

7.2 – Best Practices

7.2.1 – Describe at least two institutional best practices

1. Title: **Promotion of students' research and publications**

Goals: a. To familiarize undergraduate and postgraduate students with the scholarly activities b. To encourage them to pursue their academic projects with seriousness c. To familiarize them with the standards of publications, academic writing etc. d. To make them aware of publication channels e. To help students to network with peers and other scholars of the respective fields

Context While reflecting on the academic experiences during the previous assessment period, the faculty of the college came to know that if promoted, students will excel in research and subsequent presentations publications. Hence, it was decided to inculcate research aptitude among students both undergraduate and postgraduate to pursue small scale research, and present their findings in conferences for wider discussion.

The Practice: As an initiative, four departments (Economics, Malayalam, Physics, and Psychology) actively promoted this practice among both undergraduate and postgraduate students. Several students responded to this initiative call of the departments and pursued their academic projects with specific scope. When conferences/ seminars were announced, teachers and college librarian provided necessary guidelines in preparing presentations and articles as per the formats prescribed by organizers. Evidence of success The scholarly activities of students belong to various disciplines are mentioned below: a. Economics – 5 paper presentations in conferences b. English – 1 article published in scholarly journal c. Malayalam – 8 (Interviews of leaders of social service activities and community welfare groups will be published as a book in the coming year. Students who attended interviews were rigorously trained through a series of mock interviews) d. Psychology – 18 students presented papers. e. Physics – 9 students participated in conferences and presented 2 papers another 3 students got research funding from a state government agency. f. Zoology – 1 student got award for her PG Project g. Botany – 1 student presented paper in Kerala Botanical Society. The practice will be further popularized and strengthened in the next year by conducting a workshop on research methodologies, and inviting participation from more departments.

Problems encountered a. Lack of sufficient time to conduct research and then to prepare articles due to the tight class schedule.

2. Title: **Bhoomi Malayalam**

Goals: a. To provide a space for scholarly discourses b. To address those themes pertaining to cultural studies, literature, and linguistics which require special attention c. To examine and appreciate different viewpoints and perspectives d. To encourage research among students, research scholars and faculty e. To encourage academicians to publish their findings

Context:

The department of Malayalam has been very active in promoting discussions, research, etc. in topics related to the marginalized issues of Cultural studies, Malayalam Language, and Literature. Ever since the inception of the undergraduate program they have conducted seminars, conferences, workshops etc for the benefit of students. In the past, many such programs were appreciated by the college community, and had impact on students' learning. However, such programs were not properly documented or archived. Hence, the department embarked on organizing programs systematically, and subsequently archive/publish the documents presented in such programs. The Practice: Since 2007, every year the department selects a key theme for discussions and subsequent seminars in that year, and at the end of the year publishes the documents presented in the series of seminars in the form of a journal called 'Bhoomi Malayalam'. The outcome is that a key theme which requiring academic attention will be examined in detail by scholars from various perspectives, and papers will be brought out for wider circulation and readership. Besides, the practice promotes academic writing among the students of the college.

Evidence of success: The department has been publishing the journal since 20 and contents of many of them are followed by students as a supplement to the prescribed textbooks of Mahatma Gandhi University for undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

Problems encountered No significant problems encountered

Distinctiveness

1) It is the vision of the college to serve the nation by facilitating socially relevant education to actualize the values of humanism. In providing such education, the college believe that economic status, gender or religious beliefs should not be a hindrance for students. As many of the college are first generation learners belong to the rural communities, financial support is essential to keep them pursue their education. More than the informal assistance offered by faculty members to the needy ones, the college has been successful in providing several scholarships to the economically weaker but meritorious students (Merit cum Means) with the help of philanthropists, retired faculty members, and alumni. Some of the notable donors are North American Chapter of Alumni (UCCANA), Scranton (United Board of Christian Higher Education), Kano Yamamoto etc. During the reporting year, 142 departmental and 74 institutional scholarships were provided. In total, 593 students were benefitted with Rs. 52.00,000 distributed over a period of one year.

2) As depicted in the mission statement of the college, educate to serve the humanity is one of our greatest missions. We believe that the mission of education will be wholesome only if the educated individuals are capable to serve the community. When the state of Kerala was petrified due to the devastating deluge that severely impacted Kerala during the eve of August 15, 2017, the college community as a whole including students, teachers, non-teaching staff, alumni, and the college management stood collectively to help those victims. The college arranged a flood relief camp in its campus immediately. Approximately 10,000 refugees were accommodated in the college for 5 days; and they were served with necessary amenities with the support the community. Though it was humanitarian attempt, later we felt the education aspect as well. It was an act of support to unknown brothers or sisters, but everyone collaborated with this exercise brought home a set of experiences that will guide them in their whole life