

ASSESSMENT REPORT ON INSTITUTIONAL REACCREDITATION OF ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE, MUMBAI, MAHARASHTRA

Section I

Preface

St. Xavier's College was founded by the **Society of Jesus** in 1869 to impart modern education to the members of the Christian community around Mumbai and extend the service to all irrespective of caste, creed and religion. Originally affiliated to the University of Mumbai, St. Xavier's, Mumbai, was made a constituent college of the university in 1953 in recognition of its premier role in higher education of the state. It enjoys recognition under section 2(f) of the UGC Act right from 1956 and subsequently received recognition under 12(B) of the Act. The College is a minority institution. The college has been recognized as a College with Potential for Excellence by the UGC.

The College commits itself as an academic community of students and teachers who enjoy the freedom and feel the responsibility to evaluate, enhance and disseminate the humanity's store of knowledge. It endeavours to shape the students into complete human beings with the capability to work for the welfare of the society and the country at large.

The college is keeping itself abreast with the changing times and is on a fast move to equip its students to meet the challenges of globalization and knowledge explosion. While its long established Human Values Programme (PHV) ensures the holistic development of its students, the newly introduced Learning for Life courses and Honours Programmes expose them to real life situations and practical application of knowledge gained grooming them for life in the outside world. The thrust of the college over the last five years has been towards attaining state-of-the art infrastructure to keep pace with technological advancements. The college is actively involved in academic research and has acquired some sophisticated instruments for research.

The College has completed the first cycle of the NAAC accreditation process with Five Star rating and has volunteered for re-accreditation. The NAAC constituted a Peer Team to visit the College and validate the Re accreditation Report. The Peer Team comprising Prof. J. Shashidhara Prasad, Vice-Chancellor, University of Mysore as the Chairperson, Dr. Annamma Philip, Principal, Stella Maris College, Chennai as Member Coordinator and Prof. Mamata Ray, Principal, Presidency College, Kolkata, as Member, visited the College from 6th to 8th, December, 2006. The following report concentrates basically on the activities and achievements of the post-accreditation period.

St. Xavier's College, Mumbai, makes effort at offering socio-economically relevant programmes. During the last five years it has introduced five UG courses of which two are self financing courses in Media and Management under the University of Mumbai namely BMM & BMS. Two P.G courses have also been opened along with five self-financing certificate courses all with a very strong vocational component. A post-graduate diploma in Applied Biotechnology is also a good addition. The College now offers 32 U.G. programmes and 16 P.G. programmes. Out of 233 working days 177 have been teaching days in the last academic year. The number of students in the self-financing courses now stands at 400 on an average. The College remains basically an undergraduate college with 2648 students on the roll and 99 students enrolled at the P.G. level. Women constitute nearly 60 percent of the total student strength. A good number of research students (21) are working under different faculty members in sciences and social sciences.

The success rate of students in the university exams varies between 95-100 percent with a good number securing university ranks. The number of dropouts is negligible. A few departments have reported the number of successful students in the NET/ CAT/ GMAT/GRE and other competitive examinations.

The College has a total number of 90 permanent teachers of whom 53 are women. The management has appointed 3 full time teachers and 11 part-time teachers. Also 2 teachers are working as full-time on temporary assignment. The teacher-student ratio stands at 1:33. Number of teachers with Ph. D degree is 38 out of a total of 95.

Three teachers have been accorded special awards and recognition for their distinguished service.

The College has rightly put a thrust on acquiring excellent infrastructure. The Central Library has open-access system and is partly computerized and a few departments have their own libraries. The Central Library has a holding of 1,33,489 books of which more than 50% are reference books and 76 journals of which 14 are foreign journals. The library hours extend from 9 a.m to 8 p.m. College has one boys' hostel with a capacity of sixty, the college canteen, Xeroxing facilities and sports facilities including an upgraded gymnasium. The class- rooms have partially IT enabling accessories. The life-science laboratories have been upgraded with funds from the DST-FIST. The Smith Centre for Audio Visual Instructions (SCAVI) and Multi Media Room (MMR) are fully equipped audio-visual centres. A full-fledged language laboratory has also been set up.

The College is innovating changes to enhance the qualitative relevance of various healthy practices such as the honours programmes, the Learning for Life self-financing courses, inter-religious studies, the Teacher Assessment Questionnaire (TAQ), the Women's Development Cell, the Social Involvement Programme, the Students' Placement Cell, the Human Resource Development Centre at Khandala, a state-of-the-art resource center for the visually challenged (XRCVC), the Xavier's Science Association etc.

