

BEST PRACTICE # 1

Title of the Practice

Imparting Traditional Knowledge through a unique blend of Gurukula, Bridgecourse and ICT methods.

Objectives of the Practice

To provide Sastric knowledge to the students in the traditional Guru-Shishya method which has been in vogue for centuries altogether

To acclimatize the students of UG and PG in various other disciplines of Sastras using the BRIDGECOURSE program, thereby instilling a seed to pursue inter-disciplinary research at later stages.

To render knowledge to students in the areas of Computer Science and Applications so that they do not lag behind in the current technology-driven society.

To bring out the profoundness of the rational approach and scientific temper, presented in the ancient Indian Knowledge in the context of pursuit of knowledge and realization of higher levels of consciousness.

to foresee the overall development of the students by making them adept not only in the traditional sastras, but also in modern contemporary subjects, thus helping them to become good teachers so that they can contribute to development of the nation by propagating and continuing the rich traditions and cultural heritage of our country.

The Context

Ever since its establishment, The Vidyapeetha had always been a fore runner in the Sanskrit scenario and had always strived, not just to save the rapidly diminishing Sastric knowledge systems, but to proliferate them in the present society. The traditional lecture method was used to teach the ancient Sastric texts initially. However, the authorities quickly realized the need to use modern teaching techniques to help students stay abreast of the rapidly changing academic scenario. Hence, a plan was devised to incorporate modern teaching methods like ICT for teaching the Sastric texts whilst using the traditional Gurukula method. Furthermore, the need to orient students in other disciplines of Sastras was also found important and accordingly, the BRIDGECOURSE program came into effect. Students who had only knowledge pertaining to their particular sastra are provided with the basic tenets of many other sastras in this program, thus enriching their knowledge which provides the necessary clarity in their main Sastras too.

The Practice

The Vidyapeetha always aims at promoting and propagating the ancient Sanskrit knowledge systems and has been doing so, for the past five decades. The traditional Gurukula System wherein the Guru teaches the Shishya the aphorisms and the Sastric elements, cements the bond of the Guru-Shishya relationship, thus inculcating a sense of utmost respect and devotion towards the teachers, thereby resonating the essence of the Shloka **GURU BRAHMA GURU VISHNU**... The fact that the Vidyapeetha is one of the best centres for higher education in the country has been established with the grant of

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR TRADITIONAL SASTRAS by the **UGC**. The Sastravaridhi project under the banner of COE, further promoted the *Guru-Shisya parampara* and students who passed out from this scheme are now esteemed teachers and lectures in various institutions of the country, thus directly contributing to the educational growth in the country.

As soon as a new calendar year commences, students of UG and PG programs are enrolled in a **BRIDGECOURSE** program, where basics of various Sastras and modern subjects like Computers are taught, thus helping them gain an all-round command on various subjects. This program also helps them in duly equipping themselves for various competitive exams like NET, SET etc too. While teaching traditional Sastras, the lecture method ensures that students gain full proficiency and clarity over their respective subjects. Further, to provide an in-depth clarity to the subject understanding of the students, innovative and modern methods using computers and power-point presentations are utilized, whenever and wherever necessary. Intense short term Sastravaridhi courses are also conducted from time to time in various sastras to further supplement the students and help them understand the subject content better.

Evidence of Success

This unique blend of various methods to impart traditional knowledge has been a visible success in the past years.

The traditional Gurukula method ensures that students have a mastery over the Sastras. Students of the Vidyapeetha have participated in various academic competitions all throughout the country and have won many laurels. Proficiency obtained in the subject via the Gurukula method is the main reason why students of the University have been so successful in such competitions.

Orienting students of different disciplines to various Sastric and modern subjects has given them a considerable edge while appearing for competitive exams like NET, SET etc. Ever since the implementation of this unique method, a steady rise has been observed in the number of students clearing such competitive exams.

A sense of communicational congeniance prevails amongst the students. The bringing together of the students of diverse backgrounds and streams under one roof instills a feeling of brotherhood thereby ruling out any unrest amongst the students. This favorable atmosphere of unity and fraternity amongst the students helps the administration in implementation of various policies for the benefit of the student community.

