

ACADEMIC AUDIT 2018-19

Report on the Academic Audit for the year 2018-19

of

NORTH BENGAL UNIVERSITY



Raja Rammohunpur,
Darjeeling, West Bengal



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Schedule for the Academic Audit

Day 1 Visit to Jalpaiguri Campus, 11 am to 5 pm

Day 2 Visits to Departments and Academic Centres, 11 am to 5 pm

Day 3 Visits to Library and other facilities

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1. Introduction

The University of North Bengal was established by an Act of the Legislature of West Bengal in 1962 with the mission “to encourage and provide for instruction for teaching, training and research in various branches of learning and course of study; to promote advancement and dissemination of knowledge and learning and to extend higher education to meet the growing needs of society.”

The University of North Bengal has set up another campus at Jalpaiguri by the side of the campus of Jalpaiguri Government Engineering College for widening the dimension and scope of Higher Education and Research in one more Centre for Higher Education through modern studies in order to reach the people of this region in a bigger way so that they can have better and easier access to Higher Education.

Vision

Located in the lap of Himalayas and situated far off Kolkata the University of North Bengal was established in 1962 with a vision to encourage and provide a congenial space of higher education, in particular to the socially and economically backward students, in the form of instruction, teaching, training and research in various branches of knowledge and to meet the growing needs of this region as the highest temple of learning and to commit to foster education on the basis of democratic values and ethos. With the passage of time along with its enriched capacity structure as a competitive University of national repute, North Bengal University envisions a global centered education system with a commitment to be a part of knowledge society and to provide quality based education to all.

Mission

To establish a large, well-resourced vibrant multi-disciplinary teaching and research institutions by way of collaboration of teachers, research scholars, students, academic administrators and employees.

To enrich a strong educational communities and to play a catalytic role to provide high quality education in this disadvantageous geography.

The University envisages a broad based liberal post graduate education with rigorous specialization in chosen disciplines and to provide optimal learning environment students support services.

To develop capable faculty and students who shall be energized and engaged so that they can become hearts of higher education in the region. The University is

committed to make all its stakeholders as drivers of demand driven educational changes in national and international field.

Finally, the University seeks to inculcate environmental awareness and sense of urgency of conservation of nature creating pollution free green campus by encouraging sustainable practices.

2. Audit Committee

In May 3, 2019, IQAC constituted a three members committee to conduct an Academic Audit of the University. The Audit Committee comprised the following members:

1. Professor Ranjit Samanta Rtd. Professor and Former Director, IQAC, NBU
2. Prof. Dilip Debnath, Head, Department of Chemistry, Coochbehar Panchanan Barma University.
3. Dr. Kajal Mandal, Department of Mathematics, Coochbehar Panchanan Barma University.

3. Objective & Scope

Director IQAC, Professor Soumitra De at a preliminary meeting, held on 10-05-19, with the members, outlined the broad objectives of the academic audit as an independent assessment of the University by an external peer team comprising of the above members.

Accordingly, the audit team decided to look into the prevailing situation at the University covering the following aspects:

- Methodology of teaching and learning conducted for the different courses run by the University
- Functioning of the Laboratories and Computer Facilities
- I.T. Infrastructure
- Examination and Evaluation system
- Activities of the Internal Quality Assurance Cell
- Central Library and the Central Research Facility and Sport Office
- Outreach Programmes conducted by the University including the NSS
- Alumni and their contributions to the University

4. Methodology

At the meeting (held on 13-05-19) with the Dean, Science, Prof Bikash Ch. Pal, Dean, Arts, Commerce and Law, Professor Sanchari Roy Mukherjee, the Controller of Examinations, Dy. Registrar, and other officials, a presentation was made by the Director IQAC which gave a general and broad profile of the facilities and activities of the University, the new facilities added and the new programmes that have been introduced and the infrastructure in the process of being developed.

The Audit team began their visit on May 20 2019 to Jalpaiguri Campus, and spent two more days on May 21-22, 2019 at NBU Campus. They made visits to the various departments and facilities, for brief interactions with the faculty of each department, the students of the department streams and the support staff. Visits to the laboratories, Computer facilities, the Library and some of the other facilities of the University were accommodated in the schedule arranged by the University to enable the Audit Committee to acquire relevant first-hand information.

Based on the information/data gathered from the available documents and the interactions afforded with the different component of the components of the institution, the Audit Committee made a sincere endeavour to put forward certain views, observations and recommendations in the body of this report with expectations that these recommendations, when implemented, will best serve the interest of the University as intended.

5. Brief Profile of the University

The University is recognised under 2(f) and 12B.

