

LOYOLA BEST PRACTICES 2018-19

BEST PRACTICE 1: RESEARCH CLINIC

1. Title of the practice

Research Clinic

2. The context that required the initiation of the practice (100 – 120 words)

In order to raise the bar of quality of our student dissertations, Loyola College of Social Sciences came up with a proactive mechanism titled “Research Clinic”. Under this programme, our final semester students go through three phases of presentations of their research work at various stages of their dissertation. The presentations are made before an inter-disciplinary expert panel of 3-4 teachers and an audience comprising of research scholars, other dissertation students and junior students. The feedback and the corrective measures gathered from these presentations ensure that each and every dissertation submitted by a Loyolite possesses optimum standard. This practice is in addition to the personal guidance provided by the faculty guide throughout the course of dissertation.

3. Objectives of the practice (50 – 60 words)

The overall goal of the Research clinic is to ensure that the dissertations submitted by our students possess superior quality. The research Clinic also serves, in the process, to accomplish the following sub-objectives:

- To ensure the students have an effective and logical understanding of the research methodology.
- To monitor the proper and timely completion of research dissertations.
- To solicit multiple views and expert opinion on a particular research topic.
- To act as a platform for exchange of information on research methodology.
- To induct junior students into the process of research.
- To facilitate contribution to the existing literature in their research areas.
- To inculcate the love for the process of research in the minds of students.

4. The Practice (250 – 300 words)

The faculty-in-charge of the research centre is responsible for conducting the research clinic. Under the Research clinic, every student is required to go through three stages of presentations. The first presentation happens right at the beginning phase when the researcher has finalized his research topic and the methodology he/she wants to adopt. This presentation sets the tone for the entire research as the basic framework and the research methodology adopted is discussed in depth here. The second presentation happens just before they enter the data collection phase. The progress up to that point is presented and the suggestions for the corrective steps to be administered are provided. The last presentation is conducted once the students have completed their analysis and findings part. This is the most important presentation as the student is required to provide a complete picture of their thesis. While the first and the third presentation happen at the college level, the second presentation happens at the departmental level. Some departments have more than one presentation in which external experts are invited to provide feedback.

The presentations take place before a 3-4 member expert panel of teachers drawn from all departments. The feedback received from the expert panel which is interdisciplinary in nature ensures that various perspectives are addressed. The teachers in the panel are given a feedback form in which they have to provide their written feedback about each presentation, in addition to verbal feedback. This feedback form about each student’s presentation is then forwarded to the respective guides, who are to discuss the issues with the student.

The audience for the research clinic includes fellow presenters, junior students and research scholars, who chip in with suggestions and doubts. This exercise acts as a strong platform for a student to sharpen the understanding

about research methodology, defend their presentation and clarify the doubts and concerns raised by the audience. It also gives the students an exposure to the various nuances of research. Fine tuning of the thesis happens during these presentations and the student gains confidence and pride in their research work.

5. Obstacles faced if any and strategies adopted to overcome them

- The research clinic was initially a 2 day process that happens simultaneously in 2 venues. As the process involved non-stop deliberations and over 30 presentations, this was heavy for both teachers and students. Currently we have 4 venues and the process happens in a single day. Approximately 60 final year students make presentations in one day.
- Initially the feedback was verbal only and the students were expected to note down suggestions and convey it to the guide. This was not considered effective. Hence a written feedback form was created and filled by the expert panel and forwarded to the guide.
- Research clinic has become a mandatory process in the dissertation process. Hence if any student is absent or not able to present well on the day of the research clinic, another research clinic is organized for absentees and sub-quality performers. This ensures that there is 100% participation in research clinics.

6. Impact of the practice (100 – 120 words)

This practice has been instrumental in raising the standard of the dissertations of final year students. It is also a platform for knowledge sharing and deliberation where both teachers and students gain more information on research. The research clinic acts as a detailed induction for the juniors to the field of research. While earlier dissertations were only an academic requirement, introduction of research clinics have made the dissertation a very serious affair. As students are exposed to multiple dissertations and different views, they understand the importance and complexity of research. The research clinic is grand endeavor that brings together every single student, researcher scholar and faculty of the college to focus on research.

