

ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE AUDIT (AAA)
GAUHATI COMMERCE COLLEGE
04.01.2022
Report

We, at the invitation of Gauhati Commerce College, conducted its first AAA during 9.00 am and 6.00 pm on 04.01.2022 in the College premises. The College is situated in the heart of Guwahati city in a 7.07-acre area. The campus comprises academic buildings, a sports complex, and a Boys' Hostel. The College has student strength of approximately 2500.

Presentations were made by the Principal, Coordinator IQAC, and other academic Departments (12 in number) on various academic and administrative aspects of the College. The members had department-wise detailed interactions on points necessary for a healthy teaching learning environment. The Committee's focal points for these interactions were guided by the matrices that will be assessed by NAAC, which the College authority is contemplating inviting in the near future.

Overall, the Committee is happy with the teaching learning environment observed in the College. In spite of the restrictions imposed due to the pandemic most of the time during the last two academic years, the College could maintain its teaching learning process as per Gauhati University's (affiliated University) schedule. The Committee also took note of the excellent infrastructure that's been developed by the College authority over the years, even when waterlogging has been a huge problem for the College, especially during the summer months. The efforts to tackle this problem take away a considerable amount of resources, and attention from the College authority.

The College, as the name suggests is a single-stream college and as a result, only commerce and management related programmes are offered. A minor diversification is seen in the form of the PGDCA programme run by a relatively small Department of Information Technology.

The Computer lab maintained by the IT department is well equipped and there are 50 standalone desktops in the centre. In addition, the College has made another cluster of 30 computers for the use of the students, which is situated in the Department of MBA.

The College is kept neat and tidy and maintained exceptionally well. This is impressive considering the problem of waterlogging in the rainy season. All Departments are furnished and maintained in an aesthetic way. Though separate chambers are not provided to the faculty members, they are accommodated in a specious manner where some privacy can be maintained. In addition, there is a well-maintained Teachers' Common Room. Small pantries are seen attached to the Departments for the use of faculty members. All the washrooms inspected by the team were found to be kept hygienically clean and running water was found invariably in all such restrooms. There are enough restrooms for the girl students at convenient locations.

A new multi-storeyed building is coming up and already some of the Departments are running from the new premises.

The College has a sanctioned strength of 46 faculty positions out of which 38 are filled up at this moment. Out of these 26 are with Ph.D. degrees (**68%**). In addition to the Government sanctioned positions, the College has appointed 19 full-time faculty out of its internally generated resources. Moreover, 12 Guest Faculty are engaged by the College as per the requirement.

The Committee is happy to note that almost in all departments the pass percentage is more than 90. Many of the students are in the top category in the University examinations. This is not a

small feat considering the fact that almost all such programmes are also being run by the University departments. The performance of the students is consistent over the years and the Committee is happy to note that.

Departments have laid down their programme-wise PO-CO on the College website. At least one department could show the PO-CO matrix. It is expected that IQAC shall take up immediate steps in development of the matrix in the remaining departments also.

From the students' welfare side the College has a playground, girls' and boys' common rooms, gymnasium facility, and an auditorium. The conference room of the college is also impressive. Many (numbers could not be ascertained) programmes (viz. soft skills, personality development) towards holistic development of the students have regularly been organised by the College.

It is worth noting that the NCC, NSS, and the Scout and Guide units are functioning very efficiently. The volunteers have been nominated to the Republic Day Celebrations in New Delhi consistently, showing the high level of training and resultant skills of the cadets. The highest state-level award (Bir Chilarai Award) for the NCC cadets was also bestowed upon one girl cadet of the College in the year 2021. The members of the Committee are deeply pleased with the dedication of the volunteers of all these three units. It was heartening to witness the Guard of Honour arranged for the committee members during arrival as well as during the inspections. The Professors In-Charge are very dedicated, hardworking, and good motivators.

The admission process is IT enabled, and as such the admissions were not hampered during the pandemic period. The fees are also collected through this system.

The college accounts are being regularly audited by qualified external firms. The accounts are also audited by the Accountant General of Assam regularly.

It is very satisfying to note that the majority of the faculty members are trained in the use of ICT, specifically in the use of the internet in teaching learning. The Committee, however, could not ascertain the outcome of this training in the dissemination of the regular lectures during the pandemic time (barring a few departments).