The University has two permanent affiliated law colleges, One Education/teachers training college which is also the constituent college with temporary affiliation and thirty six and 11 general affiliated colleges with permanent and temporary affiliations respectively. 18 colleges are NAAC accredited. 8 Colleges have post graduate departments. The University is a dual mode University with a Directorate of Distance Education. Relevant SRA recognitions, BCI, DEB-UGC, PCI and AICTE are available. The University completed third cycle of NAAC in 2016 with Grade A and is going to apply for 4th Cycle. The University is going to apply for NIRF ranking.

6. Observations

Observations based on the documents provided by the University and interactions with academicians, students and other stakeholders are provided below:

6.1 Programmes and Curricula

The University has 15 Departments under the Faculty of Science and 18 Departments under the faculty of Arts, Commerce and Law. The University has framed curricula for all affiliated colleges. It has some of its own UG and PG programmes. These are as follows: UG: 5, PG: 43, M.Phil: 25, PhD: 28, PG Diploma: 2.

University has adopted CBCS for all its programmes. The detailed curricula with PO/PSO and Cos are available in the University website.

6.2 Students

Total number of conventional learners is 3110 and in distance mode, 1185.

The quality of students is reflected in sizable achievement of success in UGC NET and GMAT examinations in particular. The average percentage of placement of outgoing students in last five years is satisfactory. Many students have received awards/medals in inter-university national events.

The university's alumni association began informally, but was transformed into a registered body in October 2001. As per its constitution, membership to it is not automatic for the alumni of the university and one has to apply for it. At present, the Association comprises over 2500 members. It has an Executive Committee of twenty-one members including its President, the Secretary and the Treasurer. There is a General Body consisting of all the members. While the Executive Committee meets from time to time, the General Body meets at least thrice a year to deliberate on issues of policy, and to convene seminar/workshop and cultural programmes. The university has provided an office to the Association in its main campus.

The Association has also been involved in extensive social work throughout North Bengal, and has convened book releases and exhibitions. It has been serving as an active platform of interactions among the alumni in matters pertaining to the university and its social interface.

Moreover, there are also several Departmental Alumni Associations which contribute to infrastructure development of the respective departments, such as installation of air conditioners, water purifiers, public address system, and so on.

6.3 Teaching Staff

University has following sanctioned posts and filled in positions are shown within brackets: Professor: 30 (11), Associate Professor: 71 (44), Assistant Professor: 167 (152).

Of these 153 are PhD holders and one has D.Lit.

The University has two Emeritus Professors and 29 visiting professors.

6.4 Teaching Learning Infrastructure

The Library is a three storied building with 2662.61 sq. mtr. carpet area and its Annexe is a two storied building with 445.52 sq. mtr. carpet area. The location of the University Library is at the Western side of the University Administrative Building and North of Padmaja Park. University Library has built up a rich collection on all branches of Science, Arts, Commerce, and Management. It is a member of UGC INFONET Consortium for on line subscription of journals. Library LAN has become a part of campus wide Network, which has made it possible for the academic community of various departments to access information from their remote location. Library has impressive collection of books and journals and an array of digital and online resources including OPAC, open access and subscribed e journals. Bar Code system has been introduced for security.

HRDC was established in 2009. In last five years HRDC has conducted 19 orientation programmes, 39 Refresher Courses. UGC-HRDC, University of North Bengal has been organising programmes for teachers, non-teaching members and research scholars as approved by the UGC. Between 2014-15 and 2018-19, 74

programmes have been approved by the UGC and 73 programmes have been successfully conducted. The compliance rate stands at 98.6 %. 2696 participants from various parts of country participated in various courses offered by UGC HRDC, University of North Bengal. The average participation stands at 36.9 or 37 during this period. This is well above the minimum intake capacity of 30 as stipulated by the UGC. The UGC-HRDC is equipped with two IT enabled class rooms, computer lab cum class room with 25 computer terminals and with individual public address system, guest house with accommodation capacity of 56 for outstation participants. HRDC is in possession of 817 books which are inter-disciplinary in nature.

The University has expanded its programme offering towards technology enables learning through introduction of Food Technology, Tea Science and Pharmaceutical Technology.

Teachers have been making use of online resources and platforms such as Google Meet, Google classroom and YouTube channels.

6.5 Departmental Profiles

All departments have been organising seminars /workshops regularly. The average rate per year is 2 per department. The Department of Chemistry mobilised highest amount of project funding, Rs 5.4 Cr. followed by Department of Physics with mobilisation of more than Rs. 2 Cr.

The faculties have shown commendable research publication. H index calculated by Web of Science in last five years is 27 and by SCOPUS it is 28.

University provides seed money to teachers for research and has budgetary support for publication of journals. Many departments have research funding under SAP and DST-FIST.

6.6 Jalpaiguri Campus

Four Departments are currently operational in Jalpaiguri campus: English, Bengali, Geography & Applied Geography and Sanskrit. Of these there are older Departments in the main campus. There is a library set up in the campus. In addition to dedicated teachers for the campus, teachers from main campus also teach there.

