Best Practices-01 State of the Art Mentoring Progrmme at Abhilashi University

1. **Title of the Practice**

Mentoring Programme

2. Objectives of the Practice

To provide students with:

- career and non-academic counselling.
- information on preparatory courses such as skill courses, bridge courses, etc. for their academic prosperity.
- focus and motivation to achieve learning goals and thereby improve their academic performance.
- guidance, encouragement and advise about their upcoming student life, health, mental, and emotional well-being and listen to their issues with patience.
- support toresolve their concerns with appropriate resources, support, and referral available.
- opportunities to generate curiosity and interest in academics and other institutional activities.
- a personal relationship between the mentor, mentee and the parentsfor making their life meaningful.

3. **The Context**

University is committed to provide a reliable and comprehensive support system to motivate students to achieve academic and non-academic fields and help them mould themselves for the future. The creation of a personal relationship between the mentor and the mentee ensures the students adapt to the dynamic learning environment and lead their ways into a highly successful career-close relationship. It develops continuous interaction between the mentor, mentee and the parents leading to a better understanding of the students' aspiration, strength, and weaknesses.

We are providing counselling to the students through personal attention and regular dialogues during their stay on campus, on the telephone, and by paying personal attention by the Mentor. Tips are provided on studies, personal counselling and guidance regarding career

choices to get success in the university examinations. The mentees are supported in the form of precise content on courses, fees, reviews, college admission process, scholarships, etc.

4. **The Practice**

- Mentees are assigned to the mentors right from the first year of the program.

- A mentor has not more than 20 mentees at a time.

- The mentees preferably are attached to the same mentor for the entire duration of the program.

- The mentor meets the mentees regularly and records the outcome of the meeting and these are periodically updated.

- The mentor identifies the students performing exceptionally well in curricular or co-curricular activities and reports to the head of the institution/department for providing further motivation to such advanced/gifted learners.

- The mentor also identifies the students whose performance/attendance is below par. The mentor interacts with the student and tries to find out the cause of the problem or indifferent behavior. If required, the mentor involves the parents and head of the department for reforming the student:
  a. Attendance: The mentor observes and monitors the attendance of the mentee,advises and takes necessary follow-up action concerning students who do not meet the attendance norms of the university.
  b. Academic Matters: The mentor also keeps a track of the academic performance of mentees including continuous assessment, term and examination, and help the mentee through counselling or by arranging remedial teaching, if necessary.
  c. Behavioural and discipline matters.
  d. Health and physical well-being.
  e. Achievements, talents, and co-curricular activities.
  f. Stress-related issues.

Mentor updates the Office of the 'Dean Student Welfare' to respond to mentor needs by sharing additional campus resources, consultation, and ideas for supporting behavior change.

The updates also help to educate other mentors on potential conversation topics and ways to address peer pressure, legal concerns, and transition issues. The most frequent referrals as summarized in the meeting updates include: Academic Advising, Financial Aid, Student Health Services, Student Legal Services, and faculty members or teaching assistants. Mentors assist their mentees in navigating a complex university system to connect the students in meaningful ways to appropriate resources. The referrals serve as an early intervention network for students who typically experiencing a crisis.

It is a very effective system that is aimed to narrow down the gap between the mentee and the mentor and thereby the society in general. The students may come across difficulties during the degree programs and have to face academic and adjustment challenges. To cope with such problems and to enable them to excel in academics and profession as per their potential, a Mentor-Mentee program for the students of the institution has been developed.

5. **Evidence of Success**

The entire mentoring program spanned several integral concerns of the students. The mentors could certainly go beyond the suggested themes and customized the same as per the requirement of the mentees. Apart from this, mentors addressed students' problems, traced their progression during mid-semester exams, motivated them to participate in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, and counseled them at all levels.

The mentorship program continued through WhatsApp groups in trying times of social isolation during the Covid-19 crisis. The mentors were just a call away and were ready to discuss not only academic but personal issues of the mentees too.

The scheme has become very successful in bridging the gap between the teacher and the student. It has become instrumental in blending the harmonious relationship between the learners and their family and the University at large. It has created an atmosphere of conviction and faith about the alma mater. Consequently, every year the enrolment ratio of students from all sections of society has been rapidly increasing.

6. **Problems Encountered and Resources Required**

- There is a significant need for a formal mentor program that includes specific guidelines for mentoring, established goals, awards for mentees and mentors, and formal training.

- Although mentors spend not more than 2-3 hours a month with their mentees, the relationship has a very positive effect on the members' overall experience.

- Additional training for the mentors on Motivational Interviewing techniques, campus resources, and ongoing discussions with mentors should enhance the support network for mentors and mentees.

- There is a need to establish goals for both mentor and mentee with recognition for achievements and to keep the program flexible, but structured and accessible to all members.

- An evaluation component to the mentor program may be added to encourage dialogue about what they did well and what needs improvement.

- Overall, positive feelings were expressed about mentoring. However, the structure is necessary to maximize retention and motivate new members to keep progressing.

7. **Notes (Optional)**

The Mentoring program demonstrated the positive connections between students and knowledgeable, caring faculty and staff members. These connections developed as a result of dedicated mentors who feel strongly about student success. The mentors took the time to support the students through a check-in system that created accountability for personal behavior. The mentors were willing to build their professional skills by investing in practicing and using Motivational Interviewing.