The College has an effective internal evaluation mechanism for the students. It conducts mid-term tests and final examination. Annual parent-teacher meetings are held to discuss the academic regularity and performance of the students. The College inspires the teachers to submit project proposals to various research funding agencies, by promoting interdisciplinary research (the Caius Lab & the Heras Museum). For making the environment sustaining, it promotes supervision of research work by the faculty members. At present the College has two major projects and 18 minor projects and two college projects in natural sciences and social sciences with a total outlay of Rs.20,57,600/- only. As an outcome of a national-level research project funded by the UNDP. Two patent applications have been filed regarding natural dyes. The College

is in the process of finalizing academic collaborations with prestigious foreign universities including the University of California, Berkeley and Harvard University.

The College has mobilized Rs.1, 00,000/- as donation, Rs. 42,00,000/- from the self-financing courses, Rs.34,07,000/- from the DST-FIST and some from consultancy.

The list of alumni / alumnae includes luminaries in different spheres such as educationists, civil servants and bureaucrats, diplomats, politicians in high offices, scientists of great repute, legal experts, judges of supreme and high courts, high profile industrialists, administrators, top ranking army officers, medical professionals of repute, great artists, media persons, religious leaders, sports persons, architects, cultural ambassadors.

The Peer Team carefully studied and analysed the Re accreditation Report submitted by the College. During the institutional visit (6-8 December, 2006). The team went through all the relevant documents, visited the Departments and the facilities and interacted with the various constituents of the institution. The academic, co-curricular, extra-curricular, sports and extension facilities were examined. The Peer Team interacted with the Governing Body, Local Management Committee, the Principal, the IQAC, the faculty members, staff members, parents and alumni and most importantly the students of the College. Based on the above exercise and keeping in mind the seven criteria identified by the NAAC, the Peer Team reassessed the institution for the quality of education offered there. The assessment, the commendable features and the issues of concern are presented in the following pages.

SECTION – II

Criterion I: Curricular Aspects

The College offers 32 UG and 16 P.G. programmes along with 19 diploma and 27 certificate courses. The College offers innovative honours programmes in various subjects. The syllabi for the UG and PG programmes are prepared by the Mumbai University. Though bound by a set pattern of Mumbai University in terms of

its syllabi, it has nonetheless sought to widen the exposure of the students beyond the limits of the University curriculum by its own self-designed honours programmes and courses offering credits to each. During the last five years the College has started five UG programmes including the ones with great job potentials viz. Bachelor of Mass Media & Bachelor of Management Studies (BMM & BMS), two post-graduate diploma courses and five vocational certificate courses like Gemmology, Jewelry Design, and Forensic Science etc. Six of them are self-financing in nature. The College has a golden legacy of imparting value-based education, which is being steadfastly carried forward. The College prepares the students for taking leading role in their respective professions. The students enjoy ample opportunities to interact with eminent scholars and achievers in the corporate sector, Government sector, in the judiciary and in creative and performing arts through seminars and workshops.

Peers from the Mumbai University review the UG and PG programmes. Peers from the UGC and the DST and other funding agencies regularly evaluate the departments, which have received financial assistance from schemes such as the FIST. The UGC has recently recognized the College as a College with Potential for Excellence. The industry-academia interactions have encouraged the College to open various vocational self-financing courses. Some of the teachers engage in academic consultancy services.

The faculty members of the College by virtue of their being members of the Boards of Studies have made significant contribution for the redesigning of syllabi for various UG and PG courses. Independent revision of syllabi for UG and PG courses has not been possible, as they have to follow the University norms. However, a few of the faculty members and the Principal being members of the University Senate, Syndicate and the Academic Council, have played major role in respective areas. Majority of the teachers are UG examiners and quite a few are P.G. examiners and research guides for Ph.D programmes of Mumbai University.

There is a well-managed system of active academic interaction between the teachers and the taught. In order to redress academic grievances &/ shortcomings of the students a number of mechanisms like remedial classes, extra classes, special tutoring are followed. The teachers have adopted many innovative teaching methods

including submitting materials on the Internet and the use of audio-visual methods. Students are encouraged to design simple experiments and are taken on field studies for practical exposure.