Receptiveness among the student community is developed, thus helping the administration in maintaining peace and tranquility in the Vidyapeetha

Interaction of students is not just limited to teachers from one particular department/stream. During the programme of BRIDGECOURSE, students get the opportunity to interact with teachers from various other streams and a healthy rapport is created in the process. This rapport helps in addressing the problems of the student community in an efficient manner as students approach not just the teachers of their stream but others too.

Problems encountered and resources required

Student Regional and Language Diversity.

Students from various parts of the country seek admission in the Vidyapeetha. Not all of them are proficient enough when it comes to speaking Sanskrit. As Sanskrit is the medium of instruction in the Vidyapeetha, it becomes a little difficult to impart knowledge with sufficient clarity to those who are not fluent in Sanskrit. To tackle this problem, Spoken Sanskrit camps or *SHIBIRAMS* are conducted in regular intervals, thus helping the students in becoming fluent in Sanskrit.

Inequality in the standard of knowledge amongst the students.

Students from a Sanskrit background have an advantage when compared to students from a non-Sanskrit background. This creates a gap amongst the students and makes things challenging to the teachers. Slow learners are given special attention and efforts are made to help them grasp the subject content. Remedial Classes for students belonging to the backward castes are taken regularly so that they become proficient.

BESTPRACTICE # 2

Title of the Practice

ALL INDIA SANSKRIT STUDENTS' TALENT FESTIVAL

Objectives of the Practice

- To give a platform for Sanskrit Students for the flowering of their talents in literary and cultural spheres.
- To Strengthen Solidarity among the students of different Sanskrit Institutions of national and international reputation.
- To develop competitive spirit among the students of different Sanskrit Institutions of national and international reputation
- To give opportunity to Sanskrit Students as well as Sanskrit Institutions to compete and compare themselves with their counterparts from various parts of India.
- To Encourage the Sanskrit Students to develop skills like oratorical, dramatic, debating skills etc., so that they can develop into balanced personalities and responsible citizens of India.

The Context

The Vidyapeetha has been striving successfully, since its inception, to preserve and propagate Sanskrit and traditional sastras and to establish their unflinching relevance to the modern world. As a premier institution of Sanskrit Education in India, the Vidyapeetha has recognized long ago that the purpose of education is not only to make the students acquire knowledge but also to bring out their hidden potential for their overall development through conducting competitions of various kinds viz. Literary, Cultural and of Sports and Games. As an extension

of this programme, the Vidyapeetha has been organizing a four day All India Sanskrit Students' Talent Festival every year since 2007 for the students of all Sanskrit institutions in India. The 10th All India Sanskrit Students Talent Festival was inaugurated on 28th January 2016 and concluded after 4 days.

For the overall development of Sanskrit students under VIDYARTHI VIKASA YOJANA, Vidyapeetha has been training its students through various literary, cultural and sports and games associations of Vidyapeetha. The prominent ones among those associations are:

Vagvardhini Parisad

This wing of the Vidyapeetha promotes the latent spirits of the students for active interaction, inter personal skills and sense of logical argument through participation in elocutions, debates, seminars, quiz etc., on every week-end regularly.

Max Muller English Club

This wing of the Vidyapeetha is a voluntary organisation run by the students themselves, under the guidance of the staff of the English Department. This aims at developing the oratory and communicative skills in English among the students of the Vidyapeetha.

Tulasidas Hindi Parishad

This wing of the Vidyapeetha is a body to promote Hindi language skills and Hindi literature amongst the students of Vidyapeeth.

Annamacharya Andhra Sahitya Kalaparishad

This is an organization to support and improve the talents and efficiency in Telugu Language and Arts in Vidyapeetha Students.

The Samskritika Kalaparishad

This is the Exclusive Cultural Association of Vidyapeetha monitoring all Culture related activities involving all interested Faculty Members, Non Teaching Staff, Research Scholars and Students. This association conducts training programmes in performing arts related mainly to Music, Drama and Dance and organizes all annual and occasional cultural events of Vidyapeetha.