The Committee members are pleased to see the active engagement of the alumni of the College. The College is very fortunate to have such a dedicated group of former students. The presence of the alumni in large numbers during the interaction with the Committee was very refreshing. The strong alumni connection and the alumni's dedicated loyalty to their Alma Mater have already helped the college in many aspects including outreach and resource generation. It is reported that the Alumni associations have donated about Rs. 25 lakh in the last year (2020-21) alone. This is really commendable.

The college is successful in conducting 4 popular self-financing courses, namely MBA, BBA, M.Com, and PGDCA. All these programmes have been generating a good pool of financial resources, which, in turn, is giving enough leverage to the College authority in developing the desired teaching resources.

The College Library has been provided with all modern settings. There are 34,254 books, 32 Journals, 3 e-journals, and 50000 e-books (via NDL) in the library. It has a section with a few PCs for the use of the faculty. The library is run on SOUL 2.0 software.

The College is well connected with the Internet and all the Departments are using the facility. 18 multimedia-enabled classrooms presently are being used by the faculty for delivering lectures.

The College is maintaining an attractive website listing out various academic programmes, the Departments, Contacts details of the Faculty etc.

The College has started a Green Belt within the Campus, which is a refreshing sign and very welcome.

The Committee has noticed some faculty publications (reported as 57 in number in the last 5 years) in CARE-listed journals which is a healthy sign. The Committee, however, could not access the full list of these articles.

The IQAC is found to become active in recent times and it is noteworthy that they have successfully submitted the AQAR to NAAC for the last 4 years that remained pending for some reasons. Immediate last year's AQAR is getting ready, and it is informed that the College is contemplating submitting the same soon. The IQAC's effort towards involving the faculty in the grassroots level activities through the seven committees set up to look into each assessment criteria is a step in the right direction.

The College has not conducted Student Satisfaction Survey (SSS) as per the questionnaire given by the NAAC.

Specific Suggestions:

The committee feels duty-bound to offer certain suggestions with regards to the improvement of the academic and administrative atmosphere of the College. However, these are not stand-alone; rather they would be a part of continuous efforts of the faculty and administration of the College in their relentless pursuit towards achieving the highest academic standard. It may be noted that the points mentioned below are *not* arranged in any particular order and hence do not indicate one's importance over another.

1. The College should gear up to embrace the spirits and provisions of the National Education Policy, 2020 in right earnest. Therefore, there is an urgent need for a **Perspective Plan** for at least 10 years (if not for a longer duration) so that the College may get aligned with the proposed outcome as stated in the NEP. The perspective plan should deal mainly with the issues of integrating multi-disciplinary programmes with the present academic setup. There is a **golden opportunity** for the college in choosing the right disciplines so that the students' skill and holistic development components are integrated into the system. Therefore, the perspective plan may emphasise **carefully chosen socially, globally, and commercially relevant disciplines and programmes**.
2. Gauhati Commerce College is *the* right candidate for getting converted into an **autonomous institution** as per the provisions of the NEP, 2020. However, this will be **possible only when** the multidisciplinary nature of its programmes and disciplines are well established and acknowledged.
3. It is good to see that the Lesson Plans are prepared in some departments. But the same **may be improved**, if possible so that *date-wise* synchronisations with credit requirements along with the Course Outcomes are achieved.
4. The College Website has shown the Programme Outcomes and Course Outcome of all UG/PG programmes (barring PGDCA). However, they are not in a uniform structure. It is expected that the **PO-CO matrix** is also presented along with the uniform structure.
5. The **attendance registers** are not maintained properly, and the Committee noted blank columns against the students' roll numbers and names in some of the registers inspected. It is urged that the College authority through the IQAC takes an active role in **auditing the**

attendance registers at least three times in a semester so that deviation if any, can be attended to without any adverse impact in the implementation of the respective lesson plans. Even when the classes were held in virtual modes, some records of classes conducted could have been maintained for scrutiny and future record. *This should be taken very seriously* as the major role of any educational institution is in the implementation of the course curriculum.

