex in nature with multiple characteristics. A notable feature of this sector is the speed with which it undergoes changes in trends and styles of operation. It may take a long time to update these new trends and changes in text books and reference materials. Thus introduction of appropriate online courses helps a lot to keep the students abreast with contemporary developments in the field of tourism and hospitality.

### ***The Practice***

Students were given awareness about the relevance of online courses and its availability. As an innovative practice, students were asked to complete at least one course in a semester as their assignment. They were allowed to make use of the college computer lab to carry out the online study. Most students enthusiastically participated in the programme after the classroom hours and maintained a weekly progress report. All the students of MTTM Semester 2 have successfully completed at least one course from the course provider ALISON.

### ***Evidence of Success***

All the students of MTTM Semester 2 participated in the programme. The details of online courses completed are given below:

Online courses completed in the second semester

- Diploma in Tourism Studies (4 students)
- Introduction to the development of Tourism Industry (5 students)
- Tourism introduction to Retail Travel Services(2 students)
- English for tourism- Tourist information and guided tours (2 students)
- Diploma in International tourism with English language studies(3 students)
- Tourism Marketing and Promotion (1 student)

### ***Problems Encountered and Resources Required***

The main obstacle faced by the students was the course fee to be paid for each course in order to get the certificate. In order to authenticate the completion of the course, students took screen shots of their course completed page.

The resources needed included high speed internet connectivity and reasonably good English language skills to understand the video lectures. The College gave free access to the well-equipped computer lab of the college with high speed internet connectivity to complete the study.

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## **5. The ‘Connecting Careers’ Programme**

### ***Objectives of the Practice***

- To make students aware of the various career openings for an undergraduate student.
- To instill self-confidence in students to attain their goal.

### ***The Context***

One of the major challenges facing the students in Kerala is that they do not know what is happening in the world outside their college, the variety of new generation professions available today nor the pathway to reach those professions. On the other hand, graduates from Mar Ivanios College manage to find very interesting professions for themselves once they leave the college and the state. It was in this context that the ‘Connecting Careers’ Programme took shape. All it did was provide a platform for former students of the college to meet and interact with current students to share the story of their journey in the modern professionally challenging world.

### ***The Practice***

From among the alumni of the college those from as many diverse fields as possible are contacted. Once the resource person is identified and availability in Trivandrum is finalised a date and time is fixed for the programme. Then the ‘target audience’ is finalised, preferably a group of around 50 final year students from a single class. The resource person shares his/her experiences in the college during his/her student days, followed by a session where their present profession, its nature, challenges, goals, and are explained along with how they reached where they are now. This is followed by the final session where the participants get their queries answered by the speaker and further, as the situation demands, tips are also given on other related areas. In addition to the general schedule of each programme, two students from the participating class are asked to introduce the resource person and propose the vote of thanks. This programme has been running for the last four years.

### ***Evidence of Success***

It has been found that these former students can impart confidence in their juniors to take up challenging professions much more convincingly than career guidance professionals. These former students were still quite young and they managed to fully convey their excitement about their journey of discovery. This enthusiasm and excitement were highly infectious and current students went away with new ideas about new professions, and conventional ones. Students were immensely appreciative of this programme.

### ***Problems Encountered and Resources Required***

A lot of planning, research and time have to be spent in collecting the whereabouts of those in as many different professions as possible. All such data have to be made use of as per the requirements of the present generation of students. No fee of any kind is collected from the participants, but the little incidental expenses required are met by the college.

