JANKI DEVI MEMORIAL COLLEGE

(University of Delhi)
Sir Ganga Ram Hospital Marg,
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Notes towards Minutes of the IQAC MEETING

A meeting of the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) was held on 6th March 2019 at 2.30 pm in the Committee Room, JDMC. The meeting was attended by the following members:

Dr Swati Pal -Chairperson

Prof. G.J.V. Prasad, Professor of English, JNU-External Member

Mr. Shakti Sinha, Director, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library-External Member

Prof. Brajesh Chaudhary, Chairman, JDMC Governing Body

Ms. Nirmala Muralidhar, Faculty member

Dr. Namita Sethi, Faculty member

Ms. Charu Kala, Faculty member

Ms. Nivedita Sharma, Librarian

Dr. Kaushal Kishore, A.O.

Ms. Poonam Abbott, S. O, Administration

Ms. Shubhangi Sethi, President, Student's Union

Ms. Muskan Sharma, Vice- President, Students' Union

Dr. Jitender Gill, IQAC Coordinator

Dr Rooplekha Khullar, Faculty member; Ms. Seema Bhagat, Alumni representative; Ms. Pushpa Rawat, S.O, Accounts had requested to be excused from the meeting.

The External members were welcomed and the all the members of IQAC introduced themselves. Prof. Chaudhry said that he had not read the minutes of the previous meeting as he had not been a member of the JDMC-IQAC at that time. Dr Gill apprised him of some of the important issues that were discussed and the action taken thereafter. She informed the committee that the Annual Quality Assurance Report (AQAR), which has to be submitted every year as a part of the NAAC review process that takes place after five years, was submitted by the college on 22nd December 2018.

She also mentioned that most of the suggestions made to the Committee in the previous meetings had been successfully implemented. They were related to the making of the mentoring list, Internal Audit of the administration which took place for the first time last year, the formation and activities of the IQAC Placement Cell and the setting up of *Pratibha* Centre for Competitive Exams. The members perused the minutes of the IQAC meetings (of

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Internal Members) held on 20.3.2018 and 24.10.2018 and unanimously passed the minutes of the IQAC meeting held on May 3rd 2018.

Dr Swati Pal gave further information and feedback about some of the initiatives which were mentioned by Dr Gill. She remarked that the recommendations of the committee members had been helpful in showing the strengths as well as the weaknesses of the system. She pointed out the need for an academic audit soon in keeping with NAAC requirements.

Dr Gill spoke about the successful functioning of the IQAC Placement Cell and *Pratibha*. The Library too was contributing to the success of *Pratibha* by procuring books for competitive exams.

Dr Gill and Dr Pal discussed waste management initiatives next and the installation of a Green Waste management unit. Training for segregation of waste that is important for waste management is being undertaken and the unit should become functional soon.

Dr Gill informed everyone about the workshops and seminars organized by JDMC IQAC to inform and educate different sections of the college community:

- Microsoft-AEP ATS Infotech Pvt. Ltd. Provided international certifications and training to students. The orientation on February 9th, 2018 was attended by 300 students. Free training was given from 26.5.2018 to 28.5.18 and from 29.5.18 to 31.5.18.to enrolled students for Microsoft certification exam by an ATS trainer. 53 students took the final certification exam on 26th and 27th July,2018.
- Workshop on 'Research Options for Faculty' was organized on 12 May 2018. The representatives were invited from ICSSR, IGNCA, ICHR and UGC to discuss relevant fields of research for faculty.
  Dr Gill thanked Dr Prasad for having suggested this workshop which proved very useful. The workshop attendance was 98.
- JDMC-IQAC collaborated with Director, Digital archives, IGNCA to conduct a workshop for the library staff of DU colleges on 15 June 2018 and a follow up hands on demonstration session on 22 June 2018, which was attended by the Library staff of 24 DU colleges.
- Two-day workshop on 'Introduction to Re-programming' conducted for the faculty by ICT Academy on August 6th and 7th 2018, under the aegis of JDMC-IQAC, in order to explain the basics of software used for research purposes.
- THE NSE team was invited to conduct a workshop on 'Financial Literacy' on 26 September 2018 to provide information to faculty about the significance of saving and investments and the investment options available in the market. It was an enlightening session for most staff members.
- Two sessions for students and faculty to inform them about higher education opportunities available in Universities abroad. The first was organized in collaboration with SICI (Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute) on 21 February 2018

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and the second by USIEF (United States Indian education Foundation) on 26 February 2019. Each session was attended by 135 and 140 students respectively apart from faculty members.

The positive feedback shared by students and faculty proved these workshops to be a resounding success.

Dr Pal added that these workshops, together with a host of National and International Seminars organized by various departments were all very successful.