6. A **Standard Operating Procedure for online classes** may be prepared *urgently* as chances of physical classes getting disrupted loom large in the near future again.
7. The **e-contents** prepared (which were reported during the visit) should constantly be upgraded and put in use even if the physical classes resume in full swing. As such the college may consider offering a certain percentage of the input through e-contents, as per UGC's guidelines.
8. It is suggested that a **Learning Management System** be used for running all courses. G-Suit is one of such widely used LMS. The free version can accommodate a virtual meeting room (class) of a maximum of 100 students. The College may consult the experts before deciding about the right system. NAAC also emphasises using LMS in teaching learning.
9. A **structured mechanism to detect slow and fast learners** at the beginning of the programme shall be very helpful for the holistic progression of all students. The ICT system can be used for a central database of slow learners and the Principal's office and the IQAC should monitor the progress of such students closely. If a Department is doing exceedingly well in bringing the slow learners at par with other learners (evident from final results), such a feat should be duly acknowledged by the authority, and the Department as a whole may be provided some tangible incentives so that others are also motivated.
10. The College has started some new certificate programmes/add-on courses/programmes, and the admission notifications for the same are already floated. Some of the courses from within the new programmes, if found relevant may also be offered to the regular students as **value-added** or **skill development** courses.
11. The **average of per faculty journal publications** in the last 5 years is just **1.0**, which is low considering the resources available in the College. There should be a serious discussion among the faculty members led by the IQAC to find out the reasons for general aversion towards quality publications and **corrective action be initiated immediately**. Attention to this is urgently needed in view of the importance given by NAAC on faculty publication, citation etc. In order to encourage research, an award may also be instituted.
12. The College may think of **expanding the online admission** and fee collection system to manage all day-to-day activities including the accounting system through ICT. The same system can also be used to keep records of continuous evaluation, students' progression etc.
13. The College has been regularly getting its **accounts audited** by external firms. The accounts are also audited by the Accountant General of Assam. The last external audit has put forward certain recommendations and it is expected that the same be adhered to. It is also expected that the College authority responds to Govt Audit objections if any, and takes corrective measures.
14. It is learned that the payments are made only on **formal and legal receipts** (cash memos), and proper care is taken to treat the tax components as per Govt. rules. It is suggested that this system be followed without any deviation.
15. Considering the IT exposure the college has at this moment, every faculty should be **allotted a PC with a dedicated LAN connection and the Internet**, *if budget permits*. In case of resource constraints, the same may be implemented phase-wise.

16. The **student to PC ratio** is marginally above **30:1**. There is an urgent *need to improve the ratio*.
17. A **green audit** along with a **sustainability plan** be prepared for the college campus. The sustainability plan may be in line with the SDGs and specific targets be fixed for attaining within 2030.
18. The college has entered into a number of Memorandums of Understanding. This is a healthy sign. However, there is a need for regular **auditing of the output of the MoUs** with respect to its stated objectives after a gap of a reasonable period.
19. Immediate steps may be initiated at the appropriate level to **fill up the vacant** teaching positions in order to improve the student-teacher ratio.
20. Teachers may still be encouraged to take part in **more quality improvement programmes** offered by reputed institutions even in offline mode without disrupting the regular academic activities.
21. **Student Satisfaction Survey (SSS)** as per the questionnaire of the NAAC should be conducted regularly once within each Semester. Faculty be made aware of the variables of the Student Satisfaction Survey so that they are motivated towards achieving these with an aim for full satisfaction of the students. There may be a system of counselling the teachers, if any, who are receiving *less than the average* scores in the said SSS *continuously over a period of time*.
22. The present **College website** is attractive and informative. But the site should have specific information about the Departments and each faculty. Faculty profiles are devoid of any photographs and other achievements. Provisions should be made immediately to accommodate the same. The website should be regularly updated and a mechanism may be devised for the same. This will enable the faculty to be noticed beyond geographical boundaries and get recognised for their expertise and skills. This may also result in more collaborative research works and consultancy offers, which will enhance the prestige of the College.
23. The College has been doing well with the **placement cell** and it is heartening to note that many students got direct employment through it. The Committee urges the College to further strengthen the cell so that the students can confidently appear in National and State level competitive examinations also.
24. Considering the potential for offering paid consultancy to the business houses situated in nearby industrial regions a **Consultancy Policy** on revenue sharing along with other matters be prepared and be adopted at the earliest. This will help the College in generating more revenue as well as the faculty will be involved in real-life projects. Such exposure will also help the students in understanding live projects. The College may also consider opening a cell in this regard.
25. It is noted that **not a single externally funded** (Non-Government or Government) research was reported during the Audit. In absence of such works, the exposure and contribution of the faculty to knowledge generation are limited and result adversely in standard publications. The College authority guided by the IQAC should immediately take necessary steps in this regard. The College authorities should encourage the faculty members to apply for research grants from various Govt./Non Govt. agencies.
26. The ICT-enabled classrooms should maintain **user registers** separately and the college can encourage all Departments to use these ICT-enabled classrooms regularly (with prior booking) at least for *say*, 20 percent of total allotted classes.

