

BEST PRACTICES 2016-21

BEST PRACTICE 1

1. Title of the Practice

Harnessing Professional Resources of Alumni in Public Life for Add-On Courses

2. Objectives of the Practice

The objective of the practice is to harness the professional expertise of alumni in public life as resources for add-on, professional programmes for students and public in general in public policy, governance and related areas. The College seeks to use this special expertise, in whose creation it has participated, to enrich the institution and society by making teaching-learning more effective for real situations in a variety of fields in public life, especially policy making and governance.

3. The Context

St Stephen's College is over 140 years old and over time a large number of its alumni have gone on to achieve success in many walks of life, especially in governance and public policy as Members of Parliament, Secretaries to the Government of India, Chief Secretaries to State Governments, Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, Chief Information Commissioner, CEO and Deputy CEO of NITI AYOOG, Ambassadors of India to many countries, Foreign Secretaries and Ministers at national and state levels, Academics and Corporate leaders, Media leaders, etc.

Further, one of the problems facing higher education is the huge gap between theory and practice, where what is taught is not easily applied to real life situations.

To bridge this gap, and to optimize the captive resources of its distinguished alumni in this regard, the College has ventured into this high-resolution, seamless flow between theory and practice where policies are studied on the basis of actual problems encountered during or after their implementation in public/professional.

4. The Practice

The St Stephen's Centre for Advanced Learning (SCAL) was established in January 2020 with the clear and definite purpose of making use of the professional capital in public life through its alumni by harnessing it into a slew of short-term Certificate, Diploma and Advanced Diploma level programmes dealing with Public Policy, Administration, Finance, Diplomacy and Governance. Courses on offer from SCAL are taught by the crème de la crème in various fields, be it Public Policy, Administration, Finance or Diplomacy. A large majority of these experts are alumni of St. Stephen's College. The participants in these programmes learn and gain from the distilled knowledge, experience and wisdom of those who have experience it all first-hand. Details of how policies are conceived, implemented and the difficulties encountered in the process are staple topics of discussion.

Almost all courses offered by SCAL follow a standard procedure. There is an open invitation offering the course and those interested are encouraged to apply. There is no age-related restriction but applicants are expected to be graduates with some, even if limited, work

experience. After a scrutiny of the applications and an interview to assess the enthusiasm and capabilities of the applicants for the course of study, students are selected. In order to enable the resource person to apportion sufficient time to each of the participants on the course, the average strength of each class is not more than 27. Through a series of lectures and subsequent interactions, students are encouraged to actively listen and participate in these programmes. There is a moderator for every lecture to enable wider participation. The students are also required to write research papers, assignments or give written examinations as part of the assessment.

The structure of the courses offered by SCAL do not follow a linear path. The experts are given the freedom to structure their lectures in a manner that they deem best fit. The students are then encouraged to structure the diverse ideas that they have gained from the spectrum of experts and share their interpretations with the group. This has multiple benefits. Each student brings to bear a unique structuring of the whole course and this opens up a myriad number of experiences and possibilities for the participants. Such a range of possibilities empowers the learner to interpret and make meaning for herself/himself within his/her particular situation while building on an understanding of the basic, foundational concepts and overall structure of the policy itself.

5. Evidence of Success

Since its establishment, SCAL has grown exponentially despite the hurdles because of the pandemic. For instance, in the Academic Year 2020-21, SCAL ran 5 programmes on International Relations, Public Policy, Civil Services and Entrepreneurship, benefitting 139 participants. A Chair in Public Policy was instituted in 2020 and it may be worthwhile to note that St Stephen's College is perhaps the first affiliated college in India to have a Chair in any discipline.

The success of SCAL is also demonstrated by the interest shown by applicants from across the country for the courses that are offered by Centre. For instance, for the 6 week long Executive Programme on Public Policy and International Relations offered between 11 January 2022 and 23 February 2020, SCAL received over 400 applications, of which 35 candidates were finally selected after shortlisting and interviews. The reputation of excellence and service that SCAL has created in a very short span has also helped to attract and generate interest among industry leaders and pioneers in every field to associate and collaborate with Centre for its various programmes.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

There are several problems the College encountered in offering such a set of programmes and can do much better with a few more important resources: infrastructure, funding, and recognition by the UGC and relevant Ministries. These resources will help to scale up the operations of the Centre both in terms of programmes and number of seats on offer.

As far as **Infrastructure** is concerned, more rooms for academic sessions, more facilities for providing accommodation to the young scholars (as this will help those from outside of Delhi to also come and learn) and some more investment in technology will go a long way in offering such programmes to a wider set of learners both nationally and globally.

Financial support from the government will help in providing the necessary impetus for such programmes. Not only will we be able to support resource persons who may not all be at Delhi

with travel assistance, but through a scheme of subsidies, also scholars and students who are needy but keen to do and have an aptitude for the programme.

7. Notes:

In March 2022, SCAL launched a three-month long Fellowship programme for young professionals from neighbouring countries with the support of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, and became the only college to offer an international fellowship programme. Through SCAL, the College is also keen on setting up an incubation centre for the replication of similar such centres across India with the necessary permissions and support of the UGC and related Ministries.