The last item on the agenda was to discuss a series of topics about which suggestions were sought from the IQAC. These included:

- Feedback forms need revision. All members agreed that these forms needed greater participation overall on the part of students, parents, alumni and faculty. Prof. Prasad and Mr Sinha opined that the numbers may not be very high but that the participation in feedback was quite encouraging. Dr Pal countered that numbers were very important under NAAC criteria. She and Dr Gill also agreed that the faculty could do with more in-depth self- assessment. Prof. Chaudhary felt he could help in this process and said that faculty must report all intellectual activities that they participate in. Dr Gill suggested that assessment of tutorials was an important mode of evaluation and needs to be quantified. Dr Pal agreed and said that tutors should leave (detailed) comment on tutorials. The external members asked a few questions about the feedback forms: about their relevance and who could see these forms. Mr Sinha felt that these forms should be unthreatening but at the same time also reveal truths. Prof Chaudhary speculated that there is some resistance to any kind of appraisal by academics anywhere. Perhaps they feared that the forms could be used against them during promotion appraisals. He suggested that the solution might lie in collective appraisal and evaluation that should be used in a non-discriminatory and non-threatening manner; and certainly not for promotion considerations. Dr Pal said that good pedagogic processes require peer review and comment. Mr Sinha expressed satisfaction overall even if only a certain number filled the forms and completed them. The external members felt that these forms should be viewed as work in progress and improvement can be made one step at a time. Prof. Chaudhary said there should be no punitive measures for five years (for any reluctance in filling forms). Dr Pal remarked that it was ironic that the faculty were reluctant to complete the feedback forms considering they had a say in designing (framing) them in the first place. She felt that the faculty members' apprehensions were unfounded and wondered if Prof/ Chaudhary as the Chair of the Governing Body of the college could reassure them.
- Measures to increase accountability and decrease absenteeism among teachers were discussed next. Dr Pal said that sending memos with a set format and

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taking rounds of the college had helped in bringing down the number of missed classes on the part of faculty. The students added to the feedback stating that student- faculty meetings are making a huge difference, though there are still times when students feel apprehensive about giving critical feedback at these meetings. Prof. Chaudhry reminded the students to use the complaint box as the complaints there can be made anonymously. Dr Pal said that student complaints are taken seriously and that one ad-hoc teacher's services were terminated following a series of such complaints. The external members pondered on how to inspire a greater sense of dedication and accountability among teachers.

- Prof. Prasad suggested that all faculty members'CVs should be uploaded on the college website along with details of courses being taught in the current semester. This may inspire teachers to work harder on overall academic and professional development, contribute to corporate life and help keep a record of BA and MA teaching and tutoring, and PhD supervision record, where applicable. Dr Pal suggested that the information can be uploaded for the non-teaching faculty as well.

- The members expressed satisfaction at the digitization of the Library as well as in the realms of time table making, examination, attendance (software) and allocating SEC/GE courses. The Librarian was advised to consider upgrading the software to KOHA instead of the existing LIBSYS.

- The members enquired about attendance requirements and holding back students with low attendance. They were informed that the attendance cut off is 66.6%, whereas the University seeks to take punitive measures only against students with less than 40% attendance. Dr Pal said that at JDMC, the attendance committee usually follows the practice of disallowing students from taking exams for two papers, which can then be taken by students next year. It was concluded that the practice can be continued.

- Dr Pal revealed that the college had been inspected for undergraduate courses in Computer Science, Statistics and Operational Research, which may be introduced soon. But the UGC is neither granting funds for new courses nor funding the recruitment of new teachers.

- Then the possible ways of conducting Academic audit were discussed. Mr Sinha cited the examples of IP University, which uses quantitative models rather than assessing quality. Prof. Prasad mentioned IIT as an example. He also warned about the potential for abuse of academic audit in the wrong hands. Dr Gill said that a proposal must be developed because NAAC includes academic audit as a requirement. Some suggestions made by Prof Prasad were to reassure faculty, especially the ad-hoc members the academic audit; make faculty fill forms on an annual basis; uploading CVs on the college website and to develop a template that includes a column on lectures delivered in the previous 5 years. Personal details need not be included in this CV. The focus should be on educational

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qualifications, contribution to corporate life, innovative practices in the classroom, newspaper articles written and published and any other relevant details of professional development can be mentioned. Even the members of the IQAC committee should share their details.

