7.1 Environment Consciousness

7.1.1 *Does the Institute conduct a Green Audit of its campus and facilities?*

We are a certified ISO 14001 -2004 organization. In view of this there is continuous monitoring of the environmental issues. A panel of teachers and non-teaching staff has been trained in tackling various environmental issues. We take conscious effort to reduce, recycle and reuse material. The NSS volunteers make paper bags and give to the fruit and vegetable vendors near the college and also promote the concept of "Say No to Plastics".

7.1.2 *What are the initiatives taken by the college to make the campus eco-friendly?*

Energy conservation:
Our college has been very conscious about conservation of energy. All tube lights, fans and switches are numbered so that only the needed ones will be switched on. On every floor the floor supporting staff and students are trained to switch off lights and fans when not required. Air conditioners are used only in months when the temperatures are not comfortable and they are set at 25 degree Celsius.

Use of renewable energy:
To promote the use of renewable energy the department of Biotechnology has set up a biogas plant. To promote community based research and to tackle environmental issues students and staff are involved in research to find alternative substrate for the biogas plant, identifying methanogens and characterizing them.

Water harvesting:
Water is the most precious natural gift. In view of saving the rain water during monsoon which otherwise would end up in drains we have installed a ring well with an investment of Rs. 6.5 lakhs. This not only recharges the ground water but also stores all the water which is collected from the terrace of our buildings. The water is pumped up in two storage tanks by an auto pump. The tank is connected to the washrooms and to the taps in the campus premises. This water is mainly used for watering the plants and is used in the wash rooms.

Efforts for Carbon neutrality:
Since the college is located opposite to the Ghatkopar railway station all students use the local train for transport. In addition most of the staff members commute by train, this reduces the carbon foot print and helps save us non-renewable fossil fuel. The biogas plant is used as a renewable energy source in the Biotechnology department.

Plantation:
As a green initiative there are plants from a wide range of plant families. This floral biodiversity also attracts butterflies and birds. In spite of the space constraint there are more than 100 plant species. The NSS and NCC students participate actively in tree plantation programs in selected areas. We have projects based on converting small roofs into green areas, growing your own vegetables using natural fertilizers and pesticides and conserving endangered plant species.

Hazardous waste management:
With the concept of green chemistry being practiced no hazardous waste is generated.

e-waste management:
We promote e waste management by practicing buy back offers. Non-teaching staff members whose children use computers are given the old computers. Whenever computers are purchased we request the vendors to buy back the old system so that it is recycled. Similarly we advocate to the staff and students to give their old mobiles and purchase new ones from stores where they have such offers. CD's are used to a very less extent staff have been provided with pen drives to store data.

7.2 Innovations

7.2.1 *Give details of innovations introduced during the last four years which have created a positive impact on the functioning of the college.*

• Starting a Post graduate Diploma Program by analyzing need requirement of the industry, inviting industry experts and designing curriculum getting it approved by statutory bodies of the University of Mumbai and successfully initiating it in our college. The program is being taught by industry experts.
• With the introduction of continuous evaluation and for taking care of the large student population one department has created a question back for objective type questions. A customized software generates many sets of question papers which are given to the students. This ensures there is no chance of malpractice since every student gets a different set of question paper. A high speed scanner scans and the software corrects and compiles the marks. This will be implemented in other departments. Automatic generation of questions according to

the blue print avoids bias in selection of questions. Marks processing is automatic eliminating human error.

• Unique code is provided to a student to track the progress of the student and also to ensure that mark sheets cannot be forged.

• Teaching innovation included use of visualizer to explain a microscopic specimen to large number of students at the same time.

• The office is student friendly all counters have names of the personnel, their work timings along with their job descriptions, There are boards displaying the time required for any service like transcripts, attested documents, old documents etc. This has ensured accountability and is rightly known as QSS (Quick Student Service).

• The Placement Cell of the college being very proactive and realizing that students are more mobile friendly use of QR code for registration of students is followed
   1. To involve students to help in process of placement during pool campus drives.
   2. Generating of resources by tie up with industry to use our facility including computers on holidays when they are not being used by students. This has also helped us to build a rapport with them. As a result new value added courses have been initiated.

• Ring well construction for rain water harvesting since it not only recharged ground water but also helps in harvesting the rain water.

• Research Innovations involve using alternate substrates for biogas production. Finding simple solution of waste water treatment.

• Enrichment programs ranging from academic to skill development based on requirements of the faculty are organized.

• In view of making the premises gender friendly and empowering girl students large number of initiatives in creating awareness, training in self-defense for girls have been initiated.

