

IQAC Minutes, Meeting held on 10th December 2020, 4 pm, Google Meet

Members present: Prof. John Varghese (Chair), Dr. Karen Gabriel, Dr. A. D. Mathur, Dr. Pankaj K. Mishra, Mr. Deepak Mukarji, Ms. Sarah Iqbal, Ms. Simmi Puri, Dr. A. P. Deo (Co-ordinator)

Proceedings:

1. The Chair, Prof. Varghese, welcomed all the members, especially the new Coordinator Dr. Deo; and **thanked the previous Coordinator, Dr. Ekta Kundra, and Ms. Felicita Lawrence, Research and Data Analyst, IQAC, for their work** for the IQAC in the AY 2019-20.
2. The **confirmation of the minutes of the last meeting** of the IQAC, held on 9th December 2019, was proposed and seconded by Dr. Pankaj K. Mishra and Mr. Deepak Mukarji respectively, and passed unanimously by the house.
3. Members expressed concern over the way in which the **pandemic had derailed normal work** in college, hence also the IQAC's agenda from previous meetings, and felt that one should look ahead and try to do whatever was possible now onward.
4. There was a discussion on the ways in which the **functioning of the Campus Placement Cell (CPC) could be improved to better serve the purposes of college**, especially in relation to the requirements of NAAC. The issues centered around the routing of internship matters dealt with by CPC through the college administration, further institutionalization of CPC within college administrative structures beyond a society, the need to retain student participation in it, the need to have greater faculty participation and perhaps two advisers, the role of the Alumni Cell, the digitization of alumni and student interaction on internship, the need to bring independent student internship situations within the ambit of CPC, recording and documentation of activities and information, etc.
5. The discussion widened to include **student society and extension activities**. In relation to the CPC, and more generally for the functioning of societies, several suggestions were made. Among the suggestions made, the Chair offered to provide a space and some office help to the CPC, Dr. Deo suggested having the CPC adviser and Alumni Cell work out the modality of their collaboration, Dr. Mathur emphasized the need to have a template for recording and documentation ready, Dr. Mishra stressed the need for societies to maintain a log of activities, Mr. Mukarji suggested vetting of any filing software we may purchase, Ms. Puri suggested that Google Sheets could be used straightaway and then the information migrated once a fuller system was put in place, and Dr. Gabriel asked for the duration of society activities recognized by the NAAC to be kept in mind.
6. This was followed by a discussion, initiated by Dr. Mishra, on **Mentorship Program**. Whereas Dr. Mathur pointed out the need to think through mentorship and other issues, where there was an emphasis in the NAAC process on formalization and institutionalization, very carefully, the Chair brought attention to the fact that a lot of informal mentoring was already going on. Ms. Iqbal suggested that a template be circulated and discussed. Dr. Gabriel pointed out the need to keep in mind individual mentoring styles. Mr. Mukarji spoke about the long-standing and successful mentoring system in place at St Stephen's and wondered how one might join the NAAC requirements to the same to at once benefit from our experience but also take the formal requirements on board.
7. Ms. Puri offered to help with the **Women's Innovation Center** on which matter, despite an earlier attempt, things had not moved further. She mentioned her work in this area and generously reiterated her offer of helping college with the same.

8. Dr. Gabriel then raised the issue of **mental health**. She felt that the circumstances of the pandemic and the online mode had created new problems and though teachers were dealing with these, there was need to attend to it properly. Dr. Mathur felt that a committee should go into the matter in depth. Mr. Mukarji asked if we were providing online counseling to which the Chair replied by pointing out that since the students were at home and the household setting had a different dynamic altogether, we need to move cautiously on this. Mr. Mukarji felt that in any case we should consider offering help those students who might need counseling. There was then a short discussion on questions of confidentiality, role of family, teachers and alumni, etc. Ms. Iqbal suggested that we could consult an expert to think of how to do this and offered to connect us to one.
9. Dr. Mukarji pointed to the need to help our students with **soft-skills** to equip them to face the challenges of a very competitive world and offered to help with conceptualizing a program for the same.
10. This directed attention towards the need, as encouraged by NAAC, to offer **value-added courses**. It was pointed out that though this should be done, the question eventually will be one of fitting it into the existing workload. A few members wondered if the alumni could help with this.
11. The Coordinator then apprised the Committee of the **preparation for and developments in the NAAC process**. A two day workshop on preparations for NAAC was conducted by the Xavier Board of Higher Education in India a week before. The process of constituting criteria sub-committees and getting them to prepare brief for what needs to be done for their criterion was ongoing. The Committee gave its consent for the same and requested the Chair and Coordinator to work it out.
12. Under any other matter, Dr. Mishra drew attention to the need to formalize a **Code of Ethics** as required by NAAC and to have **financial assistance for research to faculty**. The Chair agreed that a formal Code of Ethics needed to be prepared, and informed that some support to faculty for research was already available and more could be done along the same lines. On how IQAC could help support research, the Chair suggested that IQAC could make available platforms for discussion of faculty research as also help find publishers. Mr. Mukarji suggested that the alumni could be approached to raise a corpus to help faculty research through grants for travel for fieldwork, conferences, etc.

Dr. Aditya Pratap Deo
Coordinator, IQAC
July 22, 2021