

Title of the Practice: Ensuring Quality Teaching in Higher Education

Goal:

Quality teaching in higher education matters for student learning outcomes. Hence, the University aimed at developing policies and practices which ensure quality in teaching and learning

Objectives:

- At the institution-wide level: including projects such as policy design, and support to organisation and internal quality assurance systems.
- Programme level: comprising actions to measure and enhance the design, content and delivery of the programmes within a department or the college.
- Individual level: including initiatives that help teachers achieve their mission, encouraging them to innovate and to support improvements to student learning and adopt a learner oriented focus.

The Context

In the context of the sustained growth and diversification of higher education systems, civil society is increasingly concerned about the quality of programmes offered to students. As a result, there is an increase in public assessments and international comparisons of higher education institutions, not only within the higher education sector but in the general media. However, evaluation methods tend to overemphasise research, and use research performance as a yardstick of an institution's value. If these assessment processes fail to address the quality of teaching, it is in part because measuring teaching quality is complex and difficult. JSS University engages in fostering quality teaching essentially for the following reasons:

- To respond to the growing demand for meaningful and relevant teaching. Students as well as employers want to ensure that their education will lead to gainful employment and will equip them with the skills needed to evolve professionally over a lifetime.
- To demonstrate that we are reliable providers of good quality higher education, while operating in a complex setting, with multiple stakeholders, each with their own expectations (ministries, funding agencies, local authorities, students, employers...).
- To balance performance on teaching and learning achievements along with research performance, since research performance is not the only measuring tool to maintain the reputation of the institution.
- To more effectively compete and attract competent students against the backdrop of higher tuition fees and greater student mobility.
- To increase the efficiency of the teaching and learning process as funding constraints become more stringent.
- To engage faculty in a meaningful way to enhance the quality of teaching across all programs

The Practice:

For ensuring quality teaching a wide range of activities are carried out that are likely to improve the quality of the teaching process, of the programme content, as well as the learning conditions of students. These include initiatives such as:

- A centre for continuous and lifelong learning for professional excellence (CCLPE)
- Professional development activities (e.g. Faculty Development Programs, Conferences, Continuing Education Programs, workshops, etc.)
- Teaching excellence awards and competitions for remarkable improvements
- Fellowships and training in education technologies
- Teaching recruitment criteria
- Support to innovative pedagogy
- Communities of teaching and learning practices
- Learning environments (libraries, skill labs, hospital wards, computing facilities...)
- Organisation and management of teaching and learning
- Support to foster student achievement (e.g. counselling, career advice, mentoring...)
- Students' evaluation (i.e. programme ratings, evaluating learning experiences)
- Self-evaluation of experimentations, peer-reviewing, benchmarking of practices
- Community service and work-based programmes, development-based programmes
- Competence-based assessments

Evidence of Success:

Staff / Student and Stakeholder Satisfaction levels with Highest Feedback on Teacher Quality
Educational Content Availability and Access
High Campus Selection as a Health Sciences University
Highly Satisfied Employer Feedback
Alumni Feedback

Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

Continued motivation of faculty: To keep the faculty motivated and continue to innovate in adopting newer teaching methodologies, the CCLPE keep conducting faculty development workshops on education technologies through the Medical Education Unit, Dental Education Unit, Pharmacy Education Units. The IQAC monitors the feedback obtained from students and provides inputs to the CCLPE for faculty development programs.

Strong IT Support: To ensure that digital content is available for students and making it accessible a good IT team was required. An IT team was constituted and the team could ensure that JSSU Online platform could kick start and Attendance, time-table, digital content, MCQ's etc. could be made available to the faculty and students.