In realising its objective of providing equal opportunities to the disadvantaged group, the Xavier's Centre for the Visually Challenged is an ambitious project by way of extending its services and offering the facilities to those disadvantaged. The performance of the Centre is exemplary and probably one of its kind in the country and worth being emulated. The College's initiative in launching a national level social advocacy programme is a step towards the betterment of the lives of the visually challenged.

Criterion II: Teaching, Learning & Evaluation

Students are selected on the basis of performance in the last qualifying examinations. The academic progress of the students is monitored through class tests, mid-term and annual examinations. The academic performance and the attendance of the students are discussed with the parents in annual parent-teacher meetings. The College can claim uniqueness in providing special support to the visually challenged students and the slow learners. It has various mechanisms to facilitate the academic pursuits of the students from the socio-economically weaker sections. Four remedial programmes have been conducted though there is no provision for bridge courses. A language laboratory is being set up to cater to those from vernacular medium and to promote multi-language skills.

The College has a well equipped and very rich library which is put to optimum use by making it open-access and having library hours extending from 9 a.m to 8 p.m. for all 233 working days on an average in an academic year. Students even at the UG level are encouraged to undertake research projects and present seminar papers. They contribute articles for departmental journals and magazines. The College follows academic calendar and the teachers follow their respective announced teaching plans. The ratio of teaching to non-teaching staff is 1: 0.9.

Evaluation methods are communicated to the students through the academic time-table as well as the orientation programmes and the parent-teacher meetings. The students are allowed to retain photocopies of the assessed answer papers for verification and clarification. Reevaluation, if sought, is done by an external examiner. Results of college examinations are published within three weeks of the last paper.

The teachers are selected through interviews for which selection panels are constituted by the university. Apart from self-appraisal, the faculty members are assessed for their performance by the students through the TAQ. Counselling of teachers who do not get good student- feedback in the TAQ is done by senior teachers including the Head of the department concerned and the Vice Principal (Academic Improvement). During the last five years teachers have attended 53 refresher courses and 10 orientation courses. Many of them have participated in national and a few in international seminars and workshops. A good number of teachers have been resource persons. Various departments of the College have organized a good number of seminars and workshops. Altogether 8 research development programmes and 10 invited lectures were organized. Nearly 40 percent of the teachers are Ph.D degree holders.

The dropout rate amongst the students is negligible and the success percentage varies between 90 to 100% across various departments. There are several university rank holders among the students.

Criterion III: Research, Consultancy & Extension

The College promotes quality research in various fields. Nearly 40% of the full time teachers are Ph.D degree holders and many are pursuing research work. Teachers are encouraged to go on study leave. Altogether 47 research papers and 20 books have been published by the teachers during the last 5 years. 10% of the teachers are supervising research scholars, as the College is a recognized center for Ph.D work of the Mumbai University. Twenty research projects with an outlay of nearly Rs.20 lakhs are presently in progress. The College has one national and two international collaborative research projects. The Xavier's Institute of Social Research works in

collaboration with other units and departments in the campus and outside to promote and encourage participatory action-oriented research on issues of social concern. The teachers often undertake academic consultancy work. A few of the teachers have secured the best teacher award from the University of Mumbai and the best achievement award in the field of education. The Department of Life Science and Biochemistry has been awarded a DST-FIST grant of nearly Rs.34.5 lacs for the up-gradation of the P.G laboratories of the Biological Sciences.

The College has a golden legacy of providing extension services to the society at large and to the deprived and the under privileged in particular. The participation of the honours students in the Social Involvement Programme is mandatory whereby they are required to render a minimum of 60 hours of service for an NGO in the city or in rural areas and this carries credit. The Social Service League organizes medical camps, blood donation camps, HIV/AIDS awareness programmes, tribal welfare programmes etc. The All India Christian University Federation organize youth camps, leadership camps and camps in tribal areas.

Criterion IV: Infrastructure & Learning Resources

The main College campus is spread over 2.94 acres of land and the majestic College Building is a heritage structure. The College is well equipped with sufficient classrooms and sophisticated infrastructure needed for modern research and higher academic activities. The College has state-of-the-art laboratory equipments, fibreglass boards and pull down screens in each class room, portable audio-visual aids, Two Multi Media rooms, a language laboratory, one multi-media documentation center, video-conferencing facility and computer lab, smart boards, Xavier's Resource Centre for the Visually Challenged, a hostel for boys that can accommodate sixty, Prayer Room, College Auditorium. Xeroxing facility, Heras Institute of Indian Culture with Museum, Nadkarni Sacasa Research Laboratory, Caius Research Laboratory, Blatter Herbarium, which is a recognized National Resource Centre, cricket pitch, basketball & badminton courts and Gymnasium in Fell Gymkhana among other facilities. The maintenance of all these facilities is looked after by an administrative officer and the College has spent 3 crores for maintenance and infrastructure development over the last five years. The College augments its infrastructure to keep pace with academic

growth by means of UGC grant and funds raised through the Xavier's Development Programme. Among the learning resources a centralized computer facility with Internet access is remarkable along with the library and the laboratories. The recently created Video Conferencing Centre and Cyber Café under the aegis of knowledge centre are great steps in the promotion of international collaboration and promotion of IT education.