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## **6. Additional Skill Acquisition Programme**

### ***Objectives of the Practice***

- To develop effective language skills in graduate and post graduate students so as to enhance their employability.
- To instill group dynamics and improve interpersonal skills in English language communication
- To motivate students to think positively by recognising their strengths and building confidence
- To train them for appropriate and contextual use of language.
- To train them in nonverbal communication
- To develop professional skills like professional etiquette and business communication

### ***The Context***

ASAP was started in Mar Ivanios in 2014 as a project implemented by the the General and Higher Education Departments to amplify working hands in different sectors of the economy, by providing additional skill sets to students along with their regular courses. The programme has two different levels, ASAP level 1 Programme and Training Partner Scheme (TPS). ASAP level 1 is a combination of three courses, namely, Communication Skills in English, Basic IT and an Elective Domain Specific Skill Course. The

Programmes are developed, delivered, assessed and certified with the active participation of the related industries to ensure labour market acceptance of the programmes. TPS is a scheme of partnering higher education institutions with the ASAP Mission in training graduate and post graduate students for empanelling as Skill Development Executives (SDE). The goal of TPS is to encourage Departments of English functioning in various colleges to develop qualified professionals for prospective SDE selection..

### ***The Practice***

ASAP provides a unique training experience to students. The trainers join ASAP after passing through a double screen. It helps to develop their confidence in communication, IT and enhances Social Skills in the trainers. Trainers are trained by Communication experts, soft skill trainers and IT professionals.

Mar Ivanios College has been a training partner of ASAP since 2014. The College initiated the TPS on May 2014 as a 21 day residential programme for 30 students selected from ten different colleges all over Kerala. The second batch of 28 students underwent training on May 2015. Final Year degree students awaiting results and PG students are eligible to apply. The selection procedures are done by the ASAP Kerala. The college hostels provided accommodation for the students.

Teaching was through activity methods. The students were divided into groups and were assigned various activities which included skits, mime shows, fashion shows, tableau, anchoring, reporting, drawing, press reporting and jewelry making. They performed various language games as part of their class room learning.

### ***Evidence of Success***

Students attended the APTIS test of the British Council and all of them secured high grades. Many of these students secured jobs as Skill Development Executives and are working in educational institutions in different parts of Kerala. The visit of Shri Rajiv Pratap Rudy, the Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship was really encouraging. The TPS provided a myriad of experiences to the students as well as to all the faculties. The training of the faculties as master trainers enhances them with new teaching strategies. They are also given soft skill training. The students who were initially reluctant in communication exhibited confidence in speaking and actively participated in all classroom activities towards the second week of training. Mar Ivanios College was the only one institution in Thiruvananthapuram District that received a five star ranking for its excellence in TPS Training in 2015.

### ***Problems Encountered and Resources Required***

Problems: The initial problems have been overcome for TPS, but regarding ASAP level 1 course the academic schedule of Mar Ivanios College doesn't coincide with other non-autonomous colleges. Hence the implementation of the programme is delayed.

Resources: The Higher Education Department provides funding for the course.

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## **7. Bhoomithrasena Club**

### ***Objectives of the Practice***

- To create awareness among the youth about the importance of conserving nature and its resources
- To train and encourage the students to respond positively to environmental issues
- To make the campus a model with regard to cleanliness
- To spread environmental literacy among the public
- To enrich the floral diversity of the campus by planting and maintaining trees on the campus

### ***The Context***

Environmental education has become an inevitable tool in creating awareness of the importance of environmental sustainability. Bhoomithrasena Club, an idea conceived by Directorate of Environment and Climate Change, serves this purpose. Agencies like Kerala State Pollution Control Board, Kerala State Biodiversity Board and Kerala Suchitwa Mission came forward to guide and support the programme.

### ***The Practice***

The Bhoomithrasena club of the College has been functioning since 2011. The club has a staff coordinator and members of the club were selected from across the different departments. The club attempts to achieve its goals through a wide spectrum of activities such as seminars, lectures, talks, debates, extension activities and literary competitions focussed on environmental issues. It conducts annual visits to Wildlife sanctuaries as well as environmentally degraded sites so that the students can witness the two extreme states of the environment. The club also demonstrates reclamation and maintenance of polluted sites to general public. As an extension activity the club undertakes analysis of the quality of drinking water samples collected from various locations around the college premises. Bhoomithrasena club is actively engaged in planting and maintaining trees on the campus. It also carries out regular cleaning activities on the campus, and organises exhibitions and awareness campaigns to promote waste management, personal hygiene and a sustainable life style.

