

**DRAFT REPORT OF INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION OF
ARTS & COMMERCE COLLEGE, ASHTA
TALUK WALWA, DISTRICT- SANGLI, MAHARASHTRA**

SECTION-I: INTRODUCTION

This College is situated at Ashta, in the Walwa taluk of the Sangli district in southern Maharashtra. It was established in 1965 by the 'Kasegaon Education Society' that has been spreading education among backward and rural people including women and scheduled tribes since 1945, its motto being 'Sarvahi Tapasa Sadhyam' (everything can be attained by perseverance). The College is one of the many institutions (38) it has set up. Kasegaon Education Society was given the 'Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Dalit-Mitra Sanstha Puraskar 2001-2002' and the State of Maharashtra Award in 2002 for its social service and commendable work in the field of education. Recognized by the UGC under 2f and 12B (1965), the College is affiliated, now permanently, to Shivaji University, Kolhapur. Its financial status is grant-in-aid. Its location is rural, the campus area being 42 acres housing a few other activities of the parent society.

It runs both grant-in-aid undergraduate and self-financing postgraduate programmes in Arts and Commerce offering courses in Marathi, English, Hindi, History, Geography under Arts faculty and Advanced Accountancy & Auditing under Commerce faculty. Its current student roll is: 888 (350 female + 538 male) including 88 postgraduate (28 female + 60 male), all from the nearby areas. Its current faculty strength is 23 of which 13 are permanent, 1 part-time and 2 CHB and 7 local (CHB). Again of these 13, 3 are female and 10 male; 2 Ph.D., 5 M.Phil and the rest master's. The number of administrative staff is 8, 1 female, 7 male. The College runs on an annual system, the number of teaching days a year being 180. The number of working days is, however, 230. Judging by two recent years' performance, the success rate of the students is quite high at the undergraduate level, though there are one or two exceptions, but not that high at the postgraduate level. There have also been some rank holders.



The College expressed its intent to be assessed by NAAC and submitted the self-study Report for assessment and institutional accreditation. The NAAC constituted a Peer Team comprising Professor Amiya Kumar Dev (Former Vice-Chancellor, Vidyasagar University) as Chairman and Professor B.A. Prajapati (Professor and Head of the Department of Commerce and Management, S.K. School of Business Management, Hemchandraacharya North Gujarat University) as Member - Convener. Dr K.N. Madhusudanan Pillai was the NAAC official in charge.

Prior to the visit the Team had been briefed by the College's Self-Study Report and during the visit looked up its various aspects. The team visited the college on 21st and 22nd of January 2004, verified the documentary evidence of records, physically verified the infrastructure facilities and interacted with the Principal, the Management, the teaching staff, the non-teaching staff, the students, the parents and the alumni of the college. Based on the above exercise, and keeping in mind the seven criteria identified by the NAAC, the Peer Team has assessed the College for the quality of education offered therein. The report is now submitted to NAAC for its consideration.

SECTION-2: CRITERION-WISE EVALUATION

CRITERION-I: CURRICULAR ASPECTS

True to its name, Arts & Commerce College, it is a bi-faculty institution, but there too its options are rather limited—only 5 Arts courses and 1 Commerce course. But it deserves credit that even as a rural college it runs self-financing postgraduate programmes in 4 of them, thus providing progression to its own first-degree holders. However, there is no specific career orientation in these courses unless of course we take the Commerce degrees to be career friendly, and unless of course we agree that higher education is as such career building for rural boys and girls. Maybe that way the College is also pursuing the avowed goal of the parent society of spreading education to the backward expanse of society. To an extent the society's motto, which is also the motto of the College, 'Sarvahi Tapasa Sadhyam', too is thus upheld, for collegiate education for takers

without an exposure to the world at large and without any benefit of a tradition of learning in either the family or in the neighbourhood, may require a lot of perseverance.