7.3 Best Practices

7.3.1 *Elaborate on any two best practices which have contributed to the achievement of the Institutional Objectives and/or contributed to the Quality improvement of the core activities of the college.*

Best Practice A
1. Title of the Practice:
Providing reading room facility to students for extended timings

2. Goal:
Mumbai a city of dreams provides opportunities for all. Every day lakhs of people come to this city with a dream and by their hard work most of them are successful. It is a city of hope. This has resulted in overcrowding of the city specially suburbs. People build temples, banquets and hotels, high rise building but no one has thought of the basic requirement of a student a place to study in a serene environment and the right ambience. While interacting with the students and from their personal profile it was evident that they live in slums/very small houses where a room is shared by many and the neighborhood is noisy. We felt that after 6.30PM if the class rooms could be given to the students for studying it will be a great help to the student community, which is in line with our mission statement.

3. The Context:
Our college works from 6 .45 am to 6.30 PM. The M.A., M.Com. and ICWA classes are from 6.30 PM to 9.00 PM. After classes the rooms have to be cleaned so that they are ready for the next morning classes. If the students are allotted class rooms as reading rooms then the time for cleaning and maintenance had to be planned. There were two main challenges as to who would be responsible and secondly the security of girl students. Finally it was decided to allot two rooms on the third floor as reading rooms for the boys and first floor biology laboratory and girls common room for the girl students. This took care of the security issues since there are two night watchmen and office is located on first floor which has at least few staff available till 10.00 PM.

4. The Practice:
In the first year only our college students were permitted to use the reading room. But now students from other colleges, those pursuing professional courses are allowed to use the reading room with prior permission. Initially they are allowed to sit till 11.00 PM but in examination time final year students are allowed to use the facility overnight. This facility is available on all days including Sundays and holidays. As the popularity of the reading has increased students also tell their friends about the availability of reading room in our college and they also come and avail of this facility. This practice is now in the eighth year and has many beneficiaries. Students who are working and are placed well in India and abroad write to us and share their nostalgic memories of the reading room. They also express their gratitude for providing this facility. The reading room facility is mentioned on the college website

Students interested in using the reading room facility write an application to the Head of the Institution and affix a recent photograph. This application is signed by the any one of the authorities. Copy of the application is retained by college office and the original is retained by the student as an Identity card for seeking entry. For outside students in addition to the application an identification proof is taken.   This has also formalized the system.

5. Evidence of Success:

Over a period of time the reading room has proved to be an oasis in the space starved city like Mumbai. In addition to our students, outside students pursuing MD, MBBS, appearing for competitive exams like CA, CS, ICWA, UPSC also come and study. They express their gratitude to the institution. Almost every day there is an application to use the reading room. The reading room is used not only during examination time but also during vacations indicating there are students who are genuinely interested in studying. The reading room also encourages student to develop habit of reading since the young generation is more interested in learning through use of television, internet, social networking etc. Reading helps one to explore themselves and reading is also a very good habit. The thought process is more active while reading than while viewing television. The reading room has helped students explore this and they also spend time in vacation to read general books.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

As mentioned earlier the main problem in all colleges in Mumbai is space. To locate rooms to be used as reading rooms is a challenge by itself. It is also important that the authorities and the governing body should be convinced and should understand the need for this facility since there are some inbuilt challenges like security and discipline. The supporting staff must also be involved otherwise the practice will be short lived. No financial resources are needed.

7. Notes (Optional)

We believe in sharing our best practices with other Institutions. We are engaged in sharing them when the teachers from other colleges visit us. In addition we had a National level seminar organized by the IQAC of our college to share the best practices. Our faculty was invited by other colleges to share some of our best practices.

Best Practice B
1. Title of the Practice:
Ensuring Inclusive education for a) socially marginalized b) the differently abled and c) female students

2. Goal:
Our mission statement is "Knowledge is All Ambrosia" the divine nectar of knowledge which is shared with all. The ethos of our founders is practiced by providing education to the poorest of the poor students most of them first generation learners. With locational advantage of being very close to the railway station the cheapest mode of transport is the local train. The marginalized and the differently abled students commute to our college which provides services, amenities and support to the differently abled. Our student community is mainly Hindi speaking community who has migrated from the Northern regions of our country and a large section belongs to the Muslim community. 55% of our student community is female the college has ensured a very gender friendly premises to build confidence in the parents to allow their girl child to seek higher education. We ensure that a safe and secure environment which encourages holistic development of the students specially girls is provided.

3. The Context:
In Mumbai 50% of the population reside in slums and chawls. Ghatkopar is one of the largest North eastern suburbs in Mumbai. In our Institution 75% of students reside in small houses and they come from a lower income group as per living standards of Mumbai. A person with disability as per a survey conducted a decade ago is a little more than 3%. In our college   students are with Physical disability, few of them have speech problem   4 of them are partially visually impaired and one postgraduate student this year and one student graduated last year are visually impaired. In the last ten year the number of girl students enrolling for higher education has increased to 52% . This diversity in student population put forth challenges in terms of financial hardships, accessibility, social background from where they come which has stringent societal norms. Braving these our Institutions have worked towards making our premises gender friendly, equal access to higher education to all and to develop mechanism for students with disabilities to feel at home away from home.