### ***Evidence of Success***

Through the sustained efforts of the club the littering behaviour of the students could be reduced to a great extent. The active participation of the club members in various environmental protest programmes such as “tree walk” against unnecessary felling of trees in the city clearly illustrates the imbibition of the ideals of the club by its members.

As a token of appreciation, 'Certificate of participation' from Environment Management Agency, Kerala (EMAK) under Department of Environment and Climate change, Government of Kerala is being presented to outgoing Bhoomithrasena members every year. The club was awarded the second position at south zone level during the academic year 2013-14 for its resourceful activities towards environment protection.

### ***Problems Encountered and Resources Required***

**Challenges:** The problem of wastes generated as a result of changing lifestyle of people needs to be addressed more efficiently. Green technologies are to be promoted in every aspect of campus life.

**Resources:** Various governmental agencies working in environmental sector support the programme.

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## **8. Open House**

### ***Objectives of the Practice***

- Evaluate the academic and overall performance of the students.
- Give suggestions to improve their performance
- Identify weak students and motivate them
- Give parents feedback on the performance of students and hear their grievances, if any.

### ***The Context***

It is mandatory on the part of the teachers to expose parents to the performance level of their wards, on the basis of which the concerned parties will be aware about where they stand in the academic and non academic fields. The students and the parents are made aware of what is required of them to acquire a degree and also how to deal with their personal growth.

### ***The Practice***

The Open House is held once in a year, immediately after their internal exams, for the three degree classes separately. Parents are informed about the meeting in advance. This exercise is found to be of great assistance to all the participants involved. It provide the teachers a clear understanding of the background of the students, enable the parents to get a clear idea of the level of performance of their children and improve their involvement if essential and above all the students get an opportunity to remind themselves of their duties and responsibilities and to adopt measures to improve. Parents meet all the teachers who teach their ward and get their feedback.

### ***Evidence of Success***

This has led to a better relationship among the students, teachers and their parents. A periodic check done by the teacher on the student and informing the parent about the performance of the ward has helped in building up a better relationship among the three stakeholders.

### ***Problems Encountered and Resources Required***

Getting a convenient time for all the three concerned parties to meet has proved to be a difficult task. This has sometimes been a challenge on the effective implementation of the programme.

### ***Contact Persons***

The Faculty Advisors of the respective classes.

## **9. Mentoring System**

### ***Objectives of the Practice***

- To focus on knowing the personal needs and difficulties (both academic and non-academic) of the students in order to help them bring the best out of their efforts.
- To provide psychological and emotional support to the students for helping them to face adverse and crisis situations.

### ***The Context***

- Students with different educational levels and social backgrounds come to college. It is necessary to create platforms to identify individual problems and difficulties and address them.
- Not only do the educational needs of students have to be addressed, but also their social and psychological issues need to be handled sensitively.
- It is in this context that different modes of mentoring were adopted on campus.

### ***The Practice***

- There are three modes of formal mentoring: the Scholar Support Programme and the Walk with A Scholar Programme supported by the Kerala Govt, and the Mentoring Programme of the college.
- The SSP mentors weak students in a class, while the the WWSP mentors bright students. The MP mentors mixed groups of students.
- Each faculty is allotted 15 to 20 students under their personal care and guidance and they are given pre-designed mentoring tasks to do.
- Faculty members take effort to
  - Excel in their professional sphere
  - Provide necessary support and guidance in student academics
  - Shape the character of students in order to mould them as good human beings with a sense of responsibility and accountability.



- Face moments of crisis tactfully

### ***Evidence of Success***

- Improved teacher student relations
- Reduced grievances
- Feedback from the students indicating the usefulness of the system
- Improved morale of the students evidenced from the reduced rate of absenteeism
- Improved participation of students in teaching learning process evidenced by the increased participation in brainstorming sessions, group discussions and general discussion

### ***Problems Encountered and Resources Required***

- Lack of professional competence of teachers in personal counselling.
- Difficulty on the part of teachers to spend time for mentoring activities in addition to their official responsibilities.
- Psychological resistance on the part of the students have to be properly addressed through proper planning and implementation.
- Careful planning, professional competence and sustained follow-up are needed to make mentoring successful.

