

S.P. Mandali's

R.A.Podar College of Commerce & Economics

Best Practice

1. Name of the Practice

Capacity building of students for nurturing all-round growth through college forums.

2. Goal

In accordance with Podar's vision for creating all-round personalities allowing the students to explore their own potential to the best extent possible, the college has always supported and encouraged student activities aimed at providing the same. It is also however noted that rather than placing everything for the students to consume directly, it is better to allow them the freedom to build for them a structure that improves and enhances the personalities of the students present and future.

3. The Context

In today's world where a good academic education has become increasingly crucial and almost impossible to survive without, there has been a constant negligence of other activities cultural and of other kinds that are essential to create a society of individuals of different kinds and giving it the variety that makes it rich and its culture intense.

However, while nourishing such talent it should be understood that a spoon-feeding mechanism cannot work. It would only stifle creativity and end up being self-defeating. To inculcate all-round growth it is also seem important that the students learn to manage, organize and execute such activities that they also gain a lesson in team-work and management skills. Accordingly the practice has been designed.

4. The Practice

The college has a huge number of forums that allow students to undertake whatever means of self-expression they find best suited to themselves. There is the Artists' Guild for enhancement and improvement of drama, dance and music amongst the students. It also on various occasions hosts various guests from the world of the fine arts. The college hosts intercollegiate festivals like Engima, Moneta, Rostrum spectrum, Hunar, Hryturang and Mock U.N model competitions, all conceived, organized and implemented by students. The faculty are just facilitators for the students.

Besides, there are forums with a more academic bent such as the various literary forums, the Speakers' Academy and the Group Discussion Cell. Literary Circles and their events catering to the practice and propagation of languages like English, Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati and Tamil are very popular. The Speakers' Academy and The Group Discussion Cell prepare students for public speaking and hone their debating-skills. Students from Podar have won the prestigious A. D. Shroff Memorial elocution conducted by the Forum of Free Enterprise a number of times. Besides there a number of intra-collegiate events which train students in voicing their opinions and are extremely beneficial to them when they appear for interviews for placements. Rostrum Spectrum is a literary festival which takes this fervor to the inter-college level.

The various forums are funded by the college and hence have to budget their activities through the year. While this is good training for the committee members, it also places certain constraints on the size of activities or events conducted.

This practice is purely extra-curricular and outside the classroom. It aims not at creating rankers but at creating personalities that shine outside their report cards. Sometimes it is not possible to put the improvements on paper but the aim of Podar has never been to improve its statistics. It has always been all-round growth amongst its students and rich academic and cultural environment.

5. Evidence of Success

The success of the practice can be gauged by the various achievers Podar has created. It is also seen in the diversity in the student force and their involvement in activities beyond books and examinations for reasons other than results. It is also believed that a healthy exposure to culture and sports broadens the mind and improves one academically. That Podar has performed well in academics as well as in other sphere of the society can be attributed to this commitment of the college to foster all-round growth. Various students from Podar have represented the state or the nation or attended international schools and institutions and are a matter of pride for the college and the society.

To cite few examples . Priyal Keni , a National level rifle shooter is pursuing her professional course successfully while competing with her rifle shooting tournaments. Vaishnavi Pathak is pursuing her post graduate studies along with her acting pursuits in Marathi plays on theatre, Television and movies.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

As all forums are financed by the college it has occasionally been a bit difficult to extend activities beyond the college and foster a more competitive environment by involving other colleges. However time and again at such occasion's sponsorship from various means and sources has saved the day. The only true problem encountered in an activity of such kind is a lack of spirit or passion amongst the students or the college authorities. The college is proud to say that it has never been wanting in the former and never shall be in the latter.

7. Notes

The one thing that is paramount in an activity of this kind is freedom. Interference only defeats the objective. If all-round growth is to be achieved then it must also range the matter of organizing and executing. Besides, students connect and work with each other much better than they would do with others. This must always be kept in mind while conducting a practice of this kind. Also, the scope should be as broad as possible, encompassing any and every sphere of learning and expression that any and every student has an interest in.