

## **I. Mentor – Mentee programme**

**Objectives of the Practice:** The Mentor – Mentee programme aims to foster interactions between students and teachers where the respective teacher (mentor) supports, provides guidance and wisdom to their mentees so that they are ready to overcome challenges in their lives. Through this programme, a bond is developed; a friendly dialogue is established between the teacher and the student by which the student can tackle the approaching storms in their lives through the various attributes nurtured in them.

**The Context:** For students to perform well in academics and in life, it is very necessary for them to set their goals and work in the direction of achieving their goals. This however is only possible if they have a healthy body and mind, and more importantly a healthy supporting environment which in turn takes them altogether to a new level where they are more focused, more confident, and more efficient in what they do. This process however is not easy as students in their journey encounter several problems which either slow them down or ultimately take them to an alternate path which most of the times is not fruitful. This is often the result of students not realizing (on their own) where they need to channelise their energies into, and/or perhaps they have several misconceptions of the outcomes of their actions, or perhaps they do not feel secure in sharing their problems. Such type of confusions, doubts, frustrations, negativity can be remedied by the Mentor – Mentee programme where the students are provided with academic and emotional support. As friendship and trust starts to build between the Mentor and Mentee, the mentee is able to share the mental burdens which they carry on their own. With dialogue, various possible solutions can be made available to the mentees from vast richness of experiences from their respective mentors.

**The Practice:** ‘Formation for Transformation’ is the vision of St. Xavier’s College, Mapusa – Goa. The Mentor – Mentee programme caters to the vision of the institution in the following way (brief description hereafter). In the traditional way, faculty members are assigned with the task of mentoring certain number of students during special timeslots in respective designated classroom. Such formal meetings generally take place once a month. The mentors have with them the personal profile of their mentees which contain basic information as their personal data, contact numbers, home addresses, details about their likings/ interests/ future plans, etc. Most importantly the mentees are reminded about their code of conduct on the campus viz. dress code, behaviour, punctuality, attendance, examination preparation and importance of hard work in examinations (not to adopt unfair means during examinations), non-tolerance of ragging, informing them about availability of counsellors on college campus, cyber – crime, how to build their confidence, sexual harassment at work place, various career options and guidance on the same, suicidal tendencies, etc. Students are also counselled about healthy lifestyle, cleanliness, road safety, Swacch Bharat campaign, conservation of water and energy. Students are also informed about various facilities and scholarships available. Mentees are always encouraged to come and interact with mentors not only during the scheduled time but at anytime on the campus depending upon the availability of both. In addition to guiding students, mentors monitor the academic progress of their mentees and provide necessary assistance and guidance in that matter: encouragement to improve upon poor grades, acknowledging/praising for their achievements and making them give their best performance in any rewarding/self-beneficial task they wish to accomplish. Mentors maintain a confidential data sheet about their mentees which details the

mentoring activities rendered. Given the Covid – 19 pandemic situation in the state, the mentor – mentee programme was done via. online mode. The overall programme is monitored by a committee comprising one coordinator and two faculty members from each stream. This committee assigns the mentees to each mentor and, also, prepares/suggests inputs for each formal session keeping in mind students’ needs and relevant current issues. At the end of each academic year, mentees are required to provide their feedback on the various topics discussed during the formal interactions. Their suggestions are used, wherever possible, to improve the programme.

**Evidence of Success:** Success of this programme is summarized briefly hereafter. As one comes on the college campus, it is easy to get the message that the campus is litter free. One can also see garbage bins placed at various locations which are used by the students thereby contributing to the cleanliness of the campus. Because of constant reminders about do’s and don’ts, the discipline on the campus has improved. Students also show a sense of responsibility to turn/switch off taps, lights and fans when not in use. An improvement in academic performance is also observed. Students are aware of the various opportunities available after completing graduation and more number of students pursue higher education. The mental health of students is well maintained as they have counsellors who cater their needs.

**Problems Encountered and Resources Required:** Given the pandemic situation, it was not possible to have students on campus and have a physical interaction with students. Nevertheless the mentor – mentee program was taken up via online mode. It was however not possible to have periodic sessions as the mentors themselves had to undergo a transformation to teach the students via. online platform. Such a change in the teaching routine made the teaching situation quite challenging especially with respect to network issues and ensuring whether students were able to follow and understand the contents of the lectures. Such a shift from the regular offline to online teaching gave rise to busy schedules as teachers had to prepare their lecture content for online mode of teaching thereby making it difficult to devote adequate additional time to the mentees.

