Institutional Distinctiveness 2022-23

"Enabling all, specially disadvantaged and marginalised students, to develop their human potential as God's children and caring for the Earth"

St Xavier's College, Ahmedabad, managed by the Jesuit Fathers of the Gujarat Province, follows the mission of providing access to academic excellence, research, service learning and all round human development to all strata of society with special attention to those deprived, discriminated and marginalised for socio-economic, religious, cultural and gender reasons. The College emphasizes the key value of Jesuit education, i.e. "to educate women and men for and with others". This mission and core value is implemented by adequate policy measures (admission) and practical steps (accompanying protocols) with a view to providing them access, opportunities, handholding and empowerment for excellence.

The process starts at the admission time. Separate counters manned by senior Faculty attend individually to students belonging to SC, ST, OBC, minorities and differently abled groups (divyangjan). Suitable information is combined with proactive and encouraging ways to show the students, for example, the opportunities of various science courses. A note is taken to follow them up later during the academic year.

Once admitted, the process of handholding (accompaniment) takes place through various cells/groups catering to the specific needs of various groups. The Campus Ministry cell coordinates, facilitates and ensures collaboration between the various cells shown below:

1. UTCARSH (cell for the Divyangjan)
2. JAGRAT (SC/ST cell)
3. PRERNA (Campus workers)
4. SEVA SUHAS (Christian student's cell)
5. CWDC (Collegiate Women's Development Cell)

The following are the activities of the special cells of the Campus Ministry:

1. **UTCARSH (cell for the Divyangjan)**

UTCARSH is a cell for the physically and visually challenged students aiming at the personal growth and integration of these students through a variety of programmes in which other students, including ex-students, participate:

- An official inauguration (Sneh Milan)
- Outreach programs with in-campus NGOs
- Outreach programs with the Blind People's Association
- Seminars on study techniques, stress management, time management and growing together
- Cultural activities during the College Culfest
- The Akhil Ahmedabad UTCARSH Day wherein the differently abled students from different batches attend

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2. JAGRAT (SC/ST cell)

JAGRAT is the hand-holding cell for Dalit and Tribal students. The activities of the cell are aimed at developing self-confidence and leadership qualities in these students, many of whom are first generation learners needing greater orientation, motivation and a sense of belonging to the College.

The activities of JAGRAT include:

- An inaugural function.
- Workshops on themes like 'Planning and Goal setting', learning styles, study skills, social awareness and analysis, etc.
- Workshops on English speaking, computer training, leadership, etc.
- Motivational talks by eminent persons from the SC/ST communities

3. PRERNA (Campus workers)

All the supporting staff, housekeeping staff, canteen staff, hostel mess staff, helpers and peons of the men's hostels, security guards and gardeners form this group. They are attended by the Campus Ministry. The activities of Prerna ensure that the support staff feels motivated, recognized and valued for the service they provide. The major activity of Prerna is a bimonthly get-together wherein a resource person guides them in teamwork, motivation etc. The get-together also serves as a time for relaxation and enjoyment for the group. During the session, the members take time to share their strengths, weaknesses and difficulties faced during work etc. Special celebrations are also held around festivals like Diwali, Christmas and Holi. Prayer meetings are organized for deceased persons/relatives.

4. SEVA SUHAS (Christian student's cell)

SEVA SUHAS is a Christian student club meant to provide a platform for minority students to have regular prayer meetings, organize events related to social issues, serve the community and celebrate festivals together with a view to promote social harmony. The club provides a great opportunity for the Christian minority students to connect with peers from similar backgrounds and create an environment of teamwork. It helps them to understand their place in society and motivates them to play a constructive role in society despite being a minority. They help spread the value of service and charity among students and staff.

5. CWDC (Collegiate Women's Development Cell)

With a growing awareness of women's dignity and rights and the need to grow in gender sensitivity, the College's CWDC is led by a senior women Faculty and comprises of other women staff and students. It invites men students to participate in its activities like motivational talks, gender sensitivity workshops, etc. It takes up issues affecting women in the College, family, society and even personal or medical life. Women students have a special women's lounge in the College. The College through this cell provides a mental space wherein women students and staff can experience equality, liberty and dignity within the campus.

Besides these special cells, the Management and Faculty check at various intervals the participation of students coming from these groups in sports and in the cultural and academic activities of the College. In addition, the Campus Ministry team offers special counselling attention to these students. Some of these students staying in the hostel are also accompanied through regular meetings.
All these cells have senior Management, Faculty and student volunteers that manage and participate

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in all the activities. They ensure that the College Vision and Values are translated into action. The experience of interacting with these marginalized groups sensitizes the students towards social issues and motivates them to become agents of change in society.

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