Criterion V: Student Support and Progression

The drop out rate is negligible. The students opt for a variety of professions. Not many departments have given information on success rates in various research/teaching-qualifying examinations such as the NET, GMAT, GRE, CAT etc.

The College has a glorious past as evidenced by a very large number of distinguished alumni. The Alumni Association established in 1902, is actively involved in fund raising for the Alma Mater, provisioning of scholarships, career counseling, felicitation of the retiring staff etc. An Advisory Council of eminent alumni has recently been constituted.

The efficient administrative department and its systematic functioning has ensured regular updating and publication of the college handbook and prospectus. Attention has been paid to ensure that it contains all necessary information for the students including the goals and objectives of the College, the facilities available on the campus and the details of the courses offered and the general rules of the library.

The College has set up a Grievance Redressal Cell with a representative from an NGO. In the last two years four cases of grievance have been settled by the Cell. The Counseling Cell caters not only to the faculty and students but also to the public.

Criterion VI: Organisation & Management

The College has a very efficient decentralized system of administration with a great deal of accountability. The Principal functions through Academic Council of all the Vice Principals (3) and other important officials. This expands into the IQAC

which does planning and evaluation for the College. Various committees of staff and students take responsibility for the different activities of the College.

The Local Managing Committee (LMC) comprising nine members including the Principal as the Secretary, prepares the budget and financial statements, recommends creation of new posts, recommends measures for academic and administrative improvement and undertake many other vital decision making activities. The LMC meets twice every year. The perspective plan for the institutional development is done after consecutive meetings with the Academic Council, IQAC and the Heads of the Departments. They have initiated and implemented a number of proposals, the outstanding among them being the restoration of the heritage structure (in particular the library), up-gradation of the laboratories, establishment of Information Centre, Placement Cell, introduction of self-financing courses etc. The College does take measures to upgrade the skills of non-teaching staff also by conducting workshops and training programmes during vacation. Sessions on personality enhancement and financial management have also been held. These programmes have helped to enhance their professional skills.

There is a Women's Development Cell to address the grievances and empowerment needs of the girl students who constitute more than 60% of the student-strength. The WDC meets several times in a term.

The officers and the non-teaching staff of the administration have meticulously maintained the records and have started on office computerization.

The College undertakes a number of welfare measures for the students and the staff including provision of insurance coverage.

Criterion VII : Healthy Practices

The College can act as a role model for other institutions so far as healthy practices are concerned. This history dates back to 1869 when the College was established with the missionary zeal of producing complete human beings capable of ushering in fundamental upliftment in human-life in the neighbourhood. Majority of

the healthy practices are age-old and still relevantly pursued. The new additions include setting up the IQAC (2003-04) to initiate and monitor academic and all round development of the College in the post-NAAC scenario. The introduction of the TAQ, the Women's Development Cell, Xavier's Resource Centre for the Visually Challenged, the Department of Inter-Religious Studies, the Social Involvement Programme for the honours students, the Xavier's Science Association, the language lab, the Central Computer Centre with internet access, the multi-media facilities, are some of the numerous healthy practices being adopted by the College.

Innovation in teaching, learning and evaluation is achieved through feedbacks, workshops and conferences for the faculty, recommendations from the Advisory Board etc. The administrative system of the College is also IT-enabled with softwares for the collation of monthly attendance, results, admissions, salary bill etc. The biometric system for recording the attendance of the non-teaching staff has been introduced.

The students maintain good interactive relationship with peers from other colleges by participating in many inter-college competitions and by organizing the College Fest and also by productively utilizing the platform of Mosaic – an interdisciplinary, interdepartmental activity of exhibitions and poster presentation.

