



# BEST PRACTICES

Implemented

UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS

## **BEST PRACTICE – 1**

### **“MADRAS UNIVERSITY FREE EDUCATION SCHEME (MUFES)”**

#### ***Introduction***

At every juncture in its long history, the University of Madras has rejuvenated itself by dovetailing its innovations and best practices into healthy practices for all its stakeholders and Higher Education at large. University healthy practices are defined as the "institutionalization of innovative self, regulated responsibilities which aim to promote academic growth of international quality in the University system. Higher educational institutions are expected to build optimally seven healthy practices if they are to answer professionally the requirements of societal transformation universities. They are:

- Respecting diverse talents and ways of learning
- Communicating high expectations
- Encouraging increased interaction between students and faculty
- Developing reciprocity and cooperation among students
- Encouraging active learning with advanced teaching tools
- Giving prompt feedback to staff and students and
- Emphasizing tasks on time with total quality management.

#### **1. Title of the Practice**

**“MADRAS UNIVERSITY FREE EDUCATION SCHEME (MUFES)”**

#### **2. Objectives of the Practice**

- To promote the skills, knowledge, capacity building, critical thinking and innovative approach of the students by providing them all-round support
- To foster multi-disciplinary research perspective in the students by giving them the needed research support
- To assist the students in their academic pursuit by extending the scheme of “Madras University Free Education Scheme (MUFES)”

#### **3. The Context**

From its inception, University of Madras has been implementing a rally of healthy and best practices, in response to the social needs and to the dynamics of higher education in India and abroad which had become a model for many of the other state universities. The university attempts to instill in its students not only skills and knowledge but also capacity building,

critical thinking and innovative approach. With the aim of hold up the students to accomplish all the above objectives, the university has been framing and executing all its academic and administrative proceedings as learner-oriented. As the institution encompasses a vast diversity of the students from various social, linguistic, and economic strata, there arises a necessity to support its students not only from an academic perspective, but to bestow them with the required financial support deemed as a requisite for the overall promotion of the students.

This particular best practice which has been observed by the university is in tune with its mission, i.e. to impart quality education to the students within their means. This adopted best practice is proven to be a triumphant endeavor on the part of the university with specific focus on the upliftment and expansion of the students who are the backbone any academic system.

#### **4. The Practice**

The practice which has been implemented successfully is titled as **Madras University Free Education Scheme (MUFES)**.

The core values of the University which is reflected in its motto “*Doctrina Vim Promovet Insitam*” (Latin) - “*Learning Promotes Natural Talent*” is seen extensively in all the deeds of the university. In order to promote and extend, this gracious dictum, the University is disposing a bouquet of activities and most of them are *learner-centric* i.e. to expand the learning to the greatest segment of the learner-community.

To emphasize the noble thought that ‘education liberates human soul’; the university instigated the scheme of **Free Education** for the 1370 learners of the university departments and its affiliated colleges. The promotion of Universal values, ethics and humanistic thoughts are practiced and reflected through this enterprise. Even though the unit cost of education in the University is high, the course fee structure is low and within the reach of ordinary students. The University has been making full use of grants from the UGC and the State governments without allowing any grant to lapse on account of non-execution of a project or non-implementation of a programme.

The “**Madras University Free Education Scheme**” has been introduced from the academic year 2010-2011 onwards to help the poor students to pursue a degree course in the Madras University affiliated colleges in the districts of Chennai, Thiruvallur and Kancheepuram. Under this scheme financial assistance is provided for pursuing a degree course in the aided and self-financing colleges affiliated to University of Madras and located in the Chennai, Thiruvallur, and Kancheepuram districts. All students residing in the above districts

are eligible to apply. Preference is given to economically backward students, orphans, children of agricultural labourers, daily wage earners, widows and destitute women and also to the First graduation of the family whose annual income of the family is less than rupees two lakhs. The Free Education Scheme is to assist the students who are unable to pursue their higher education in undergraduate courses in the Aided/Self-Finance Colleges only affiliated to University of Madras, owing to financial constrain (Tuition fee and Hostel fee only). The selection is made on the basis of Economic status cum merit.