### ***Contact Persons***

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## **10. DBT Star College Scheme**

### ***Objectives of the Practice***

- To equip students of 'Basic Science' for higher education.
- To familiarise the students with modern technology in the field of research.
- To develop 'Research Culture' among Undergraduate Students.

### ***The Context***

The number of students pursuing higher degree courses after graduation is only about 20% or even less. Most of them end up with some lower cadre jobs either in public or private sector firms. What makes them reluctant to pursue higher studies is their inability to appreciate the joy of science studies and lack of clarity about the wide scope it offers. This situation could only be addressed by generating a genuine interest in science among students. By providing state-of-art research facilities at Mar Ivanios College, we intend our under graduate and post graduate students in life sciences to choose a research career in various fields of biological sciences with special focus on molecular biology. We consider this as a prime recognition from DBT.

### ***The Practice***

The programme is being implemented jointly by the Zoology, Botany and Biotechnology departments of the college. A teacher from the department of Zoology serves as the co-ordinator of the programme. The students are well informed about the programme and encouraged to participate in it by the respective faculty advisors. Entry is open to all students regardless of their academic excellence. Thirty students from the above departments are selected on a first come first served basis as a core group. They are given special training on a regular basis on modern scientific instruments and experiments at the centralized lab. The students are given opportunity to do extra practicals not included in their prescribed syllabi. Series of invited lectures on various topics by experts are being conducted. Support is also extended for 'Students Projects', Field Study Programmes, Research Institution Visits, summer training etc. A Life Science Facilitation Centre is also planned to attract school students to the Life Sciences.

### ***Evidence of Success***

- Witnessed a notable enhancement in laboratory skills of the students.
- Several students responded positively by submitting individual and group projects.
- Many of them participated and made presentations in seminars at state and national levels.
- The number of students appearing for post-graduate entrance examinations at various universities and centres is increased significantly over the years.
- PG enrolment rate registered an obvious rise during the period.
- Able to initiate a Research Culture among Undergraduate Students as evidenced in their projects works done

### ***Problems Encountered and Resources Required***

Resource: The programme is funded by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India. The centralised lab established as part of the scheme offered necessary facilities required to carry out advanced practicals and student projects.

Problems: Time constraint was the main hurdle encountered during the implementation of the programme. To follow the schedule of practicals as planned was really challenging along with the busy schedule of regular curricular and co-curricular activities of the college. Repair and maintenance of sophisticated instruments is a challenge.

### ***Contact Persons***

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## **11. Vermicomposting**

### ***Objectives of the Practice***

- To reduce the quantity of biodegradable wastes in the campus at a cost effective and eco-friendly manner.

- To reduce the emission of greenhouse gases.
- To give training to the students on vermicomposting technology.
- To encourage the students to practise vermicomposting at their homes.
- To understand the benefits of composting and organic farming.
- To spread the message of processing wastes at site among the public.

### ***The Context***

Accumulation of solid wastes and its proper management is a challenging issue today. Conventional management practices such as open dumping or burning cause serious environmental and health problems. Throwing of food wastes in open may attract stray dogs and other animals such as rats that may spread many diseases. Our campuses too are no exception to this. Thus it is the need of the hour to create awareness among the students about the importance of safe disposal of wastes. They should imbibe a culture of 'zero waste' lifestyle. They should be trained in environmentally responsible waste management processes and be motivated to spread this message among the public by practicing it at home. Vermicomposting is one such practice, which is cost effective and eco-friendly. It uses earthworms to turn organic wastes into very high quality compost. It is many times richer than the waste itself in mineral content, microbes and other growth factors. It allows for yearlong composting and is probably the best way of composting kitchen wastes. The practice has several environmental, economic, and educational benefits. It makes the environment healthier as it reduces waste in a healthy, natural process.