BEST PRACTICE 2

1. Title of the Practice:

Provision of Seats in Admission to Children of Martyrs

2. Objectives of the Practice:

The objective of the practice is to support the children of our martyrs in gaining the best kind of undergraduate education available in the country and to both fulfil our duty towards country and society and to benefit the children of martyrs.

3. The Context:

While on the one hand the families and children of martyrs need help and support, on the other, St Stephen's College has over its 140 years become a much sought-after institution of higher education which provides opportunities to its students to successfully shape themselves academically and otherwise to measure up to the challenges of career building.

4. The Practice:

In 2017, the College decided to provide three seats every year to the children of martyrs for study.

The description of the same policy, as stated in our Prospectus under Undergraduate Admission is as follows:

Children of Martyrs: Three Candidates who are children of defence personnel who have lost their lives in the line of duty will be allotted seats across all disciplines. Inter se merit will be determined as in General Category.

5. Evidence of Success

Over the years, the following students have been admitted:

Year	Name of the Student	Course
2017	Simran Singh	B. A. (Honours) Economics
2018	Srishti Vaideeswaran	B. A. (Honours) English
2018	Kunwar Sher Singh	B. A. Programme

2019	Prakash Chand Joshi	B. Sc. (Honours) Mathematics
2020	Amy Alexander	B. A. (Honours) Economics
2020	Ishfaq Hussain	B. A. Programme)
2021	Rishabraj Maiti	B. A. (Honours) Economics
2021	Ankita	B. A. (Honours) History
2021	N. Angel Mate	B. A. (Honours) Philosophy

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

Merely providing admission to these children is not sufficient, it is important to ensure that they get sufficient financial and other help to complete their studies and move further securely. The College is in the process of setting up such supports.

BEST PRACTICE 3

1. Title of the Practice

Equality of Service Benefits to Regularised Non-Teaching Non-UGC Employees

2. Objectives of the Practice

The objective of the practice is to offer benefits on par to all regular non-teaching employees of the College. This means that regularized non-UGC employees who are funded by the College enjoy the same benefits as regularized UGC funded employees.

3. The Context

Usually, as is general practice everywhere, while those employees who are funded from the UGC grant are entitled to various benefits that come with the terms of their employment, others who are regular but not in that category, do not get this benefit. St. Stephen's College was founded on the principles of equity and justice to provide education for the needy. Drawing from this philosophy, and despite the substantial financial burden that this practice entails, the College considers it as its duty to ensure equality of service conditions to all its regular employees, UGC-funded or otherwise. This decision was taken as College strongly believes that as an institution that holds excellence and service as sacred, it is important to treat all employees in an equitable manner. The values of social justice and service that inspired the founders of the College still guide the manner in which the College treats its employees.

St. Stephen's College has one of the largest campuses within the University of Delhi with sprawling heritage buildings set between beautifully manicured lawns, hedges, trees and flowers. The College currently has over one thousand three hundred students and close to ninety teaching staff. Attending to the needs of all the students, teachers and maintaining such a vast campus requires not just a large number of staff on payroll, but also one that feels that its dignity is respected and thus one that is loyal and committed to the tasks at hand. Approximately 20 percent of the regularized non-teaching staff employed by the College, whose salaries and benefits are paid for by the College, needed to be given equal benefits to make them feel fully a part of the College and to make them dedicated contributors to its growth. The College strongly believes that financial security, and equality and dignity in the workplace, are important factors to ensure a motivated and inspired workforce. Modern

management strategies encourage worker satisfaction as a key element for overall success. Way before these management techniques became popular, the College, in the interest of social justice, has been providing fair and equal benefits for all employees.

4. The Practice

The College allocates a large proportion of its resources to ensure that all its regular employees draw the same benefits.

Most of Non-UGC regular employees of the College are now benefitting from LTC, Health support, educational support and housing facilities. The details of the some of the benefits provided to them are as follows:

1. Same LTC Benefits
2. Leave Encashment Benefits
3. Medical Expenses
4. HRA
5. Children Education Allowance
6. DA and other allowance as per prevailing rates.
7. Leaves
8. PF
9. Pensionary benefits on retirement

Funding for this practice continues to be a problem but the College is working to obtain funds and benefits in relation to this from many sources, including from the alumni.

5. Evidence of Success

Such practices have helped to bridge the social equality gap among employees in College. Most importantly, this practice has led to better employee satisfaction and retention of skilled employees. As a result, the College has a team of highly motivated employees whose primary interest is to aid the College in its pursuit of excellence. The practice has also resulted in the employees being able to provide better health and educational opportunities for their family members.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

Providing benefits on par with those offered to UGC-regular employees places a huge financial burden on the College. The institution has very judiciously deployed a variety of income resources for this purpose – charges from residence facility for students, extra and special courses and special funds created for the non-teaching staff through donations and contributions by the alumni and others. The College is constantly exploring avenues for a steady inflow so that along with its other commitments, it can also continue to support its staff in an equitable and adequate manner. It will help if the UGC revises the salary and maintenance grants, and till that time, the College will continue to strive to make the College work environment a fit and just place for all its employees.

7. Notes:

The College hopes to cover all its employees, which non-regular or contract employees, in this category soon.