**Beneficiaries of the Scheme:**

The following economically and socially disadvantaged sections of the student community are benefitted by this noble scheme of the university.

- The Family income should not exceed Rs. 2, 00,000/- P.A.
- The Family should not own a house or land.
- The Orphans, Widow's Children, Transgender, disabled.
- The Candidates should be the First Graduate in the family.
- The Candidates, whose mothers have been deserted
- Other candidates are also considered on the basis of Economic and Family Circumstances.

**The Eligible Candidates will be selected on the basis of the following conditions: -**

- This scheme is applicable for the student's seeking admission in Under Graduate Programme in Aided and Self-Financing Colleges affiliated to University of Madras and appeared +2 examinations or its equivalent degree during the current academic year i.e. 2021-2022.
- The students should have passed all subjects in first attempt and should submit both PLUS ONE and PLUS TWO-mark statement otherwise the application will be rejected.
- The Family income should not exceed Rs. 3, 00,000/- Per Annum as per the Income Certificate issued by Tahsildar, Revenue Department.
- Each college will be allotted with minimum 3 FREE SEATS (i.e., 1 free seat under each category) which will be sanctioned as extra seats above the sanctioned strength by the University. The seats are allotted to different categories as given under:
  1. **Category (i):** 1/3rd of the seats for widow's children / widower's children / orphan / destitute children based on the marks obtained in major subjects.
  2. **Category (ii):** 1/3rd of the seats for first graduate / disabled / transgender students based on the marks obtained in major subjects.

3. **Category (iii):** 1/3rd of the seats for Merit students who had obtained 80% of marks in the Major subjects.

The students may be called for counselling in the ratio of 1:2 in every category.

#### 5. Evidence of Success

As a testimony to the success of this practice adopted by the institution, quite a lot of success outcomes have been observed from the student succession and student progress.

**Students Applied and Selected in the last five years:**

#### Affiliated Colleges:

ACADEMIC YEAR	NO. OF CANDIDATES ADMITTED	NO. OF COLLEGES ALLOTTED
2017-2018	199	74
2018-2019	272	84
2019-2020	238	84
2020-2021	238	86
2021-2022	313	83
2022-2023	200	70

Year	Number of Students Benefitted	Amount
2017-2018	21	Rs.1,36,530/-
2018-2019	28	Rs.1,83,680/-
2019-2020	30	Rs.2,11,915/-
2020-2021	30	Rs.2,21,265/-

**University**

2021-2022	16	-
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**Departments:**

## 6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

University of Madras is a State public university. Most of the financial affairs of the institution are dependent on the State government as well as the Central government. The major sources of fund/income for the institution are from the external sources. With this reality as an obvious factor, the institution is taking challenge by giving its students utmost freedom and flexibility with regard to their financial requirement. This bold approach as a practice is being implemented by the institution with a single vision of supporting its student community in order to assist them in their academic progress to achieve knowledge, skills, capacity building and an inclusive intellectual growth and ultimately to the accomplishment of excellence in higher education which is the supreme vision and mission of the university.

Since the implementation of this practice is related to finance, the main resource required itself is evidently the funding. Hence the implementation requires financial support for extending various sorts of financial relaxations to the students. This was sourced through the government support, both state and central, Industry funding, project funding, funding from agencies and also from the alumni support.

## 7. Notes (Optional)

**Madras University Free Education Scheme** was introduced in 2009-10 which provides a complete fee waiver for the poorest student among students based on merit and economic status in each of the PG programmes in the University departments.

Going ahead with this best practice by the institution may invite students from across the various sections of the society which are especially lagging behind on account of the poor earnings. The same practice can be adopted by other state universities which are function with the vision of imparting education to all. The institution as an alma mater for other institutions of higher education is planning further to extend this noble strategy to reach more needy students with the aim of imparting quality higher education to all learners.