### ***The Practice***

The department of Zoology started a model vermicomposting house on 19th March, 2015. The trial run of the newly constructed Vermicompost pit was inaugurated by the Principal Rev. Dr. Gigi Thomas. Mr Manoj S (Asst. Director, Dept. of Agriculture, Government of Kerala) provided all the technical support for the setting up of the plant. He also gave hands-on training on "Care and Maintenance of Vermicompost" to the faculty, supporting staff and students.

Wastes collected from all over the campus by the sweepers were first screened to remove plastic and other non-biodegradable products from it. The organic wastes alone are fed to the plant regularly. The final year BSc Zoology students were entrusted with the responsibility of plant management. They inspect the plant regularly to maintain conditions stable for favourable action of worms. Within a short span of a few weeks the students mastered the art of vermicomposting. When composting is over, the formed compost is dried in shade, sieved and used as organic manure for agricultural activities on the campus. It is also sold to the staff, students and public if available in excess.

### ***Evidence of Success***

The programme helped to reduce the organic wastes on the campus substantially. The most important aspect of compost produced by earthworms is that it is 100% organic. There are no harmful chemicals and it does not need to be mixed with anything. The programme generated considerable quantity of organic manure. All of the final year BSc Zoology students of the year 2015 were given hands-on training on vermicomposting. Several students started vermicomposting of kitchen waste in their homes.

### ***Problems Encountered and Resources Required***

The initial expenditure for setting up of the plant was borne by the management. The capacity of the plant needs to be increased. A small outlet for selling the vermicompost to the public is to be opened.

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## **12. Creating Communication Networks for the Dissemination and Sharing of Information**

### ***Objectives of the Practice***

- To create communication channels among the different stakeholders inside campus and outside.
- To build an online platform where shared information can always be accessed.
- To create knowledge which would help in quality creation and sustenance.

### ***The Context***

One of the major problems in a large college is the lack of communication channels for the stakeholders inside college to share information. This leads to administrative bottlenecks, delay in implementation of plans, lack of co-operation among the various sectors and often miscommunication. It is therefore imperative that stakeholders have communication channels open to share/ disseminate information.

Another problem when it comes to quality creation and quality sustenance in the higher education scenario is the blasé assumption that teachers and students have and know the standard administrative and organizational procedures that is expected of them as they hold various positions within the organizational framework.

Keeping these two problems in mind the IQAC of the College has created best practices which could demonstrate a solution to these problems

### ***The Practice***

To open communication channels, the IQAC has created official email IDs for all faculty members using Google Apps. The IDs have a standard format of [firstname.lastname@mic.ac.in](mailto:firstname.lastname@mic.ac.in) or [firstname.initials@mic.ac.in](mailto:firstname.initials@mic.ac.in). Similarly, all classes have an official email ID with a common format. Groups have also been created; there is a single email ID for all the staff members to which, if anybody sends a mail, all staff members get the mail. Similarly group email IDs have been created for HoDs, members of a department, IQAC members, groups of Faculty Advisors, etc. This enables the Principal, for example, to send an email ID to all staff members by sending a mail to a single email ID, or the HoD of a department or the Faculty Advisor of a class to send

information to all the students in a particular class, or the Vice Principal to all the staff members of a department to call a meeting by sending a single email, etc.

Standardization of quality processes is inevitably necessary to bring quality to organizational procedures. The IQAC has standardized processes by creating guidelines for organizational procedures like the steps involved in curriculum revision, conducting Course Committee meetings, or the responsibilities of Faculty Advisors. These can now be shared through the official email IDs of staff members.

To give further access to created knowledge, a website for the IQAC, where all information relating to its activities are accessible to all stakeholders, has been created.

To open up communication channels with stakeholders within and outside the campus, online feedback forms accessible from its website have also been created. This has enabled a much easier mode of collecting feedback.

### ***Evidence of Success***

The Principal now sends common information to all staff members through the group email ID of the staff. The Attendance committee shares attendance records with the students of a class by sending a mail to that class. Information about new add-on courses, commencement of examinations, time tables are all shared with students through their official class email ID. Feedback is taken or suggestions recorded from stakeholders through the website. All stakeholders access any information related to the IQAC from their website.

