



# NETAJI SATABARSHIKI MAHAVIDYALAYA, ASHOKNAGAR

(Affiliated to W.B.S.U., Barasat)

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Ref. No. *NSM/* .....

Date .....

## 7.2- Best practices

7.2.1 - Describe two best practices successfully implemented by the Institution as per NAAC format provided in the Manual.

### 1. Title of the Practice:


**MENTORING: BUILDING COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN TEACHERS & STUDENTS**

### 2. Objective of the Practice

The term mentoring can be understood within several paradigms: the transfer of a particular set of values, skills and norms adopted by society; an interaction of experienced and less-experienced person; or, nowadays, as a learning partnership. The mentoring system is an attempt to bridge the void or gap of a generalized structure of the institutionalized education system and a student's personal struggle to adjust to it. The mentors through humane approach tries to build a bond cutting across the domain of classroom teaching and to become a support system to their mentees. The students upon entering college are confronted with new challenges like requirements of the academic environment, changes in the social relations and planning for further career along with this they also undergo personal level struggles for which having a mentor to guide them in this transition period of their adulthood should be really beneficial. The objective is to provide a reliable and comprehensive support system to the young minds as they undertake the journey to become their best future self.

### 3. The Context

The continuation of the deadly pandemic that reimposed the closing of educational institutions to enforce social distancing and the shift to online mode of teaching and learning had huge effects on learning, especially for students in the rural areas. NetajiSatabarshikiMahavidyalaya being situated in a rural area with students who mostly come from economically disadvantaged sections of the society had to face the challenge of how to communicate and transmit education and information among a large sum of the students who have inefficiency in adaptation to the online mode and have limited or

  
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inaccessibility to technology and internet. Firstly, a constant comprehensive communication needed to be maintained with students to transmit information regarding academics, examination and other related matters, Secondly, to motivate and energize the students to continue their academic pursuits as many in order to cope with family financial woes were forced to seek employment in meager jobs, Thirdly, the students suffered from uncountable stress and depression dealing with health problems, inability to attend online classes or receiving study materials. Such multiple challenges required a cohesive system to address the problems at individual student level by building a developmental relationship that enhance both individuals' growth and advancement and also acts as an empathetic support system to boost and motivate them amid trying times. The mentoring system was to act as a bridge between the students their mentees and the college authorities for a collective endeavour to tide over the upcoming challenges.

#### 4. The Practice

Once the students register to the first semester course, their names in accordance to their roll numbers are divided into groups and each group is then assigned to a particular teacher of the college. That teacher remains responsible for the overall progress of those students for at least five years, i.e even after they pass out final year examination. The mentor either meets the mentees in the college campus or calls them at regular intervals to monitor their academic progress, attendance record and personal well-being.

Responsibilities of a mentor includes

- Identifying strengths and weaknesses of the student and work for his/her strengths.
- Providing guidance in selecting the job/higher education Motivating the students to go for higher studies and choose their future endeavors.
- Guiding the students to excel not only in career but also in becoming wholesome individuals.
- Recognize the students difficulties in learning or in personal struggles and helping them to overcome those.

The system has been working for few years but a major boost was given to deal with the new mode of education as imposed by Covid 19. Due to the global pandemic the mentors this term has remained connected to their mentees mostly over telephone or virtual platforms. Apart from educating about online education system the mentors had to grapple with diverse challenges ranging from mental depression, technological difficulties to financial troubles at the mentees end. The mentors contacts each mentee to make them understand the process of attending online classes and accessing materials, to use the LMS and college app and most importantly to develop a sense of reliability and affection so the students would be encouraged to share their problems and difficulties with ease. Additionally the mentors remain available to their mentees over telephone whenever help is required. They keep a written account of all interactions and tries to find solution to their problems by communicating with the college authority or with the guardians if situations so occurs. After the students graduate from the



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institution, the mentors still stays in contact and provide advice on higher education and future career planning. The Indian education system is mostly based on curriculum and classroom teaching which leaves very little space for the students to develop individual relations of guidance and support with their teachers. The mentoring system helps to construct relationships of trust, reliability and kinship that not only assist and guide a student in his/ her academic pursuits or future career but provides the necessary support to overcome various personal and social struggles in their course. The New Education Policy (NEP) drafted in 2020 vividly highlights the importance of mentoring system and its relevance in institutes of higher education. Our college in such light has taken the initiative with much vigour and importance to build comprehensive student teacher relationship in the institution.

## 5. Evidence of Success

The system has consistently yielded satisfactory results over the years. Especially the sessions during the unprecedented crisis of global pandemic that restricted physical communication the system ensured the thriving of continuous student teacher communication. As the students confronted challenges of attending online classes on virtual platforms, utilizing online resources and personal crisis, the mentors took utmost care to provide comfort, support and strength to their mentees amidst the pandemic. With constant guidance the students gained confidence in adapting to the new online education system, the online examination process. To confront the diverse challenges presented by the pandemic to the education system the institution sought to address some targets

1. To help those who were devoid of technology : The mentors took extra measures for students who didn't have access to proper technology or were unable to recharge their devices with internet packs by consulting with specific departments who were thereby supported by taking classes over telephones.
2. Most of the students should be able to appear for University Examinations: To convey the students about the online mode of university examination the mentors not only communicated through phone or email/letters but to access the students who couldn't be contacted by any means few mentors went to their homes to convey the information in person. As a result most of our students were able to appear for all the university examinations and didn't miss an academic term. Along with this video sessions were organized to demonstrate how to give online exams.
3. The mentoring system has helped students on verge of dropping out with proper counseling for their career and has helped to significantly improve the percentage of student attendance in classes.
4. Addressing the financial Difficulties of majority of students: Based on the mentors reports regarding the financial difficulties of the students which is obstructing them from taking admissions, the college authority initiated the concession program to help the needy students and took the help of the mentors to identify those students who received almost 50% concession in admission fees and full concession was also given to special cases and to those students who have lost their parents to Covid 19.

