

Staff Advancement Committee Report 2020-21

Keeping in mind the need to rise up to the challenge of being educators in a pandemic affected universe, the Staff Advancement Committee organised a five-day Faculty Development Programme (online) from 4- 8 January 2021. Titled “Empower and Enrich: A Faculty Development Programme for New Age Educators,” the programme aimed at teaching participants a wide range of skills for professional and personal success. The first two days were dedicated to understanding the law of attraction, the importance of visualisation and such other philosophical concepts as well as hands-on activities to emphasise the importance of positivity and conviction in all we do. In his session titled, “Transformational Workshop for 21st century Educators,” International Success Coach, Mind Expert and Motivational Speaker Mr. Anand Kumar demonstrated how the power of conscious positive thinking can be life-affirming and uplifting for those who practise it every day.

On 6 January 2021, Mr. Sharat Sharma (Author, Professional Speaker and High- Performance Coach) conducted a session on “Video Editing for Teachers.” He explained at length the processes involved in video editing and demonstrated how even amateurs could execute basic video editing tools, a skill much needed in view of the move from offline to online teaching in this academic year. On the same day, Prof. Hargopal, (Visiting Professor, NSLIU, Bangalore), delivered a lecture on the National Education Policy. Touted as a radical policy designed to change the future of education in India, the National Education Policy has been in the spotlight in academia since its introduction. Prof. Hargopal imparted a critical perspective on the National Education Policy, highlighting its many strengths but also drawing attention to the areas in which he felt it had not done justice to the poorer sections of society.

Mr. Ashley Vinil, (Visual Communicator, Story Coach and Experiential Facilitator), conducted an intriguing session on Usage of Storytelling and Visual Communication in the Teaching World 7 January 2021. He explained how doodling could be used as a pedagogical tool to enliven online lectures and even gave the staff an opportunity to display their doodling skills by making us draw the content we teach in our respective 81 classes. On the same day, Ms. Ritu Paithankar demonstrated how yoga operated as an important form of both relaxation and physical fitness. Her session on Yoga and Fitness was more practical and required the staff to perform in the comfort of our homes the different asanas she demonstrated on the screen.

Dr. Radhakrishnan Pillai, (Author, Trainer, Mentor and Certified Management Consultant), an expert of Chanakya’s philosophy, provided a perspective on the implications of the National Education Policy for higher education on 8 January 2021 in his talk titled “Chanakya Neeti on Modern Education and Change in Structure due to NEP”. He drew parallels between the National Education Policy and the wisdom of the ancient Indian scholar Chanakya to highlight the advantages the NEP offered for higher education in India. The same day, Ms. Archana Thakran (Founder and CEO, Skills Mitra Academy, Strategic Leadership Consultant to Saylor Academy) delivered a lecture on “Mastering Online Teaching through Open Education Resources,” in which she gave the staff the benefit of her extensive knowledge and expertise with regard to digital resources they could access to amplify their efforts in the field of academic

research. She also enlightened us about intellectual property rights, plagiarism, and the nuances of open access portals for research.

The Faculty Development Programme was extended to the junior college staff as well to ensure that they too could benefit from it. Taken together, the varied sessions offered at the Faculty Development Programme provided participants a wide range of life-skills for their personal wellbeing as well as new and innovative techniques to draw upon to enhance their teaching and research skills as educators in an increasingly digitised academic world.