

Institutional Policy on Online Class

In the backdrop of unprecedented challenges created by the COVID pandemic, education has changed dramatically. There is a distinctive rise in e-learning, where learning takes place in digital platforms. With this sudden shift away from classrooms, and the possibility of this situation persisting beyond the pandemic, it has become imperative to adopt on line classes at the earliest.

After preliminary discussions in the general staff meeting and at the TQM meeting, a committee was constituted to explore the possibilities of conducting online classes for the UG and PG students of SXCS. Given below is the report submitted by the committee.

Objective and Methodology

Objective

To device a mechanism for holding online classes for all courses at SXCS.

Resources

Existing resources at SXCS

- An Academic Management System (AMS) provided by Laneways
- Video conferencing facility-Avaya Spaces
- Facility for recording audio and video lectures
- Good internet connectivity within the campus

Limitations of existing resources

- Integrating the AMS with the video conferencing facility
- Scheduling of classes and tracking student attendance

- Tracking student participation

Requirement

An integrated platform for scheduling classes, holding online meetings, attendance capture, display of course schedule and structure, reading materials, assessment and continuous interaction with students.

Evaluation of Free Resources

Free resources were evaluated by the committee in order to select a platform that is reliable and user friendly and with functionalities required by them institution. The following criteria were considered in evaluating the platform:

- A platform that is simple to set up and use.
- A platform where we can have an overall view of the course progress
- A platform in which teaching and assessment is integrated

Choice of Platform

'Microsoft for Education' is the free version of Office 365 designed for utilization by schools and colleges. After comparing Microsoft for Education with other platforms like Google Classroom, this platform was selected for conducting online classes.

Plan of Action

The committee held several rounds of deliberation to prepare a plan of action for beginning online classes. The following was implemented:

- Teacher and student accounts were created
- Timetable was planned for the online classes
- Several rounds of training were held for the faculty members
- Class groups and subject groups were created
- Trial sessions were held for the students to familiarize with the platform.
- Online classes were scheduled on a regular basis

- Regular feedback was collected from students to resolve issues.
- Progression of classes and attendance is being monitored through the College ERP portal

Continuous Internal Assessment

In view of the online classes the Controller of Examination has issued a set of guidelines to the teachers for conducting Continuous Internal Assessment of students. The guidelines include i) aligning CIA tasks with the online learning pattern ii) principles of effective online assessment iii) recommended online assessment methods iv) model online assignment. Teachers have been encouraged to come up with innovative assessment methods apart of the existing ones.

Technical Support Group for Students

A Student Support Group comprising of three students from each was constituted in order to train them in the technical aspects of the online platform. Several rounds of training were given to this group and they in-turn trained their respective classes. Apart from this, the student support group lends regular support to their class in managing technical issues that might arise during the course of the classes.

Support System for Faculty Members

An Online Classes Support Group comprising of a few faculty members was constituted to offer technical support and advise on conducting online classes. This support group conducted several rounds of training to the faculty members. The group also created FAQ documents and other user manuals for both students and teachers in order to resolve technical issues. The support group continues to offer regular technical support along with updates on latest features in the online platform.

Screen-time Management and Counselling Support Emotional support for students is an integral part of the Student Support Programme at SXCS. Realizing the difficulties involved and the

challenges faced by the students in this new mode of learning, the college has extended counselling support to students. Class mentors have been continuously guiding the students in screen-time management and in coping with the online mode of learning. The Counselling Department is in regular contact with the students to identify those students who may require emotional support.

Feedback and Evaluation

In order to evaluate the student experience of the online platform a feedback and evaluation system has been established. Feedback is to be collected every semester from students which will be analysed. The analysis will help in identifying and drawing pertinent points to enhance learning effectiveness. (Annexure 1)

Framework for Online courses using Microsoft Teams

Enrolment

- Create accounts for all students using their register numbers as user names
- Create groups and distribution lists for all classes
- Create separate distribution list for open elective courses
- Limit the privileges for student accounts (ex. Students should not be able to create teams or start team meetings)
- Create faculty groups for specific subjects

Class allotment

- Create teams for each course and add the relevant distribution list to the team.
- Create a class notebook and connect it with Teams
- Map the notebook with the Teams course
- Map the Class Notebook students to the Microsoft Teams course students

Course Schedule

Class meeting will begin as scheduled in the timetable

- The subject teacher will start a video meet and will allow students to join the meet
- Attendance to be download after all students have left the meeting (teacher should continue to be part of the meeting)
- The teacher can announce activities like quiz, polls, surveys, written responses to ensure that students are paying attention
- The teacher can make use of the Class Notebook that is integrated with the Teams course to get students to maintain a class journal
- The teacher can share files, video links and weblinks with the students

Evaluation

- Assignments can be announced through the 'Assignment' tab in the Teams course
- Due date, description of the assignment, rubrics of assessment and marks allotted can be mentioned within the Assignment tab
- Assignments can be evaluated; feedback can be given to individual students and the marks can be exported to an Excel file

Tracking learning progress

- The teacher can assign weekly tasks to the students and assess them periodically
- Student attendance to be regularly entered through the College ERP portal
- Marks can be assigned for maintaining the class journal

Conclusion

The academic policy of the institution shall remain the same and the technology adopted shall only be utilized to realize the academic objectives. Technology shall be used only as an aid to conduct classes and efforts shall be made to retain the best practices in teaching

pedagogy while conducting online classes. Tracking individual student progress, addressing the needs of slow and fast learners, providing individual attention and need based assistance shall continue to be the top priorities of the institution. Teachers and students shall be introduced to the online mode of teaching and learning in a gradual manner and institutional support shall be provided to students who may not have the necessary means to attend online classes.