

Two Best Practices of the Institution during AY 2021-2022

I

1. **Title of the Practice:** Digitization (of Alumni Interface through an Alumni Website within the College website)
2. **Objectives of the Practice:** The underlying principle was to extend digitization to an important aspect of the functioning of the college, which is alumni outreach. The intended outcome was to leverage technology to increase alumni participation in the life of the College.
3. **The Context:** For some time now, the college, through its Alumni Association (AA), has been increasing alumni outreach. There is an Alumni Office, headed by a faculty, that liaisons with the AA, and the AA works through contact with alumni chapters. All this was however episodic and discontinuous, and most communication in this regard was happening through personalized emails and other traditional methods. On the other hand, the college has been making strides in digitization where, with the use of inhouse talent, substantial digitization was achieved in the form of the Academic Management Portal, etc. There had existed an alumni website before but it was not integrated into the College's internet domain. In this practice, both these things came together, and a fully dedicated alumni website, linked to the college website, is now allowing us to use technology to keep in touch with our alumni continuously and comprehensively and is easily accessible from all parts of the world. The challenge was to think of all possible aspects for which the alumni and college would need to connect with each other, and to design a website which would incorporate all these features.
4. **The Practice:** The website as it has been created and exists today provides a. registration facility for the Alumni Association b. alumni news c. platform to share stories d. means of connecting with batchmates e. opportunities to do professional networking f. chance to contribute to the college g. guidelines to form chapters. The alumni network of St Stephen's is one of the oldest, most distinguished, most global and largest among HEI in the country as the college was founded in 1881. The limitation and constraints will have to do with the fact that for an institution of our longevity, many alumni may not be able to use the net and this might create a divide of a sharp kind in relation to a time when most alumni were at the same level in terms of mode of communication which was more traditional.
5. **Evidence of Success:** The website is now operational and provides a wide set of functionalities that help the College and its alumni to keep in touch more regularly and effortlessly. Since the domain of the website is now linked to the College's main and official domain, there is greater legitimacy to all this interface.
6. **Problems Encountered and Resources Required:** The challenge was to integrate the alumni website with the college website and provide all the functionalities required for a comprehensive as well as nuanced interface. The College IT Department consisting of Mr. Arnold Milton and Mr. Ravi Prakash designed the website in-house under the supervision of the Principal Prof. John Varghese. Ms. Ann Susan Aleyas, Faculty In-Charge of Alumni Affairs collected all the information and data required through the

Alumni Office, and was assisted by a Joint Office Cler and the Core Committee of the College's Alumni Association.

7. **Notes:** From this experience, it would be advisable for all HEIs to create a digitized interface with their alumni for increasing the extent and depth of the institution's connection with alumni and within the alumni, and for long-term, cutting edge and sustainable processes within.

II

1. **Title of the Practice:** Sensitization of Students to Constitutional Values and giving them Representation in the life of the College (Resumption of Student Elections).
2. **Objectives of the Practice:** The objective and underlying principle was to expose students to processes that are critical to our constitutional system and democratic values. The intended outcome was to give students familiarity with election as a process that is the linchpin of our system and give them a representation in the functioning of the College.
3. **The Context:** Because of Covid 19 lockdown and restrictions, the College was working largely online in the period March 2020 to February 2022. In this period, certain basic practices of the College that help sensitize students to constitutional values and gives them representation in the functioning of the College could not be implemented. The election to the Students' Union Society, the umbrella body for student representation in College life, were not held for two years. The challenge was that the student batches who had an experience of how the elections to the Students' Union Society were held had passed out of the college, and long-standing traditions of nomination, campaigning, counting, etc., had not been experienced by the batches at this time in the College. The time was right to resume this practice.
4. **The Practice:** Elections were held for the position of the President of the Students' Union Society (to be chosen from among final year students) and the 20-member Students' Council, with representatives for each year, on the 27th of January 2023. Mr S R Ayde, the Staff Advisor to the SUS, was appointed as the Election Officer for the academic year 2022-2023. The Tribunal comprised of Dr Malay Neerav, Sanjay Rao Ayde and Dr Karen Gabriel. The process comprised stages of nomination, campaign, final campaign address and the election itself. St Stephen's College was the first college in University of Delhi to hold Students' Union elections (January 2023) after the Pandemic years. Notices were put up regarding guidelines to be followed by the contestants and the voters in accordance with the Lyngdoh Committee Recommendations As mentioned before, this was happening after a gap of two years so none of the batches had experience of it.
5. **Evidence of Success:** Polling took place on January 27, 2023 from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in seven different rooms. Room-A was specially earmarked for the differently abled students. Ballot Paper for the office of the President and the Council Seats were printed in College. On January 27th at 5.30 p.m. the election results for the office of the President were declared by the Returning Officer. Pankaj from BA Programme, Third Year was declared elected. A total number of 765 votes were polled. Pankaj secured 497 votes out of 765. Defeated contestant Sagarika Chowdhary secured 256 votes out of 765. In all 12 votes were declared invalid. The Students' Council elections were also conducted successfully simultaneously. The students showed great maturity in

participating in the process and the faculty and non-teaching staff were able to run the elections without any problems. The students were able to benefit from the Union as it organized key events like the College Festival Harmony, Convocation and the Graduation Dinner, among other things.

6. **Problems Encountered and Resources Required:** As mentioned before, there had been a gap of two years, and none of the batches participating had any experience of the College's traditions regarding this. Faculty and Non-Teaching Staff conducted the process. Mr S R Ayde, the Staff Advisor to the SUS was appointed as the Election Officer for the academic year 2022-2023. The Tribunal comprised of Dr Malay Neerav, Sanjay Rao Ayde and Dr Karen Gabriel. All faculty handled the election booths. The tribunal conducted the counting and announced the results which were then certified by the Principal.
7. **Notes:** The elections in the College are not linked to the party-based system in the University. This could be considered as a model for wider application.