4. The Practice:
A common problem of students in our college is being socially disadvantaged in terms of their economic and literacy background. More than 75% students are from vernacular medium and are from lower income group. In addition to the Government scholarships for SC/ST/

EBC which are promptly brought to the notice of the students. Our College allows student to pay fees in easy installments, fee remission is provided to students who are very poor, mentors pay the fees of few students. These students are the support systems for their families and they supplement their family income and take care of their family members. Our college has taken several initiatives to ensure that these students pursue, complete their education and are not deprived of education

The college timings for Arts and Commerce faculty which are from morning 6.45 am to 10.15 am enables the working students to go to work since our college is very close to the station which helps them to reach their workplace easily. Students are provided with books from the book banks. For Field trips these student pay in installments and few of them are also taken free of charge for the trip.

Our college has successfully implemented the "Earn while Learn scheme" for the students. In this scheme about 10 students are identified by the authorities on the basis of the recommendations made by teacher mentors, students who approach and apply for working under the scheme along with the information of their socioeconomic background. They are given work on hourly basis in college office, laboratories or in departments. This also provides them sort of an internship to learn the practical aspects of work and helps them develop habits of team work, meeting deadlines, doing work meticulously in a given frame of time, reporting to the seniors, in addition to the financial assistance they get. Some the students who were working in the "Earn while Learn" scheme have graduated, done their post-graduation and are now working in permanent positions in various capacities in the college. This has helped the college administration to train students so as to get the required manpower for the college. Some students have joined other organizations. This has also helped in confidence building among the students.

Since the differently abled are mainly with orthopedic problems provisions are made to ensure that they have access. Lift is provided to them and students and supporting staff also help them whenever needed. Wheel chair is made available. Examinations are conducted on the ground floor looking into their convenience. Readers and writer are provided for examinations. Railings are provided for support. The toilets are also marked for easy access. Special software JAWS is provided for the partially or completely visually impaired.

The college helps the Socially/ Economically disadvantaged students by providing them fee concessions, allowing them to pay fees in installments, mentors paying their fees and by providing them on campus jobs under the "Earn while Learn" scheme.

Our college encourages girl students to acquire higher education by providing gender friendly premises. Large number of initiatives have been taken for holistic development of the girls. The women development cell of the college conducts series of activities along with NGO's like AKSHARA, MAWA, NSS unit and WDC of University of Mumbai. These are issues of eve teasing, gender equality, domestic violence, Health and hygiene, female foeticide, law for women, save the girl child. These forums provide them information and encourage them to identify self and develop their personality. Our College has a vigilance squad to ensure that the girls feel safe and secure. There are special facilities for the girl students like round the clock security at the college gate. Neat, clean, airy girls' common room for girl students. Lady attendants are available. Special medical camp for detection of anemia and thalassemia followed by counseling. Encouraging girls to participate in NSS, Extension activities, all the co and extracurricular activities including sports. Special coaching facility for Kho Kho boxing, Kabaddi, Taekwondo, Volley ball. Self-awareness forum allows them to imbibe values in Life. Since majority of the girls are from the conservative muslim community their families are also counseled on the need for empowering girls and educating them. These initiatives have been recognized by the Government of Maharashtra who have awarded us the first prize at the district level in University of Mumbai suburban colleges under the aegis of "Jaagar Jaanivancha"

5. Evidence of Success:
- Negligible dropout rates due to fee concessions allowing them to pay fees in installment and Earn while Learn Scheme.
- Trained man power is made available to industry and to our own college due to Earn while Learn Scheme.
- Students with disabilities are enrolling in different programs of the college and have shown progression in education enrolling for PG programs. They develop a sense of belonging and feel secure in the college.
- Increase in the number of enrollment of girl student. Some programs like M.A. Hindi and English have more than 75% female students, even though the programs are run in the evening. They have confidence in the security of the college. There has been an increase in the number of Muslim girls enrolling for higher education in the last four years.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

- Financial resources have to made available for all the schemes like "Earn while Learn", fee waiver, providing facilities for students with disabilities.
- Apart from high cost committed human resources is also difficult to find.
- The teacher student ratio if increased could allow better interaction. However, Government norms do not allow sanction of any extra posts.

7. Notes (Optional):

It is important to involve the family members of the students in ensuring that the socially disadvantaged, physically disabled and girls are provided equal opportunity and are ensured access to higher education. In all these cases the priority is day to day survival and education takes a back seat. With the socio economic system the entire family structure changes for e.g. health of the family member, care of elderly in the family, family issues like marriages, alcoholism, migrants, space constraints, lack of basic amenities like clean drinking water, sanitation etc. In all these cases the students are fragile and are probable candidates who would drop out either to earn for the family or in case of girls get married at an early age or share the family responsibilities of cooking and cleaning. These students besides financial help also need emotional support which our college provides through teacher mentors and professional counselor. Money and facility cannot suffice but a bonding has to be developed with the students and their family to ensure that the student completes education, is employable and develops as a good citizen.