Being bound to the affiliating University's curricula, it is understood that the College cannot offer much flexibility with regard to the time frame for a degree programme, or any horizontal mobility at all. Of course there is a little room for choice among the Arts subjects at the undergraduate level in terms of 'Special' and 'Optional', but very little indeed. Besides, the College as such has no authority of unilaterally redesigning its courses—that is, being a non-autonomous affiliated college it cannot behave like an autonomous college. However, one faculty member each of Hindi, History and Accountancy is a member of the respective Board of Board of Studies of the University, and thus was partially involved in syllabus redesigning.

Though the College is not surging forward in curricular respects, it seems to be collecting a kind of feedback, if not from academic peers, from some neighbourhood concerns that can be prospective employers for its graduates. The College is also taking an extra care in offering them coaching them for competitive examination.

CRITERION-II: TEACHING-LEARNING AND EVALUATION

The students are admitted in order of merit. As per University norms there is a cut-off that is rather low (35% for undergraduate and 40% for postgraduate admission) but probably catchment friendly. The College does not seem to have a specific mechanism of gauging a student's preparation for a particular course, but he or she is steered through periodic tests and terminal examinations (2 + 1 a year). However, the College does seem to have a mechanism of gauging a student's skills and latent potential, especially in co-curricular and extra-curricular fields. In fact students are encouraged to take intellectual skill tests administered by outside agencies. However, there are as such no UGC sanctioned remedial courses for socially backward students (an application has been made to the UGC), though there is extra coaching for students who lag behind and fail in



examinations. On the other hand the advanced learners too are given extra coaching and library guidance. The College is also trying a new incentive for them, by inducing them to occasionally instruct others in which process their intellectual preparation is sharpened—quite a matter of credit for a rural college.

Since the syllabus is split into units and the teachers make a unit-wise teaching plan at the beginning of the academic year and maintain a continuous tab on it, the students are taken through their learning programme at an even keel, without being too leisurely or rushed. But the number of teaching days a year being the bare minimum (180), and the weekly teaching hours being inadequate (some 21) the learners do not get the benefit of a longer academic year and a more substantial weekly schedule. However, the College has introduced a few of the new pedagogical modes supplementing the conventional chalk and duster way, such as group discussion, assignments and study tours. Sometimes audio-visual aids too are used for lectures. Students are also encouraged to keep day-to-day diary. They are told in advance what tests and examinations they will have to take in course of their studies.

The faculty is recruited as per UGC, State Government and University norms. However, there is room for ad hoc appointment without going through the formalities. The test of the faculty is in the students' success, and judging by that it would seem that the faculty had not been ill chosen. Some faculty members try to keep up with the latest development in their field by attending seminars/conferences, occasionally. The mandatory requirement of attending Orientation and Refresher courses is complied with by the permanent teachers. Anyway, to what extent they are true to their vocation is reflected in the self-appraisal they are required to make. But it is not clear if such self-appraisal tallies with the feedback from the students, for learning is as much important as teaching in the teaching-learning process. It is good that a faculty member has got in touch with the author on whom she has worked through the Internet, though that by no means amounts to an institutional link.



CRITERION-III: RESEARCH, CONSULTANCY AND EXTENSION

Research culture for a rural college is not an easy thing, but the College is trying to create it by giving incentive to its faculty to participate in seminars and conferences, even by giving prolonged study leave in one case for working on her doctoral thesis. But doctoral research or research leading to the M.Phil. degree—and quite a few faculty members have done that—is not research at the institutional level. True there have been publications, but most of them not in scholarly journals. Besides, there has not been any research done under any schemes or on, say, a UGC Minor Grant. Yet the faculty should be given credit for writing and giving radio talks, and on a variety of topics.

The College does not seem to be familiar with the idea of consultancy that is not given to the students but to outsiders on the basis of faculty expertise.

