

‘RENAISSANCE’

The Academic Retreat for Teaching & Non-Teaching Staff

Since the inception of DiST, ‘Renaissance’ The Academic Retreat has played a key role in **planning and implementing the curriculum for the ensuing year** and assessing and evaluating the academic and non-academic activities of the previous year. Renaissance is **an interactive platform for the management and staff members of DiST to fill in the gaps in providing quality education with timely vision**

Objectives of the Practice

- **To evaluate ongoing year’s academic and non-academic objectives, activities and performance of the institution and the departments in detail**
- **To plan and schedule curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities of the departments and the institution for the ensuing year**
- **To achieve targeted outcome in the teaching learning process**
- **To train faculty members to transform from teachers to mentors**
- **To inspire faculty members for self-development and live up to the expectations of the students and all other stake holders.**
- **To refresh the body and mind of all involved in the academic pursuit of the college.**

The Context

Renaissance, the academic retreat programme of DiST is a **process to coordinate curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular action plan of all departments and that of the institute as a whole for the upcoming academic year**. Though time-consuming, it provides clarity and lucid understanding over the entire academic plans for the upcoming year based on the evaluation of current academic year.

The programme ensures that each school’s academic and non-academic developmental programmes, the exposure and skills each student is expected to obtain and progress of students in all aspects are being planned and executed. The discussions and evaluation

of the shortcomings of the previous year, presentations of the objectives and activities of the institute and of all departments for the upcoming year and standardization of the learning objectives for the entire college and provision of a clear path for students to progress from one grade to another are the intended outcomes.

The Practice

At the end of every academic year, **both teaching and non-teaching staff members gather in a residential centre outside the college** for two days. This practice **begins with the formation of a renaissance working committee** in the month of April in each academic year. This committee forms various sub-committees for planning and executing different aspects of the retreat.

The committee, in discussion with the Principal, selects a theme related to current issues and problems in higher education and moulding of young minds. Invited discourses by experts on the selected theme are given in the initial sessions to enlighten the staff. Before the commencement of the Retreat, **each department conducts elaborate discussions on the achievement levels of objectives and action plans for the current year and achievable targets, department calendar and action plans for the upcoming year. Presentations of each department's previous years' curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular objectives and activity appraisals and upcoming year's objectives and action plans** are made.

Each department presents a critical analysis of its current year objectives and objectives to be achieved in the next year. **The entire staff and management sit together to engage in quality discussions** on these presentations and based on these discussions **decisions are made on the upcoming year's objectives for each department and for the institution as a whole, teaching learning processes and other curricular and extra-curricular activities.**

One month before the academic retreat the monitoring and evaluation committee undertakes **a survey on students' satisfaction on the teaching learning process and other activities**

of the entire academic year. Suggestions of students for improvement in different aspects are also collected which are analysed for follow up action.

A similar **survey is conducted among the teaching staff using almost the same questionnaire and these responses are also analysed. A comparison is made between students' responses and teachers' responses. The survey results are presented before the whole management and staff members to get a glimpse of how students and staff rated previous year academic and non-academic activities. This helps to find the gaps between student expectations and actual delivery and the gaps between ratings of the staff and students.** Discussions on these results help to make **effective action plans for the ensuing year.**

Discussions and decision on **infrastructural and other needs of the college, staff welfare needs and new teaching pedagogies** also take place.

The **cultural programmes and games** of and for the staff members during the retreat **refreshes the staff and helps them to know each other more and work in a team as a family** for achieving the common goals.

These two days' residential programme **plays a significant role in bringing higher standards and innovative methods** to make teaching learning process more effective and help us realize our vision and mission.