Physical Education Unit

This Unit of Vidyapeetha gives training to the Vidyapeetha students in all sports and games through out the year and encourages the students to participate in all National Sports and Games meets and Festivals.

Practice

The Talent Festival has two types of Competitions:

A. Literary Competitions consisting of

- i. Elocution in various Sastras viz. Veda, Sahitya, Vyakarana, Nyaya Vaiseshika, Sankhya Yoga, Purvamimamasa, Vedanta, Dharma Sastra, Jyotisha and Puranetihas
- ii. Samskrita Sloka Antyakshari
- iii. Ashukavita/Samasya Purti
- iv. Rasaprasna (Quiz)

B. Cultural Competitions consisting of:

- i. Mono Acting
- ii. One Act Play
- iii. Folk Dance
- iv. Sanskrit Song

In each of these events there will be four prizes of First, Second, Third and Consolation levels of which:

First Prize: A cash Prize of Rs 1000 and Certificates

Second Prize: A cash Prize Rs 750 and Certificates

Third Prize: A cash Prize Rs 500 and Certificates

Consolation Prize: A cash Prize of Rs 250 and Certificates

A Rolling Shield is awarded to the overall Champion team. Each participating institution can send only one team consisting of not more than 14 students and only one staff member as team in-charge. Only bonafide and fulltime students of the participating institutions who are studying Sastri or BA, Acharya or MA with Sanskrit can participate in this Festival.

Evidence of Success

The list of the following participating institutions stands as a direct evidence of the Grand Success of this PRACTICE.

1. Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Viswa Mahavidyalaya, Enathur, Kanchipuram
2. Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, Rajeev Gandhi Campus , Sringeri
3. Sri Ahobila Muth Sanskrit College, Madurantakam
4. S.M.S.P. Sanskrit College, Udupi
5. Sri Ranglaxmi Adarsh Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya, Brindavan
6. Sri Rajrajeswari Sanskrit Mahapathashala, Sri Sonda swarnavalli Mahasansthan, Sonda

7. Kavikulaguru Kalidas Sanskrit University, Ramtek
8. Poornaprajna Vidyapeetha Sanskrit U.G. & P.G. Study Centre, Bengaluru
9. Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, Shree Sadasiva Campus, Puri
10. Kaliachak Bikram Kishore Adarsh Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya, Kolkatta
11. Shree Shreemata Samskrit College, Ummachgi
12. Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, Lucknow Campus, Lucknow
13. S.V. Vedic University, Tirupat
- i 14. Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, Guruvayoor Campus, Thrissur, Guruvayoor
15. Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, Mumbai Campus, Mumbai
16. Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, Ernakulam
17. Basantrao Nayik Shasakiya Kala & Samas Vijyana Sanstha, Nagpur
18. Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, Bhopal Campus, Bhopal
19. S.P. Ruganta Acharya Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya, Jaipur
20. Suryapur Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya, Surat
21. Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha, Tirupati, Andhrapradesh – **Host Institution**

So far around 5000 students from different parts of the country have participated in this National event in various years and all of them have been suitably rewarded. This event was not confined to conduct of competitions in the campus, but also it has spread a message of fellow feeling, mutual understanding and encouragement among the Sanskrit students of the Country.

Problems encountered and resources required

This has always been a successful Practice in the Institution ever since its inception with the utmost cooperation of the committed faculty, office staff and zealous students of Vidyapeetha. Hence in the organizing style and workmanship no problems are confronted so far with the well disciplined participation of all the institutions. THE ONLY PROBLEM is: THE LIMITED FINANCIAL STRENGTH OF VIDYAPEETHA IN CONDUCTING THIS FESTIVAL. All through these years Vidyapeetha has been organizing this event from its own limited resources and limited space in the Vidyapeetha. Hence the number of contestants allowed to participate is confined to 14+1= 15 from each institution. If there is any possibility of getting funds from either from UGC or MHRD or Ministry of Culture or any other related Government Agencies these festivals can be conducted on more grand scale.