6.7 Support Staff

There are 484 sanctioned posts for non-teaching staff of which 270 is filled in. There are 72 contractual staff and several casual and workers on daily basis. 174 sanctioned posts are for technical staff of which 55 are filled in. University is in process of urgently fill in the posts of non-teaching staff.

6.8 Examination

The examination branch has been successful in ensuring timely publication of results. The office of the Controller of examinations has been increasing automation with online form-fill up, online issuance of Admit cards and computerised mark sheets. University has also arranged for availability of certificates and mark sheets on NAD platform.

6.9 Facilities

The University offers a Remedial Coaching scheme under which in last five years 536 students have been trained in communicative English. The academic infrastructure is developed. Each department has Computer Lab, SMART Classroom and Virtual Class Room. Remote access is available for accessing data.

To facilitate Research University has acquired NMR machine, Scanning Electronic Microscope, Glovebox, Liquid nitrogen Plant and HCC set up.

6.10 IQAC

The Office of the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of University of North Bengal was established on 10th July 2003. The Cell has sixteen members with the Vice-Chancellor as the Chairperson and the Director-member Secretary as the Coordinator of IQAC. One of the important functions of IQAC is to develop realistic and attainable quality bench marks for each of the academic and administrative activities. One of the most critical functioning of IQAC is to keep the institution abreast of and abuzz with quality sustenance activities on a wide gamut of pertinent issues through workshops / seminars / demonstrations / case studies / group discussions / panel discussions / role-plays / symposia. Multi disciplinary and multi-institutional actives like this will expose the students and teachers to new frontiers of knowledge thereby strengthening the moral fibre of the institution leading to holistic

development. IQAC has undertaken several quality initiatives including conducting different types of audits, such as energy audit, green audit. It has been regularly processing CAS applications of teachers and other academic staff of the University.

Students' feedback is collected annually by IQAC under two-part questionnaire.

The part A is administered to students who have scored more than 60% under Science Faculty and 55% under Arts Faculty and have 80% attendance in Semester I & II. This part is for evaluation of faculty. The part B is administered to students who have average marks of 60% for Science and 55% for Arts regardless of attendance. This part related to evaluation of programme Curriculum, facilities in the department, Hostels and other infrastructure.

For part A analysis attempts to identify faculties who need improvement. Those identified are informed about the nature of improvement expected. Each Department is communicated about the deficiencies, if any, in the teaching learning system from the analysis of Part B. The departments discuss improvement measures by way of adopting resolutions in the Committee Meetings and action taken report is sent to IQAC. For centralised facilities like library, hostels, canteens etc. deficiencies are identified and communicated to concerned offices. SSS and other stakeholders' feedback are being readied for online feedback and automated analysis.

7 SWOC

Strengths

- University of North Bengal has been the sole university for the then six districts of Northern part of West Bengal and the state of Sikkim. Eventually many of this area have seen new universities in which the alumni of this university have taken the leadership role.
- This university has also taken frontier step in developing a culture of scientific research in a region that is ecologically varied and rich, lucky to have many biodiversity hotspots, national parks and a pool of socio-cultural admixture with many tribes and linguistic groups.
- Our University has some unique centres contributing to representation of this region's biodiversity profile and cultural diversity.

Weakness

- Inadequacy of Built –up area for expansion of academic activities and administrative set-up.
- Non sanction of some of the post of (i) Placement Officer (ii) Sports Officer (iii) Assistant Engineer (Civil) is creating problem for smooth function of the university.
- Due to the absence of one integrated software, administrative functioning is slow and paper work is being done to a great extent which reduces the speed and accuracy of administrative functioning.
- There is lack of Master Plan for over all development of the university.
- Enrolment of international students is rare.
- There is Lack of applicability of IT in administration as well as in planning and development.

Opportunities:

- Community and outreach activity may be enriched.
- There is scope for consultancy service through the University Consultancy Centre.
- As the region is associated with three ‘T’s namely Tea, Timber and Tourism, there is ample scope to offer courses and research on these fields.
- Courses on physical education may be opened as the University Sports Boards has adequate infrastructure in this regard.

Challenges:

- University has to explore its own resources to generate revenue as the funding from U.G.C. and State Government is inadequate to cater the increasing need of the university.
- All administrative work may be computerized and sharing of soft form information may be started so that paperless office management can be developed.
- As some new universities are coming up in this region, university may loss some good feeder colleges.
- There is scope to increase participation of teachers in SWAYAM platform and offer courses in MOOCS.

7. General Conclusion

The Audit team is convinced that the university has untapped potential for carving a niche among high ranking universities. Form the 3rd Cycle of NAAC accreditation it has undertaken several initiatives for qualitative improvement in teaching and learning system. It is felt that University should urgently deploy ERP level software for information management and workflows.

Dated, NBU

24th May, 2019

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