The mentor relationship encourages members to continue progression with their personal goals and educational achievements. Furthermore, members report that mentoring improves motivation and retention.

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Best Practice -02 State of the Art Green Initiatives at Abhilashi University

1. **Title of the Practice**

Green Initiatives

2. **Objectives of the Practice**

A Green Campus is a place where environment friendly practices and education combine to promote sustainable and eco-friendly initiatives.

University is committed to:

- Create awareness in the campus on an environmental policy amongst the students, faculty, staff, andstakeholders.

- Protect and nurture the Flora and Fauna on and around the campus.

- Use Solar Energy.

- Sensitize the students, faculty, and staff regarding the economic use of water resources.

- Use rain water harvesting.

- Maximize the use of ICT and minimize the use of paper

- Install a proper waste management system on the campus.

- Maintain green campus, 'Green Audit' is done regularly.

3. **The Context**

Raging environmental degradation is now a cause of global concern. Being an educational institution, Abhilashi University is aware of its duty to educate the youth on the importance of conserving the environment by encouraging the adoption of a sustainable lifestyle. Greening the campus is all about sweeping away wasteful inefficiencies and using conventional sources of energy for its daily power needs, correct disposal handling, purchase of environment-friendly supplies, and effective recycling program. University is working with time-bound strategies to implement green campus initiatives. These strategies are incorporated into the institutional planning to develop a clean and green campus.

The University is taking all the possible initiatives for energy conservation and buildings of the University are being designed accordingly to save energy. There is sufficient cross-

ventilation in laboratories and classrooms to avoid the unnecessary use of electricity. The street lighting in some sections has been made functional with solar energy.

4. **The Practice**

- The employees and students are advised to use the natural light; turn off the switches whenever not in use; use LCD monitors for computers and; use tube lights instead of bulbs.

- **Digital Library/E-Learning Centre:** The employees and students are encouraged to use of more readout material in soft form. Work in paperless mode using online electronic system.

- **Wastewater Management/ Rainwater harvesting:**The University has built rain water harvesting structures/bunds in the campus to make certain that rainwater recharges and to enhance the high-quality and stage of floor water. It increases the natural storage of water and helps the campus in getting water for various purposes. The University also works in the direction of wastewater management, particularly in students' hostels. Water flow restrictors on bathroom faucets and showers, low water flow toiletsare used to cut down campus water use.

- **Plastic-free Campus:** The University Campus is plastic-free and also creates awareness amongst the students and staff members regarding the same by display boards and other programs.

- **Use of bio-fertilizers:** There is a vermicompost unit on the campus for the collection of garbage in it. It is biocompatible and of natural origin.

- **Periodic Awareness Programme:**University is continuously conducting awareness programs for staff, students and the community for protecting and maintaining the environment. The awareness is also done by arranging programs, rallies on various issues related to the environment and health.

- **Plantation programs: University** conducts such programson and around the campus throughout the year.

- Tobacco and tobacco products are strictly prohibited on the Campus premises. Various boards for the awareness on the environment control, conservation of energy, recycling of resources, tree plantation, and environmental policy of the university have been displayed for all the stakeholders.

- **Waste Treatment and Disposal:**Bins are kept at different places on the campus as well as in all classrooms and laboratories. Solid waste is (Dry and wet) collectedregularly and proper disposal are being done. Waste from plants is also regularly collected and used in the vermicomposting units. E-waste from the campus is collected and managed by an agency. The University has installed waste water recycling plant treating the liquid waste. The recycled water is used for various purposes on the campus.
- University also conducts energy audit.

5. **Evidence of Success**

Initiatives undertaken by Abhilashi University is a step towards the greater good of humankind. As it may be understood these initiatives take time to bring about significant changes, however, the efforts are bearing fruit and gradual changes are becoming visible.

- Through periodical tree plantations, the flora and fauna on and around the campus have significantly increased, which has turned into a green belt.
- There has been a sharp decline in the total electricity consumption.
- The e-academic management system and no paper policy have visibly reduced the use of paper in the university.
- Awareness campaign for the plastic-free campus through signboards/display boards made campus plastic-free.
- Through workshops/seminars/NSS activities, students are made aware of environmental issues.
- Green, Environment and Energy audits of the campus have been started periodically and regularly.
- Only LPG cylinders are used in hostels and other places for cooking.
- A mandatory course for environmental awareness entitled "Environment Education/Science" has been introduced in all programs.

6. **Problems Encountered and Resources Required**

- The hilly landscape, poor sewerage, pressure on water resources and electricity, vehicular pollution are some of the major issues to be addressed.
- Financial constraints remain the biggest problem for expensive green initiatives like rainwater harvesting.

- Educating the local community about green initiatives so that they too adopt adequate measures also remains a challenge, given that there are many domestic use of fire wood in the locality.
- Green Campus initiatives are challenging so it requires determination and long-term assurance from all the stakeholders.

7. **Notes (Optional)**

The green campus concept offers Abhilashi University the opportunity to take the lead in redefining its environmental culture and developing new paradigms by creating sustainable solutions to the environmental, social, and economic needs of mankind.

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