27. There is an urgent need for a state-of-the-art **seminar cum meeting hall**. The present seminar hall is under construction and it is urged that the same be converted into a *modern hall*. Being situated at the heart of the city the same can be used for resource generation also. A *small dining area* may also be annexed to the hall, which will serve as the refreshment room.
28. The College authority may seriously think of **modernising the hostel facility** (presently available only for boys). Relevant funding may also be sought from donors for **starting a Girls' Hostel**.
29. All the self-financing Departments are presently being named after the programmes offered. There may be a **review on the names** of the departments so that more relevant and highly demanded programmes can be started by the Departments.
30. There is a need for a review of the constitution of the departments in order to **rationalise** the same with respect to the programmes offered. For example, the BBA and MBA programmes are offered by two separate Departments. It will be judicious to see the feasibility of merging the Departments and name it appropriately so that both the programmes are run under the same department. The same exercise may also be carried out of other established departments also, if otherwise not constrained.
31. It will be good for the interest of the greater teaching community if a proper **salary structure** is devised even for the self-financing courses, if otherwise not constrained.
32. The College has a rich tradition of students' performance in drama, dance, and music. More efforts should be made in generating enthusiasm among students for additional wellness and holistic development programmes such as Yoga, aerobics etc.
33. The **strength of the very active alumni associations** may be channelled well in developing the college resources. As they have been doing already, *a more structured approach* may be adopted to synchronise the efforts of the alumni with that of the college *in achieving the Mission and Vision of the College*.
34. Some **short-term programmes relevant to the weaker sections** (small traders, pan shop owners, vendors etc.) of the business community may be adopted after proper brainstorming sessions. The programmes should be a part of the extension activity and community reach of the College. As such some such programmes could be subsidised, maybe through external funding. This will enhance the prestige and **brand image** of the College to a new milieu.
35. The college may also **connect to and adopt** at least up to 10 nearby villages/slum areas as far as academics/child education/health and hygiene/gender sensitivity/ drinking water/environmental awareness programs etc. are concerned. A good number of nearby High and HS schools may be adopted academically to encourage students from a young age for commerce education.
36. The Academic departments should try to make provisions for **students' internships** during the vacation period in collaboration with nearby industries/Banks/Insurance companies etc.
37. The Language Departments should try to develop **short term programmes** on language skills together with the provision of foreign language courses.
38. A few **Study Centres** may be considered for development in the College:
 - a. Study Centre for India's Act East Policy
 - b. Innovation Incubation Ecosystem (Idea centre)
 - c. Centre for Eco-restoration

- d. Centre for developing English Language Proficiency: IELTS/TOFEL etc.
- e. Study Centre for Climate Change
39. The College should increase the amount of **solar energy** components in the college.
40. The **Library** should be fully automated and modernised. Attempts should be made to collect and preserve some rare and rarest items (Written records/materials etc) in the Library.
41. The students-parents-teachers **mentoring system** may be introduced department-wise.
42. The College may actively consider generating some more resources by allowing outsiders access to its infrastructure (say, the Gymnasium) if otherwise not restricted.
43. In order to promote inclusiveness, the College should arrange for ramps/lifts in the academic buildings for specially-abled students. The Website also be made friendly for visually impaired students. The Library should also keep stock of textbooks (in Braille) suitable for visually impaired students.



(Mrinmoy K Sarma)
Professor,
Business Administration
Tezpur University



(Jogen Ch. Kalita)
Professor & Head,
Dept of Zoology
Gauhati University

Dated, the 4th of January, 2022
