



BEST PRACTICES

Title : Faculty Development Programme

Introduction:

VFSTR strongly believes that Human resources are an important element that is needed to realize the Institute's goals and aspirations. Hence, VFSTR is trying to maintain a highly skilled and efficient academic faculty in order to achieve excellent standards in all the disciplines offered by the Institute. In view of this, the Institute recruits, nurtures, and retains the best faculty to meet the changing needs of the curriculum, teaching, research, and consultancy.

The shortage of faculty is the basic problem for all the institutions including the premier institutions. It is also a fact that well prepared and "ready made" faculty will not be available at any given point of time. Hence Faculty Development Programme is considered as a serious activity to prepare and mould the faculty.

Objectives :

The objectives of the FDPs are to enable faculty to:

- Understand the significance of higher education, in the global and Indian contexts
- Acquire and improve the art of teaching at the university level to achieve goals of higher education, and to be effective in the transfer of knowledge
- Accord importance to research activity in addition to academic activity
- Understand the linkages between education and socio-economic, and cultural development.
- Keep abreast with latest developments in their specific subjects, and acquire knowledge and skills in new and emerging areas
- Understand the organization and management of the Institute and to perceive the role of teachers in the total system
- To familiarise with the philosophy and culture of the institution, especially to make every program student-centric.
- To work as a matured counsellor to the students, and to contribute to their overall development.
- To train on the basics of administrative work.
- To familiarize ICT usage in teaching and also in the preparation of digital content to promote self-learning.

Context:

The university recruits teaching faculty by adopting a rigorous three tier process of written test, technical interview and a final interview by the selection committees. Utmost care is taken in recruitment of teaching faculty by constituting selection committees with experts from premiere institutions like IITs, NITs, State and Central universities. The Institute also conducts special drives at IITs and NITs to recruit well qualified and competent faculty.

A qualified and competent teaching faculty enhances the breadth, depth and quality of teaching, research and consulting. The role of a teacher is not only to provide instructions to the students but also to develop their overall personality. The faculty plays a pivotal role in shaping the career pursuits of the students, mould them into professionals, and responsible citizens.

It is observed the most of the fresh recruits :

- are not familiar and thorough with all the concepts of the subjects they have to teach.
- Need to understand the students and their attitudes
- their approach with the students is either too rigid or too much liberal.
- do not have any idea of counselling and mentoring system
- lack team spirit to work with their colleagues.

If the faculty is directly put on the job with this kind of deficiencies, they may be failure in the class leading to unhappiness in the campus.

To avoid this kind of problem and also to transform them into effective and efficient faculty, Faculty Development Programme is planned, well designed, and conducted very seriously in the Institution.

The Practice:

VFSTR has an "Academy for Faculty Development (AFD)" to organize the Faculty Development activities. Keeping in view the larger scope and requirement of these activities, it was upgraded to Directorate of Academic Faculty Development in 2017, with a Dean heading the Directorate. This Directorate plans and organizes all the Faculty Development activities.

FDP is being practised in the following ways :

1. Faculty Orientation program:

This is mostly done by a dedicated in house team along with administrators like Registrar, Deans, Vice-Chancellor, and also involving the best academicians from outside.

Components of the program:

1. Creating awareness on the comprehensive role of the teacher ie., teacher, researcher, counsellor, and administrator.
2. Preparation of the quality content and its process of having complete idea of entire subject and connectivity between different concepts.
3. Presentation of the content in the class room using various teaching methods and ICT technology.
4. Details of delivery of content with stress and pause support of teaching aids.
5. Method of conducting group discussions, seminars, and making them interactive.
6. Explaining about the importance of counselling system giving various illustrations of the issues of the students.
7. Creating awareness of the importance of research for the careergrowth.
8. Correction of attitudes for the smooth landing in the department.
9. Creating awareness on administrative roles like conducting workshops, seminars, guest lectures, conferences, motivating the students to conduct the events etc. After the completion of the above program the faculty members are introduced to the department by allotting mentor for hand holding till they get settled.

2. Faculty development program by NITTTR:

External agencies like NITTTR Bhopal and Chandigarh and other experts are invited to develop:

- Teaching and evaluation methods oriented towards outcome-based education
- Various modes of setting the question papers
- Other evaluation methods suitable for attaining POs and PSOs.

- Methods to encourage the self-learning among the students.

3. Faculty development through exposure to the industry:

10% of the faculty at the end of each semester deputed to the industry for 2-4 weeks for the following purposes:

- To identify the industrial requirements and to enrich the curriculum.
- To acquire skills and transfer the same to students through laboratories.
- To negotiate with the industry for the consultancy or collaborative work.
- To acquaint with industrial best practices and to incorporate the same in the institution.

4. Faculty Enrichment :

The institute has initiated special programmes intune with the recent changes and also to prepare the faculty for the future on the following:

- Artificial Intelligence(AI),IoT, Machine Learning, Data science etc.to all the faculty across the branches
- Special incentives to the faculty who complete NPTEL, Coursera courses in the emerging areas.
- Special program on teaching of programming skills to the faculty of other departments.
- Training on writing the papers for reputed journals and project proposals.
- Methods of undertaking inter-disciplinary projects.
- Process of planning and executing conferences and workshops.
- Process of executing extension and consultancy activities which are socially relevant.

Directorate of Academic Faculty Development organized a total of 16 FDP Programmes during 2016-2019, with a total participation of 903 participants. In addition, it organized 176 specialized training programs with the help of different Departments (in-charge of various Programs) during the same period for the development/enrichment of the Departmentspecific Faculty. 160 Faculty members from different Departments are given specialized training for two weeks in Computer Science / Engineering courses in emerging areas. Faculty worked in industries for 2-3 weeks in the last five years. In fact, the FDPs is a continuing activity in VFSTR to the benefit of the Institute and Faculty.

Evidence of success :

- 90% of the faculty are in "A" category having more than 90% of feedback from students continuously
- The institution always maintains outcome of academics as more than 90%
- Very minimal number of complaints from the students or the student committees on the quality of teaching.
- Though the standard of students is in varied levels during the admission time, ultimately more than 80% of the students are placed in multi-national companies.
- VFSTR has not witnessed even one case of disturbance on the campus because of the matured counselling.
- Every faculty member has published minimum 1 paper per annum in the last 2 years which is considered to be a very healthy development for faculty as well as the institution.

Impact

This kind of process may be emulated on a large scale for the benefit of Indian education system as a whole, as every institution (big or small without any exception) is seriously suffering from the lack of competent faculty. As it is mentioned it should be done through a multiple approach involving the in-house people, external agencies and also the industries for the real development of the faculty.

The Institute is continuously striving to further strengthen the faculty so as to bring balanced growth in all disciplines on one hand, and achieve excellence in the specialized fields on the other hand. To strengthen the faculty, the Institute is inviting scholars of high academic standards in various subjects, to associate with the Institute. Further, the services of the aforesaid experts will be utilized to inculcate research and consulting culture among the younger teaching faculty.



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