



SREE SANKARACHARYA UNIVERSITY OF SANSKIRT, KALADY

POLICY ON ADVANCED AND SLOW LEARNERS



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This policy paper is recognized as the “Policy on Advanced and Slow Learners” of the Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady. Through this policy the University pronounces its assurance to the vital facilitation and prop up to the advanced learners to be excellent achievers and slow learners to be better performing and achieving students in the academic and personal life. The policy also persuades the teaching Departments to develop significant strategies and scientific implementations to benefit both the advanced learners and slow learners in the University education system without forgetting the average performers.

A)Introduction

The Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit is an academic institution for higher level of knowledge generation and dissemination through effective research and teaching programmes. It is established in the name of great Guru Adi Sankara at his birth place Kalady and is spread through the complete state of Kerala with its regional campuses. The University is offering graduation, Post-Graduation and Research programmes to the students from the rural as well as urban backgrounds in Kerala. Majority of the students are from the rural background and also represents the middle or lower middle class social environment. The University is a complete government - funded State University and therefore caters to the needs of the students from the minority communities as well. The admission to all the programmes are through comprehensive and competitive admission tests and students can get admitted to any programmes from any discipline. The ultimate aim of the programmes in the University is to make all students admitted in the University equipped and competent to face the challenges of the life and contribute to the social development through the critical reflection and academic achievements. This is possible through the process of making the academics more exigent and competent for the advanced learners and also by supporting the slow learners to achieve more in their academics and personal life. In every academic programme there will be some students who can do really well and learn more with the comprehension capacity, retention ability and hard working practices. On the other side some students may find disadvantage in their learning process due to various personal or systemic reasons. In both these situations the students need special attention and interventions to make their learning activity more enriching and effective.

B)The Concepts

B1.) Advanced Learners

The term advanced learner in this policy refers to the students who can engage learning activities faster than the other students in the class and achieve high scores and make significant achievements in their life. They are more potential with their comprehension, retention, memory, critical thinking, creativity and contextualization practices. They also may have hard working behaviors and usually achieve more than the majority of the classmates. These students are in a great extend gifted and talented than the others in the class. These students can take up higher level learning and academic responsibilities. They can bring some new concepts, strategies, and also can take the leadership in the teaching learning activities.

B.2) Slow Learners

The slow learners are always the poor achievers and lag behind with the academic life. They may fail in exams or will score only poor grades. They will find it difficult to understand the lessons and may have difficulties in their comprehension, retention, reproduction and integration. They may fail in articulations and critical reflections. Their motivation levels also may be poor and may find it difficult to adjust with the teaching learning process and can drop out or fail in the programme. The poor performance may not be a sign of the poor capacity or talent but may be due to inappropriate teaching methods, poor family situations, inadequate motivations and supports, unscientific learning practices or even the inability to converse in an unfamiliar language.

C) Methods of assessment

The students can be assessed to identify their learning levels by different mechanisms. The merit in the qualifying examinations, Competitive entrance examinations, and the performance in the initial stage of the programme including the bridge porogramme and orientations assessed through the qualitative methods can be taken as indicators of their achievement as they get admitted to the programme in the University. This level can be set as the benchmark of the student. Subsequently they can be assessed continuously through the examination results at various levels and stages, their performances in the extra - curricular and co - curricular activities throughout the programme. The assessment procedure can be a statistical process of making the three levels like High, Average and Low on the basis of the central tendencies (mean plus and minus Standard deviations). The change of the students and the levels achievements can also be compared with the previous semester so that the advancements can be assessed and appropriate interventions can be made.

D) Policy Guidelines for Advanced learners

1. Advanced learners are motivated to strive for higher goals. They are provided with additional inputs for better career planning and growth through offering special coaching for higher level competitive examinations
2. Motivating them to involve in research projects to inculcate research orientation and higher studies aspirations
3. Helping them to participate in group discussions, technical quizzes to develop analytical and problem solving abilities in them and thereby, to improve their presentation skills. Encouraging them to participate in National International Conferences and also to make presentations
4. Stirring the advanced learners to make quality publications and creative contributions to the academic as well as to the practical world
5. They are given special prizes and special facilities like digital library laptops and special scholarships for making their ideas become visible.
6. Startups are offered the advanced learners. Seed money can be offered to advanced learners to make their innovative proposals implemented.
7. The mentors give higher goals and also make the advanced learners get higher levels of personality development and stress management trainings.
8. They are made the supporters to the average and the slow learners.

E) Policy Guidelines for Slow learners

1. The slow learners are not labeled as poor achievers or problem students in the class or department so that their motivation and their interest are not negatively affected. This can also make them more stressed, and introvert in the class.
2. They should be treated as any other student in the class but they can be provided extra classes for improvement and achievement.
3. The Department and individual teachers help the slow learners by giving proper guidance and support to them.
4. Organize bridge classes and remedial programmes for them.
5. Conduct extra classes for the difficult subjects (based on the previous university results) in the curriculum.
6. Special attention is given to the students in the tutorial classes, who are identified as the slow learners.
7. Slow learners are specially advised and counseled by a teacher guardian and the subject expert.
8. Corrective classes are conducted for the weaker students based on the results of class tests.
9. The students are given with training on communication skills, personality development, time management and motivational sessions.

10. Design special coaching sessions or tutorial sessions to bridge the gap between the slow learners and advanced learners are provided.
11. Academic and personal counseling are given to the slow learners by the tutor, mentor and the counseling cell.
12. Bilingual explanation and discussions are imparted to the slow learners after the class hours for better understanding.
13. Provision of simple and standard lecture notes/course materials and special preparation for the exams will be good.
14. Getting the support of the advanced learners to the slow learners in making their learning process more participatory and interesting.
15. Peer education strategies are effectively used
16. Encouraging the group learning activities and practical will be useful to the slow learners.
17. The support of the alumni is also effectively used to motivation and mentoring to the slow learners.

The process of giving additional inputs to the advanced learners and the slow learners is not an effort to make the students average achievers but to make very one better achievers. Even if the students are identified as slow learners or advanced learners in the class they should not be labeled as the extra ordinary or poor but they need to be treated equally in the class with supportive care and appropriate pedagogical systems so that the talented can make more achievement and the less talented also make their goals in life achieved. The mentoring and facilitating efforts of the teachers and the university administrative system will be a great investment in achieving the best result and performance of the students.