7. Resources required

- Faculty – Special care is given during the drafting of expert committees to ensure that the expert panel is interdisciplinary and balanced in terms of teacher's experience in teaching and research.
- Research scholars and other academic staff, like librarian, are also a part of this practice. Their suggestions and observations are very insightful.
- Students and their topics should be divided proportionally among venues for presentation. We ensure that topics in a particular venue feature a mix of all 4 disciplines offered by the college.
- Classroom with LCD projectors, Feedback forms

8. Contact Persons for further details

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BEST PRACTICE 2: PIMER APPROACH

1. Title of the practice

PIMER Approach

2. The context that required the initiation of the practice (100 – 120 words)

In order to make the students competent to handle the requisites of the workplace and society, he/she needs to possess certain skills other than the academic knowledge. It is in this context the Loyola College of Social Sciences came up with the PIMER approach. PIMER approach stands for Planning, Implementation, Monitoring Evaluation and Reporting. Through PIMER approach we ensure that our students are capable of planning and implement a project or a program with utmost perfection. All events of the college are organized by students using the PIMER approach. All the students of the college become part of the PIMER process.

3. Objectives of the practice (50 – 60 words)

- To enable a student to propose, evolve, implement, evaluate and document a programme/project.
- To provide students a holistic understanding of how to design and implement various activities.
- To enable students to develop leadership, team work and administrative skills.
- To make students familiarize with the concept of authority, accountability and responsibility.

4. The Practice (250 – 300 words)

- The college has 5 flagship programmes – Onam, Christmas, Alumni Day, NSS Camp and College Day. In addition to this, the college has also organized big events like the Golden Jubilee Annual lecture series, Swach Bharath programme etc. Each department also organizes a number of programmes like seminars, congresses, field work culminations, fests etc. Every programme organized in Loyola follows the PIMER approach.
- **Planning:** Every programme begins with a common planning meeting where all students come together. Staff in-charges are designated by the staff council even before the planning meeting. The first session involves choosing of leaders and work division. Two leaders- Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator are chosen first by the students. The students are then divided into various committees, based on the requirements of the programme- namely Programme, Registration, Food, Travel and Accommodation, Decoration and Hall Arrangement, Discipline and Documentation. Leaders for these committees are also chosen. Within the sub-committees, the roles and responsibilities are divided and budget prepared. This is then documented and read then out in a subsequent common meeting. There may be one or more meetings of individual sub-committees to carry on their work.
- **Implementation:** The sub-committees coordinated by the Coordinators implement the programme.
- **Monitoring:** is done by the Coordinators and leaders assisted by staff-incharges. After the programme, there is also post-event management.
- **Evaluation:** After the programme an evaluation session is mandatory. During evaluation a feedback is taken from each committee. They report on what went right and wrong and how future programmes can be made better.
- **Reporting:** The Documentation committee reports every incident from planning to evaluation and hands over the report of the whole programme to IQAC. There is a practice where staffs-in-charge refer previous reports to organize future programmes more effectively and efficiently.

5. Obstacles faced if any and strategies adopted to overcome them

- All students of the college are involved in PIMER. That is, Some PIMER events may bring together approximately 160 students. Ensuring full student participation by charting proper work division and

preventing loafing is a challenge. Staffs-in-charges try to intervene in this aspect and help committees prepare effective plans.

- Students are given free access to use various resources of the college during programme implementation. Often after implementation the students become relaxed and dispatch and turn up only at evaluation. Post-event management was introduced to ensure that each committee cleans up after an event and ties up all loose ends.
- Some students tend to opt for one kind of committee consistently- e.g. documentation or food etc. Every effort is taken that students are exposed to different types of committees.
- Earlier the approach was termed PIME. Because of a neglect of reporting, it was changed to PIMER to give more focus on reporting.

6. Impact of the practice (100 – 120 words)

PIMER approach is adopted for every single programme in Loyola and every single student of the college becomes part of it. Hence our students get an exposure on this approach for two years. This exposure results in mastering all the elements that is endorsed in PIMER approach. They also became well equipped to coordinate different aspects of a programme and it helps them to inculcate leadership and team work skills. Many of our Alumni carry with them the PIMER approach and they widely report that they use it very often and effectively in their work place and within the community.

7. Resources required

Time and Space for planning and evaluation, leadership from teachers and students

8 Contact Persons for further details

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