However, the College has a lot of extension activities. There are both N.C.C. and N.S.S. and faculty members oversee these activities on additional charge. The N.S.S. is involved with adult education and literacy, community development, social work, and has been generating health and hygiene awareness, AIDS awareness and environment awareness among masses, and has also been organizing medical camp and blood donation camp. It is worthy noting that the College NSS has adopted a village and built up a watershed tank to encounter the drought of the area. Besides, it is to the credit of the College that two faculty members have been given a certificate of merit for their work for the National Literacy Mission. There is no population education club as such and the students are not doing any outreach campaign against overpopulation, but their initiation has been done. It is also to be noted that in many of its extension activities the College is collaborating with Government organizations as well as NGOs.

The College N.C.C. is almost as old as the College and has been very active, so much so that there has been a steady induction to the Indian army from the N.C.C. alumni. The cadet quota for the College is 54. Many of the cadets have been participating in camps organized at various places and earning prizes and their institution a good name. It is



also to be noted that the College N.C.C. carries out some social work from time to time. Many of the NCC cadets are successful in clearing the "C" Certificate examination.

CRITERION-IV: INFRASTRUCTURE AND LEARNING RESOURCES

The College is located in a rural area having a campus of 42 acres of land. The College has 7 big and 11 ordinary size classrooms and an auditorium. It is planning to add 4 more classrooms. There is some office space and space for other activities like the N.C.C. and N.S.S. By way of support services the College has a Central Library, a First-Aid facility, a Canteen, Sports facilities of various kinds and a media centre. It has also a vehicle-parking shed and a Guest room. The services are shared with the other institutions on the campus. Some are even open to the public.

The Library has 36,237 books (25,251 Exclusive Sr. College, 7670 UGC funded, 1362 PG books, 1944 donated) by the latest count and subscribes to 45 periodicals and 12 newspapers. It is observed that a large number of obsolete textbooks are removed from use, however not cancelled from the Accession Register giving a false impression of a rich collection. It has 282 bound volumes of back issues of periodicals. The library is inter-connected with other libraries for inter-library borrowing. The reprographic facility is not provided to the students. The computerization of library records and online service are yet to be executed by the College. The Library Advisory Committee consisting of seven teachers monitors the functioning of the library. The reading room of the library needs to be equipped with better furniture, instead of using classroom benches. The College has a TV, VCR, an Overhead Projector and a public address system.

The College has developed an expansive playground for games and sports. Its outdoor playgrounds include 400 a mt. six lane track and volley ball, kho-kho, kabaddi, basket ball, hockey, hand ball, cricket and ring-tennis grounds. The college has physical fitness instruments including a multigym (16 stations) with required equipments placed in a separate room. It encourages students to participate in games and sports by providing financial support. Students may be encouraged to use it optimally.



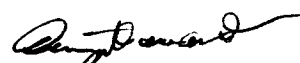
The Computer and Internet connectivity is not available to all the teachers and students to acquaint themselves with the latest developments in their fields. There is an urgent need to add these facilities to the College. ✓

CRITERION-V: STUDENT SUPPORT AND PROGRESSION

The College publishes a prospectus every year containing a brief history of the College, the admission procedure, details of the courses offered, fees charged, various schemes of scholarships and prizes, examination and internal assessment, information about the NCC and NSS, library rules and other rules and regulations. Of the total students strength of 888, there are 96 SC, 13 ST, 67 NT (Nomadic Tribes), 94 OBC, the remaining 618 belonging to the open category. The students get the government scholarships available to the backward class community students. For the current year, 79 SC students (Rs.173,370), 47 ST/NT (Rs.195,950) and 3 OBC student (Rs.6,620) got the scholarship from the Government. The College also helps needy students selected on the basis of income, results in examination, regularity and behaviour. 12 students were provided help to the tune of Rs.2730 for the current year.