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## **BEST PRACTICE 2**

### **“UNOM LEARNER-CENTRIC PRACTICES”**

#### **1. Title of the Practice**

**“UNOM - Learner-Centric Practices (UNOM - LPs)”**

#### **2. Objectives of the Practice**

University of Madras aims to empower the students with specific focus on the academic support, career growth and overall support by practicing a series of student support and service activities with the adoption of diverse mechanism with the spotlight of all of them are learner-centric.

#### **3. The Context**

As envisaged by the vision and mission of the university, the institution provides to facilitate the success of the students after the completion of their higher education learning. All the student support services are planned in such a way that they not only impart assistance in various forms but also are proposed to eliminate academic, institutional, professional and financial barriers. The support and services which are oriented towards the up skilling of the students such as job related and skill training enabling them to become educated and skilled.

#### **4. The Practice**

Quite a lot of Learner-centric practices are rendered in the form of academic support and career guidance in variously entitled systems by the university as stated by its vision and mission. Four most successful and demonstrated customs which were initiated by the university under the title **“UNOM - Learner-Centric Practices (UNOM-LPs)”** to extend the services and supports to the students are outlined below:

##### **1. USAB - University Students Advisory Bureau (USAB)**

A preminent practice focusing the students is the constitution of USAB which was launched as early as in 1909 is headed by a full time Director. The supreme aim of this bureau is to take care of the needs of the students. The USAB offers various services to graduates and postgraduates of the University departments and affiliated institutions.



- **Career Guidance and Counseling**

The USAB provides career guidance for their higher education to students. Each College is asked to appoint one Career Guidance Counsellors to render the counseling service, in which the USAB arranges training for the Career Guidance Counsellors.

- **Placement**

The graduates and post graduates those who are registered in USAB office will be given temporary placements in Government / Private and Public sector organizations. The USAB is also organizing Campus Recruitment for the University Departments and Students of affiliated Colleges.

- **Training Programme**

Arranges training for the Placement Officers of the affiliated Colleges with the help of Corporate and other Resource persons. Also arranges training for the Students of the affiliated Colleges to develop soft skills and make them employable.

- **Coaching Classes**

Remedial Coaching, Coaching scheme are provided for entry into services for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Minority Communities students. Coaching for National Eligibility Test (NET) and State Eligibility Test (SET) for Lectureship.

- **Short Term Courses**

Short term courses with an objective of developing job-skill in demanding service sectors (e.g.) Tourism, Public Relation, air ticketing and travel management, executive secretaryship, women entrepreneurial development programme, etc

- **Science Talent Promotion Scheme**

The U.S.A.B organizes for P.G. Students from various Departments of Sciences in Guindy and Taramani Campuses of the University of Madras under Science Talent Promotion Scheme for the internship which they do during summer.

- **INFORMEX**

The USAB organizes a Career Guidance Exhibition (INFORMEX) every year in the city of Chennai.

- **UNIFEST**

The USAB conducts annual Inter Department Cultural programs (UNIFEST) across all Campuses.

- **International Students Day**

USAB organizes cultural get together frequently for the International students.

- **Annual Sports Meet For The University Departments Students**

USAB organizes sports events for the students to develop their mental as well as their physical fitness.

- **Provision For Counselors/Mentors/ Advisors**

University Students Advisory Bureau housed in the Chepauk campus of the University offers counselling, mentors and advisors for each class or group of students for academic, personal and psychosocial guidance. Further, every student is assigned a faculty advisor to advice on academic matters.

- **Bridge/Remedial/Add On Courses**

The remedial programme for the newly admitted students is arranged in various disciplines. Entrance test for assessment of skill and term test for assessing the knowledge level of students.

## **2. DEAN (STUDENTS)**

Dean –Student Affairs handles both the academic and non-academic matters related to the students.

- Orientation programme to the newly admitted students
- Arrangement of inter-universities and inter-state cultural and sports events
- Redressal of issues related to the fellowships, scholarships etc
- Solving non-academic problems like ragging, sexual-harassment, issues of discrimination etc.