## 6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

  
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The system often faces constraints in the form of

- Students frequently changing their phone numbers that renders unavailability and difficulty in contacting them.
- Many of our students don't have access to smartphones which is necessary to attend online classes. Hence the mentors are faced with the difficulty to address such a problem and they consulted with the departments to find a pausable solution.
- At times the guardians are less willing to let their wards talk to the mentors or showcase limited involvement with the mentors when they try to discuss about their ward's problems, social issues like marriages of girl students or continuation of studies after their marriage are often very sensitive to be discussed.
- Mentors are faced with the challenge of how to motivate the students and limit the drop out ratio in a situation where many of the students becoming disinterested in continuing studies and many were forced to take up employment to support the family in the lockdown ensued financial crunch
- Following the financial difficulty of most of our students they are often unable to recharge their phones to utilize the internet to continue the online teaching learning process.
- Due the skewed ratio of teacher student the mentors are at times overburdened which limits the efficiency of the whole system.

The diverse challenges that confronts out mentors at times cannot be solved by procuring tangible resources as many are socio- economic in nature. Being a small institution with limited financial means the institution despite understanding the problems of students without technological support couldn't provide them with such devices that would enable them to continue in the online mode but in its restricted capacity the institution offered concession in admission fees to many students and even waived the full fees in any case where the ward has lost their parents to Covid.

The institution requires more teaching faculty to increase the teacher student ratio which will enable the mentoring system to induce more personal level interaction and counseling at the mentor mentee level.

  
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## **BEST PRACTICES:**

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

As the effects of pandemic continued in full swing the state government decided to temporarily close educational institutions in an attempt to reduce the spread of Covid-19. At the same time, the government didn't want to compromise on the much desired academic progress of the students. In this situation the virtual world has come to the rescue. In this crisis, educational institutions had to undertake smart solution by adopting online mode of education and making their best by exploring new methods of teaching and assessment.. Online option became a necessity in this pandemic situation.

### **2. Objective:**

During this period, NetajiSatabarshikiMahavidyalaya had set out to achieve three major goals to provide uninterrupted educational service. They are as follows.

**Completion of Curriculum:** To engage students actively with online lectures, video lectures, study materials, project works, dissertation, tests, and assignments.

**Extra Support for Learning:** To encourage students to join online courses, remedial classes, online webinars, and seminars.

**Counseling:** To constantly communicate with the students to lessen their mental stress and to constantly motivate them to continue their academic pursuits.

### **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, NetajiSatabarshikiMahavidyalaya adapted to face the challenge and provide resilient academic environment. An Online Teaching and Learning Strategy framework were developed for providing an active and personalized 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 libraries, emails, multimedia, internet, 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 the goals set up, the Online Teaching and Learning Strategy framework was developed which involved:

#### **A)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.

  
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The Zoom platform is used for the optimum utilization of online teaching.

Program and course-wise WhatsApp groups created for doubt clearance session.

College LMS is used to share notes and study materials.

Audio lectures in mp3 files given out.

Slides are prepared based on the texts and lectures shared to facilitate critical explanations.

**B) *Engaging Students in Learning***

Providing access to course materials through the College App (NSM College) and college-based Learning Management System (LMS)

Use of real-time text-based communication spaces such as WhatsApp and Zoom app

**C) *Modes of Evaluation***

Internal evaluation conducted by the College

University examination conducted by the University

**D) *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.

**E) *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 assignments and sharing study materials. For the laboratory courses, students got to learn about some of the advanced instruments via computer simulations.

**5. 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 it 24/7 at their own pace and time. The students were given proper assistance to be accustomed with the online mode of learning and more number of students attended online classes this session with much ease. The general courses which have maximum students, departments had to divide them in to sections and provide separate links to accommodate the students. The online mode offered time for taking extra classes beyond the regular routine which helped the slow learners to clear their doubts and provided teachers with the scope to conduct tutorial or remedial classes.

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Online class sessions can be saved on the website for future reference e.g. class notes 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 be reviewed later this greatly helped students who couldn't attend the classes for health issues or other problems. Many students had to join part time jobs to support their families as lockdown enhanced financial woes to the already needy households, those students utilized the uploaded lectures and shared resources at their time to keep themselves updated with the curriculum

In order to attend online classes, access online resources and to appear for online examinations most of our students earned first hand technological knowhow of utilizing the virtual modes like zoom application, emailing, scanning and creating pdf and most importantly accessing e-libraries, e-resources, powerpoint presentations etc. which will definitely help them in the future.

The seamless online mode of teaching and learning at our institution helped in completion of the curriculum in time. We were able to conduct the internal mode of evaluations within the stipulated time period.

The diverse webinars and interactive sessions organized by the college helped the students to acquire knowledge to further their development into wholesome individuals.

**6. Problems encountered and resource required:** Not all students have the necessary knowledge, skills, and resources to keep them safe online. 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. It widens the gap between privileged and underprivileged learners.

NetajiSatabarshikiMahavidyalaya 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.

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