

Criterion 7 – Institutional Values and Best Practices

7.2 Best Practices

BEST PRACTICE 1: Exposure to Co-Curricular Activities Alongside Academic Curriculum for Enhancing Student Understanding

1. Title

Exposure to Co-Curricular Activities Alongside Academic Curriculum for Enhancing Student Understanding.

2. Objectives and Context

The practice is designed to provide a **holistic learning experience** by integrating co-curricular activities with the architectural curriculum. This ensures students develop **practical skills, creativity, and critical thinking** while fostering a sense of **community, teamwork, and leadership**. Architectural studies benefit significantly from these activities, as they offer opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge in **practical, creative, and collaborative settings**, helping students understand the real-world implications of their studies and think innovatively.

3. The Practice

The integration is systematically planned by the faculty before the academic year to align activities with and enhance learning outcomes.

Annual Exhibition: Students present their academic projects to peers, faculty, and industry professionals, promoting **peer learning and constructive feedback**.

Tech-Fests and Design Fests: These events feature competitions, workshops, and guest lectures, providing **hands-on experience** in cutting-edge technologies and innovative design practices.

Research Conferences: Organized to offer a platform for students to present their research, these conferences foster **academic rigor, professional networking**, and engagement with contemporary architectural debates.

Workshops and Seminars: Regularly conducted sessions enhance practical skills and provide insights into the **latest industry trends**.

4. Evidence of Success

Success is clearly demonstrated by the **improved quality of student work** visible in portfolios and project presentations. Participation in tech-fests, design fests, and research conferences has led to **numerous awards and recognitions**, significantly boosting students' confidence and professional profiles. Students exhibit enhanced **creativity, critical thinking, and collaborative skills**, positively reflecting on their overall academic performance.

5. Challenges and Resources

Challenges include the need for **meticulous coordination and scheduling** to balance the academic workload with co-curricular activities. **Adequate funding and resource allocation** are required to maintain high-quality events, often mitigated by securing sponsorships and collaborations with industry partners. Encouraging **active participation** from all students remains a

continuous challenge, addressed by offering incentives and clearly highlighting the professional benefits.

6. Notes

The institute's approach is underpinned by principles of **leading by example** and setting achievable targets aligned with global practices. By fostering an **open work culture** and ensuring **transparency** in curriculum and evaluation methods, the college creates an enriching educational environment. **Teamwork and collaboration** are the cornerstones of this approach, driving the success of both academic and co-curricular initiatives.

BEST PRACTICE 2: Vision-Mission-Based Wholistic Development of Students

1. Title

Encouraging Student Participation in **Extra-Curricular and Social Concern Activities** to promote **wholistic development** based on the Vision-Mission of the institute.

2. Objectives and Context

The practice aligns with the institute's vision: "Excellence in professional education to create architects **sensitive towards nurturing natural and technological sustainability**" The goal is to produce graduates who are not only skilled professionals but also **conscientious global citizens** dedicated to sustainable development.

Extracurricular activities are integrated because they are not components of the academic curriculum but are an integral part of the educational environment. They offer students the opportunity to apply academic skills in a real-world context.

Specific Objectives:

- Inculcate important skills that include **time management, teamwork, critical thinking**, and **public speaking**.
- Offer an opportunity to the students to interact with others having similar interests.
- Boost confidence and create Positive self-esteem in students.
- Provide Productive Breaks to students to pursue their Passions.

3. The Practice

The institute believes in students' all-round development, recognizing that skills and hidden talents are foundations for basics of aesthetical build.

Student Council (SUSANWAD): Formed from the institute's establishment, this elected council aims to bring forward students' **hidden talents** and hobbies.

Major Events: The institute performs many academic and extra-curricular activities. Participation in **Sinhgad Karandak** (cultural & league sports) is well-known.

External Participation: Students are encouraged and supported to participate in various competitions, workshops, and other activities conducted by government and non-government organizations.

Sustainability Forum (SAAD): The **Society for Architecture and Allied Disciplines (SAAD)** forum was created to engage students in activities that promote sustainability¹⁵. SAAD in Marathi means "A CALL..."—a call for Architecture & its Allied disciplines to come Together and envision a Healthy and sustainable Future.

SAAD Activities: SAAD successfully conducts various activities addressing social issues and contributing to the society. Its objectives include encouraging regional & international interaction, recognising outstanding contributions, and organising events for self and community development. It also aims to create awareness within primary and secondary standard students about the architecture profession through fun, hands-on activities.

4. Evidence of Success

Students who participate in extracurricular activities demonstrate **higher levels of academic achievement**, greater character development, greater social development, and a greater sense of the importance of community involvement.

Skill Transfer: Acquired skills like persistence, goal setting, and problem-solving are applied to the academic curriculum, resulting in **more involvement** and **better grades**.

Discipline and Resilience: Students involved in extracurricular activities almost never skip classes or shirk academic work. They can also handle failure better, using it as a way to learn and improve.

Professional Benefit: Qualities of **Leadership and teamwork** benefit the students throughout their life after they step out into the professional field.

7.3.1 INSTITUTIONAL DISTINCTIVENESS: Contextual Variation

Smt. Kashibai Navale College of Architecture's distinctive priority is enhancing students' understanding through **Contextual Variation** in their curriculum. This practice involves exposing students to the same architectural project in different settings, emphasizing the **impact of context on design outcomes**.

Key Performance Area

The primary focus is providing meaningful architectural projects, emphasizing location-specific influences, and promoting designs reflecting regional qualities. Contextual architecture aligns buildings with their surroundings, countering mass production trends that overlook cultural identity.

Implementation

The practice is implemented across **Architectural Design** courses and reinforced in **Allied & Design & Technology Electives**.

Architectural Design:

Variation is achieved through **Design topic variation** and diverse **Design Brief/Programs**.

Students are given different site & context, requiring **site/field visits**.

Study tours, Field visits, Guest lectures, and surveys strengthen experiential learning.

Short term courses (e.g., Landscape Course in collaboration with **SIENNA Institute**) and the **Alumni engagement "Thesis Talk"** series further reinforce this learning.

In the fourth year, students undertake Urban Insert projects, conducting SWOT analysis of various towns for context-specific designs.

Allied & Design & Technology Electives:

Different elective topics are offered for AY 24-25. This promotes **Subject Amalgamation & Applicability** in other subjects.

Evidence of Success

Success is evident in the diverse, context-based **student portfolios** and an **increased interest in environment, sustainability, and culture-oriented projects**.

Challenges

Challenges include ensuring clear communication, managing extensive data, and converting studio learnings into measurable outcomes. The institution addresses these by emphasizing regulatory compliance, leadership by example, achievable targets, and transparency.