## **3. INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS (ICOM)**

The primary activities of the ICOM are as follows:

- Enrollment of international students
- International exchange through MOUs
- Coordinating visits of delegations from abroad
- Student exchange to and from the university

- Helping students obtain aid and administering the corpus fund of university
- Facilitating researchers from abroad
- Promoting joint/dual PG degree and joint PhD programmes with universities abroad
- Helping designing short term, need-based courses for overseas students and credit transfer facilities
- Giving partial tuition fee waiver to students belonging to SAARC countries
- Consideration of foreign nationals including NRIs and refugees for admission
- Conducting blended programs with foreign universities

#### **4. GLIDE**

Yet another pioneering and successful best practice developed by the university has been from the department of Women Studies which also is in line with the vision of the university to promote gender sensitization and thereby endeavor for the empowerment of the women.

*The Gender Lab for Inclusiveness and Diversity Education* (GLIDE), the first of its kind in the country, conducts online workshops on gender sensitization for young men and women in order to prevent gender-based discrimination and violence, the Lab has been equipped with 20 high end computers, accessories, and furniture in an air-conditioned space. This initiative addresses the need to educate different stakeholders about inclusion and diversity in public sphere including the workplace. This is undeniably help in reducing the growing rates of sexual harassment and gender-based violence in society at large.

#### **5. Evidence of Success**

The evidence of success for the practice of learner-centric practices which are rendered in the form of academic support and career guidance in variously entitled systems have led to the following outcomes:

##### **USAB:**

- Contribution in the form of counselling and career guidance
- Placement, Campus recruitment and fairs
- Solving of academic and non-academic problems
- UGC coaching classes in the departments
- Remedial coaching at undergraduate and postgraduate levels for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Minority community students

- An established Single-point to solve both the academic and non-academic problems of the students
- Training for the Placement Officers of the 129 affiliated Colleges

**Dean (Students):**

Dean –Student affairs succeeded in dealing with/solving the diverse problems of the students by becoming the single window to meet with all the academic and non-academic affairs of the students and thereby contribute further for the academic affluence of the university.

**International Centre for University of Madras (ICOM):**

- Promoted the overall educational excellence and culturally appropriate ambience in the university
- International exchange through MOUs has resulted in the exceptional growth of the academic vicinity of the university
- Provision of large number of scholarships
- More than 100 MOUs with foreign universities and institutions
- A joint online PG degree programme by the Department of Geography and Staffordshire University had been conducted for more than five years.
- A number of joint/dual PG degree and joint PhD programmes with universities abroad were produced
- Credit – transfer facility resulted in the augmented vertical mobility and academic flexibility
- Students belonging to SAARC countries were benefitted with fee-reduction
- 15% supernumerary seats were provided in all the PG courses for foreign nationals including NRIs
- Facilitation of accommodation to the students for comfortable learning

**GLIDE:**

- The feedback received responses where around 80 percent of the students, rated the course as effective with clear learning objectives, as adding to their skills and being highly recommendable among their peer groups.

- The success of the practice encouraged in the extension of the same to students of the affiliated colleges of the university
- The Gender Lab and the GLIDE family, with partners from Sutherland and UNOM, are set for a big leap in the years to come.

The evidences for the success of the practice show that the students of the university, both the current and the former students are being benefited largely out of the UNOM Learner-centric Practices of the institution.

## **6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required**

University of Madras bears the heritage of being the first university in constituting vast variety of student-oriented support and services. As the institution is a state public university, the main problems encountered in the carrying out of the rendering of student support and service activities are basically monetary natured. Keeping aside this limitation, the institution is offering all the student-oriented services in a reasonable cost.

The problems faced can be condensed as follows:

- Fund constraint
- Lack of adequate manpower to impart more services to the students

## **7. Notes (Optional)**

Learner-centric practices of the university promote positive relationships among the teachers and the students. Besides the prescribed and publicized Learner-centric practices, the university through its departments delivers several other valuable services as follows:

- Peer Tutoring
- Individual Tutoring
- Supplemental Teaching
- Remedial Teaching
- Academic Counseling

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