- Research projects were discussed next.Dr Pal informed the committee that the lacuna of research projects has now been filled and grants have been received from various sources like the college Trust and retired faculty members. Dr. Pal also said that an increase in admission fee incorporated a sum dedicated to research that will enable students to participate in projects.
- Hostel is running smoothly.
- A Crèche for the children of employees may come up soon.
- The external members were asked to book August 1st 2019 for the special occasion of the 60th anniversary of the College, for which the President of India has been sent an invitation. Some of the plans for the diamond jubilee year long celebrations were mentioned by the Principal: for example, the Online Journal (60 articles), a coffee table book, and the distinguished speakers lecture series with 60 lectures; along with a host of special events in store.
  International and national conferences held through the year were also discussed to give an idea of the wide spectrum of academic activities organized in the college.
- Criterion VI of NAAC was discussed next to assess how the IQAC could evaluate teaching. Prof. Prasad suggested a half-yearly assessment of students' performance and student feedback about classes and tutorials. This could be classed as a part of the proposed academic audit. On the one hand, student feedback should be taken extremely seriously. On the other hand, contrary evidence must be considered equally carefully, i.e. students' regularity in college must be considered before granting credibility to any dissatisfaction on their part.

The members also debated as to who should conduct the academic audit. The Governing Body should not be directly involved because that could be construed as a surveillance. It was suggested that the audit is best done by external individuals who have an experience of the system. The format could be of an informal chat. Dr Pal suggested that departments could make PPTs to showcase their achievements, teaching techniques and take stock of best practices. Result analysis and a listing of foreign admissions (of students after graduation) and placements could form part of such information sharing. Prof. Prasad said that audit should aim to calibrate strengths and should be a confidence building exercise that enables choosing best practices, rather than an exercise in nit-picking. Ms Charu Kala cited the example of Sri Venkateswara college audit as a possible precedent where departments audited each other. This college plans to invite an audit by external sources in the next year.

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Prof. Chaudhary advised JDM to seek the advice of Dr. Hema Reddy, Principal, Sri Venkateswara College.

- How to enhance the Alumni engagement with and contribution to the college was the next topic. The alumni have sponsored Braille signage in the college. Prof. Prasad suggested that the alumni could be involved more actively in the 60th Anniversary celebrations. Dr Gill suggested that they can be offered an opportunity to offer financial assistance to needy students. Prof. Chaudhary suggested that such a fund needs a more formalized structure with contribution from the Governing Body. Apart from contributions solicited from the Alumni, the Governing Body could set aside Rs. 60,000 especially for students who need financial assistance. Dr Gill said that such an arrangement must take into account issues like online fee submission. The regularity of the student could be set as a pre-requisite criterion for an application for assistance. In case of extenuating circumstances where the student is too busty taking care of family exigencies, the discretion of a constituted committee would help devise a mechanism of selection. Some money could also be taken from the welfare fund to contribute to student assistance.
- Dr. Pal disclosed that the proposed STP had hit a dead end due to the exorbitant cost of Rs 60 Lakhs. Prof Chaudhary suggested writing to the Environment Ministry. Ait was proposed that an air quality monitoring system could also be installed near the hostel.
- Re-Construction of the road near the staff quarters was brought up. Dr Pal said it was difficult to get permission for that. Prof. Chaudhary gave the go-ahead for this.
- All other projects are already underway such as the automation of the Library. The Computer Lab in the Library block will be converted to an e-resource centre. The laptops are being up-graded. The Librarian, Ms. Nivedita Sharma, drew attention to the enabling services for the visually impaired that is being provided with the help of *Saksham*. Dr Gill felt that this project falls under the ambit of IQAC.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- Dr. Gill asked the external members for suggestions for the next set of IQAC workshops and conferences. She added that the next workshop could be on Service Rules for Faculty.
- Prof. Chaudhry congratulated the college for providing an enabling space for women students negotiating patriarchal set-ups.
  Dr Pal asked the members about good practices of other colleges that can be emulated. Prof. Chaudhry recommended that grievances and their redressal

mechanism need to be de-centralized, especially for young faculty. In this regard, he proposed that a Vice-Principal be appointed to de-centralize things. This would be distinct from a formal grievance redressal committee, which usually deals with serious issues. A Vice-Principal, on the other hand, could provide an informal option for counselling and listening to students and younger faculty members.

- **Mentor-mentee** would play an important role in providing further opportunities for communication. The mentors in turn should be supervised by a committee of senior teachers who could request teachers/mentors to take these matters seriously.
- The same suggestions can be extended to non-teaching staff, who can approach either the AO or the Vice-Principal to discuss any situations they may be facing.
- The minimum term proposed for the Vice -Principal should be 2 years with up-to one-year extension.
- Prof Chaudhary recommended that to improve our NAAC score, the library should improve further.
- To take the stake holders' view into account vis-a-vis NAAC and college improvement, the student feedback can be invited by Prof Chaudhary on March 28th 2019, when Prof Chaudhary will be in college for the Annual Day and will invite suggestions from students.
- JDMC can emulate ICT Labs at Sri Venkateswara College and the crèche at DDU. He recommended a visit to these colleges (by the administration) and suggested that the team speak to Ms. Rajkumari at DDU for pointers.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by the IQAC coordinator for a very productive session.

Jitender Gill

Coordinator, JDMC-IQAC