## **II. COVID awareness initiatives**

**Objectives of the Practice:** COVID-19 has become a global pandemic by infecting people of almost all over the world. Human civilizations are facing threat for their survival and livelihood. No country is getting any substantial relief and solution from this pandemic and are facing challenges to convince citizens to take precautions in preventing the spread of COVID-19. In view of this, various departments and cells of St. Xavier’s College, Mapusa – Goa started awareness programmes on COVID-19 for its students through online platforms.

**The Context:** COVID-19 started from one city of China in December 2019, but in a short span of time, it covered almost all over the world. Nearly 216 countries of the whole world are struggling for their civilization and livelihood against the coronavirus pandemic. On January 11, 2020, China declared first death of their 61 years old citizen due to COVID-19, who was exposed to the seafood market, but then the death reached exponentially to 357,736 on 29th May 2020. On February 11, 2020, WHO announced this coronavirus disease as COVID-19 and pandemic on March 11, 2020, after reaching the virus infection to 114 countries across the world. The situation was found to worsen especially with the arrival of the second wave as the academic

year 2020 – 2021 was approaching its end. As all had seen the effects of COVID-19 in Italy, it was time to create general awareness among the students on what precautions one needs to take into account in the times to come. Such initiatives were taken by various departments of the college. The institute also joined hands with Government bodies to spread COVID awareness.

**The Practice:** One of the ways initiated to spread the awareness of the ongoing pandemic was through e-poster competition (bearing the theme: “Help Stop the Spread of Coronavirus”) organized by the Department of Microbiology. The whole focus of this activity was to flatten the COVID curve by taking necessary actions in the form of SOP’s laid down by government and health agencies. Such vital information was circulated to the student community.

The NCC – boys unit also contributed in their own way towards COVID-19 management by taken the IGOT training modules, downloading the AROGYA SETU app and installing on their mobiles so as to be alert of any infected individual in their proximity. There were cadets who attended training programme for the vaccination drive for frontline workers, took part in the same and helped in Implementing/monitoring of COVID-19 vaccination at local places.

The NCC – girls unit also took certain steps to reach out to the society in various ways by making/distributing masks in the neighbourhood of the institution, circulating posters/ e-posters on social media, bringing out posters/videos on the advantages of vaccination, by creating ‘insta handles’ in order to spread awareness in the form of post, stories, etc.

The NSS unit organised various activities as part of Public Health response to Covid-19. Under this campaign, various messages on Covid-19 awareness was flashed before the commencement of online classes. These include wearing a mask, social distancing, regular washing of hands etc. Also instructions on how to take care of family members who are suspected or confirmed with Covid-19 in our homes, was discussed during these sessions. A total of 287 students were part of this campaign, which includes 125 males and 162 females. Students also prepared a video on Covid-19 awareness and our responsibility as citizens of the country during the pandemic. The video highlighted the behaviour of members of the public and how we need to rectify the same, to help and control the spread of the virus to our surroundings and near ones.

A Poster competition was organised by the NSS unit, in collaboration with the office of Dy Collector, Mapusa. Students were asked to prepare posters to create awareness on Covid-19 vaccination which would be used by the government officials in the awareness campaigns that were to be held across the state. A total of 6 posters were prepared and handed over to the Dy Collector office in Mapusa Goa. NSS volunteers participated in Tikakaran Utsav: Vaccination Awareness programme from 11th to 14th April, 2021. The NSS unit designed an e-poster for dissemination of information on Covid-19 vaccination and shared the same with the students. On this occasion, students shared the e-poster on various digital platforms to create awareness about the vaccination during the Tikakaran Utsav.

Several members of the teaching and non-teaching staff of the institution were also actively involved in COVID management duties in various organizations in the state as well.

**Evidence of Success:** The training received in COVID management by the NCC boys units was of great use during the vaccination drive of frontline workers. The posters, e-posters, videos created on various platforms helped to spread awareness on the various protocols one has to follow during the pandemic time. Overall the activities conducted were for the welfare of the society and the messages conveyed reached out to the people.

**Problems Encountered and Resources Required:** Given the situation in the State, the institution did its best to spread the awareness of the COVID-19 pandemic for the welfare of general public. The number of activities could have been increased however given the switch from offline to online teaching this academic year, many faculty members had to prepare themselves for online lectures. The work load for faculty members thereby increased as teaching online is totally different from offline and this was the first time such a situation was encountered. The full participation of faculty members in all activities was therefore not possible. Also given the restrictions imposed by the Government prevented students from being on campus. This also had its toll on the number of activities conducted.