### ***Problems Encountered and Resources Required***

Getting all stakeholders to buy into these procedures is sometimes a bit difficult. While 90% of the staff voluntarily logged in and started using their official email IDs, there was a bit of resistance from the rest, sometimes due to very practical reasons.

It was also found that, while the process for feedback and creating a report for the feedback was much easier through an online system, getting students and other stakeholders to do that feedback was often a difficult task, in spite of the fact that students were given free internet access on campus.

Maintaining this communication network and constantly updating the website and monitoring feedback were also cumbersome tasks and required a bit of technical savvy. However, the advantages of having the communication network far outweigh the disadvantages of not having such a network.

### ***Contact Person***

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### **More information**

The faculty members at Mar Ivanios are a very resourceful, innovative bunch. The innovations and best practices mentioned here are only a few which might stand out a bit

over many others which have been highly effective, but have not been mentioned due to lack of space.

One particular innovation which may be mentioned is the introduction of the Course File system and the starting of Course Committee meetings in 2016, acting upon the very strong recommendation of the external members of the IQAC for the same.

Every course (paper) in a semester has a Course File with the following documents filed in it:

1. Vision and Mission Statement of the College
2. Vision and Mission Statement of the Department.
3. Academic Calendar for the Semester.
4. Differential Analysis List of the Class (from 2016 admission onwards).
5. Time Table of the Department/ Programme with the teaching schedule of the particular course highlighted.
6. Course Syllabus with Learning Outcomes for the Programme and the Course (to be given to students at the beginning of the semester).
7. Course Teaching Plan in the prescribed format (to be given to students at the beginning of the semester).
8. Assignment/ Seminar topics for the course (to be given to students at the beginning of the semester). (Copies of assignment topics given in previous years to be also filed).
9. Internal test question papers of the course of the last three years.
10. End Semester Examination Question papers of the Autonomy Stream (if available).
11. Copy of the CA Mark Sheet of the Course, with the signatures of students.
12. At least one sample assignment sheet (corrected; the most recent)
13. At least one sample internal test answer paper (corrected; the most recent)
14. Listing of details of curriculum enrichment strategies adopted for the Course (internet resources / MOOCs, lectures by external experts/ other teachers, industry visits, field trips, library work, peer teaching by students (with name of student, topic, date)
15. Listing of details of Remedial Classes taken for the course, with number of students, topics covered, number of hours taken, and dates.
16. Feedback on the teaching of Course taken at the end of the semester; it can be an informal/ oral feedback taken by the Course Coordinator to find out the major problems students faced while being taught this paper so that it can be avoided in the next semester.

It is the duty of the Course Coordinator to maintain this file with the help of the Course Committee and share necessary documents in the file with the students, the Faculty Advisor or the HoD as the case may be. The Course File system has helped considerably in planning classroom teaching for a whole semester.

Another best practice which may be mentioned is the free Noon Meal scheme for the needy students. There are many students in the college who cannot afford to bring or pay for noon meals. They are identified by the Faculty Advisors and coupons are given to them by the MIC Charity Fund Staff Committee and the students can have the lunch from the college canteen along with other students, without anyone knowing this. Confidentiality and anonymity is strictly observed. The funding for the said programme

is by alumni of the college. The Kuwait chapter of the alumni contributes Rs. 50000/- every year. Recently Degree students of 1991-94 batch contributed Rs. 75000/- There have been months when 40-50 students benefitted from this scheme every day.

Mar Ivanios College has the rich legacy of having produced many renowned musicians, actors, dancers, leaders, and the like. For decades

The college has attracted best talented students from nearby districts. One of the best practices of the college is to give opportunity and training for these students to perform better and excel in their fields. Many of such students may not have the financial resources to undergo artistic or cultural training. College management and PTA therefore support these students and train them for competitions especially Kerala University Youth Festival. Hundreds of students every year benefit from this.