The commerce section of the college which works in the evening has a highly note worthy practice that could be emulated by any Institution. Academically less endowed poor folk who have taken up full time jobs at lower level for living are admitted to the course. These students would have taken several attempts to pass SSC and Junior College even with vernacular medium. They are trained to come out with bright colours matching the result score of the University. Most of them are later employed at higher levels.

The various student-centred associations have been helpful in the promotion of latent skills and talents of the students. Britannia Indian Music Group (IMG) organizes 'Janfest' a musical extravaganza and invites eminent musicians to perform. It has one of the largest collections of vocal and instrumental music, which can be used by student and public interested in music. Heras Reference Library/Museum are

opened to researchers from different parts of the country. The journal of the centre has made a big name.

Overall Analysis

After visiting all departments, facilities and units of St. Xavier's college, Mumbai and extensive interaction with all the stakeholders of the College, the Peer Team is pleased to record its sincere appreciation of the enthusiasm and cooperation extended by the entire St. Xavier's College, Mumbai for the NAAC reaccreditation process. The overall analysis of this NAAC process conducted by the Peer Team is summarized below.

Commendations/Recommendations :

1. As one of the very old colleges established in the country, St. Xavier's College, Mumbai, has a glorious history and rich heritage. It has immensely contributed in spreading quality higher education in the country and in particular in the state of Maharashtra. Institutions with great heritage may not always perpetuate the good traditions and the quality but here is an example wherein, St. Xavier's College has shown to be an exception.
2. The College has phenomenal strength of having produced luminaries in different walks of national life.
3. Its educational environment is stimulating which ensures freedom of thinking and action as well as responsibility and honesty.
4. The College is unique in imparting truly value-based education, which manifests in the multifarious extension activities aiming to enhance social welfare.
5. The College has inculcated a research culture among the faculty.
6. The College has recently been granted the status of a College with Potential for Excellence by the UGC and the financial support has been utilized in a fitting way that can cater to the modern higher education for the challenging times ahead.
7. The interaction with the students bubbling with enthusiasm indicates the quality and openness of the academic and the administrative system provided to the students that would help them to face the challenges of life.

8. The Jesuit Fathers who are working behind the scene selflessly with love and affection have been role models for the faculty and the students.

Suggestions :

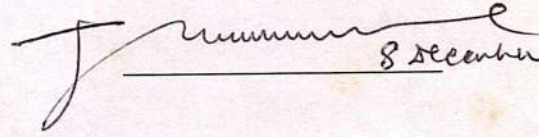
1. The strength of the Boys Hostel may be increased to meet the demand in future from within and outside the country.
2. A Girl's Hostel could be started to accommodate students from outside Mumbai and other states who would like to pursue studies at St. Xavier's.
3. The departments may be asked to hold essential reference books and texts for the quick reference of the students.
4. The management should make attempts to seek Autonomous status for the College to implement new ideas and courses.
5. The university may be approached to permit the college to start innovative and self-supporting courses that may be designed by the college.
6. The college should subscribe to more no. of good journals as they have M.Sc. and Doctoral Programmes.
7. The College could approach the University of Mumbai to provide e-journals which are subscribed under Inflibnet/Infonet to the college.
8. The College may try to expand interaction with the industry and explore the possibility of collaboration with other institutions such as the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), IIT, Mumbai, which will help the students to be exposed to the current trends.
9. The College may initiate action to have N.C.C. and N.S.S. Units.
10. The management should motivate the faculty to pursue doctoral degrees, as the college has doctoral programmes.

The Peer Team strongly feels that the Government and the Parent University should relax the academic hold on pre-eminent institutions for their all round growth.

The Peer Team would like to thank the affectionate hospitality of Dr. Frazer Mascarenhas, S.J., Principal of the College, the management and the administrative staff, faculty and students during their stay.

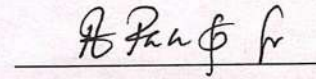
PEERT TEAM :

Prof. J. Shashidhara Prasad (Chairperson)


8 December 2006

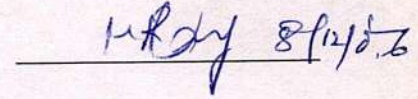
Dr. Annamma Philip

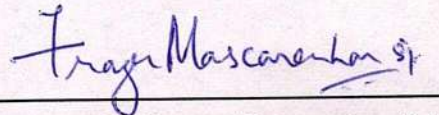
(Member Coordinator)

 8/12/06

Dr. Mamata Ray

(Member)

 8/12/06

 8th Dec. 2006

Dr. (Fr.) Frazer Mascarenhas, S.J.

Principal