The College has a book bank facility. Under the scheme, a set of books is provided to the selected students. For the current year 2003-2004, 27 students have benefited. They are all BA students. The College magazine "Lahar" is published regularly. The welfare programme of Group LIC for all students is not in yet in practice, but it will be introduced soon since the University has finalized it. The College does not have hostel facility. For girl students, the College has provided only space for a Girls' Room that needs to be equipped with minimum facilities.

The College has an active N.C.C. and N.S.S. and a very active sports wing, earning name for not itself alone but for the affiliating University as well. One NCC Cadet of the College was awarded the Best NCC Cadet recognition of the University for the year 2002-2003. Some cadets are clearing the NCC "C" Certificate examination. Two students



of the College were selected in the University Kabaddi team and played for the state level and west zone level competitions. A little more effort and professional training would win medals and trophies for the College.

The College has a Career Guidance Centre, which is run by a private agency helping students prepare for competitive examinations. The agency charges fees from the students. The role of the College is limited to providing space and engaging some sessions by the faculty members. The College also motivate students for different extra curricular activities by forming groups like- the English Literacy Association, Hindi Literacy Association, Marathi Vangmaya Mandal, Commerce Planning Forum, Nature Club, Parimal Wall-paper, Art Circle etc.

CRITERION-VI: ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

Kasegaon Education Society decides the policy matters related to the development of the College. The Local Management Committee (LMC) with the help of the Principal and other committee members look after the execution of the decisions. The Local Management Committee meets periodically to revise the functioning of the institution. Day to day activities are monitored by the Principal with help of the heads of the departments, different committees and office assistants. The minutes of the meetings of different Committees are recorded as and when they are held. This leads to an institutionalization of the system. The College has a sound internal coordination and monitoring system. It has been observed by the Peer Team that there exists a cordial relationship among the Principal, the faculty and the non-teaching staff. The Peer Team is of the opinion that inclusion of eminent educational and experts from industry/profession as members of the LMC would help the College in serving the educational needs of the region. ✓

The administrative staff is efficient in maintaining the records though using the manual method. The College should go for automation of office administration. The College should impart training to the staff in computer operation by deputing them. The College



being under grant-in-aid, the salaries of teaching and non-teaching staff are met out of the government grants. For non-grant in aid posts, the State Government pays on clock hour basis as prescribed by the University. There is an internal audit mechanism on the expenditure incurred. Professional auditor services are also used. The financial management of the College is satisfactory.

CRITERION-VII: HEALTHY PRACTICES

Looking closely, the College does not seem to have any healthy practice worth naming beside what has been endorsed above. The teachers' self-appraisal may be keeping a check on quality, but quite indirectly. It is by no means a substitute for a regular quality assurance cell. Similarly, a committee for each job is good division of labour, an instance of team-work and a practice of democracy, but is no substitute for strategic management where fast decision making and problem solution have a crucial role. It is true that the computer is used for one or two administrative purposes, but that is only an apology for what could have been done with it. Besides, there are no institutional links on the national level, let alone international, though the faculty is trying to reach out by the internet. There are no MoUs with industry either. However some relation with a few local concerns has been set up.

As regards such innovations as the credit system, a modular syllabus and continuous evaluation, the onus lies with the affiliating University. Yet the College faculty involved with University policy making could have taken a leadership. Self-financing courses complementing the conventional curriculum, other of course than for postgraduate courses, have not been thought of, maybe for lack of an immediate motivation on the part of the management or maybe for the obvious incompatibility with the catchment that is rural and economically backward.

In spite of such limits, the College seems to be giving its students a sense of value and commitment to the community. At the same time it has an eye on their personality development so that they may not fail as future citizens.



SECTION-3: OVERALL ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Arts & Commerce College, Ashta is a small college. It has a small faculty and offers only a few courses. But it deserves credit that in more than half of them it has set up a postgraduate programme. Though it is pretty conventional in its teaching-learning framework, that is, more teacher-based than learner-based, it is waking up to the value of new pedagogy where the classroom is a multidimensional experience and the whole exercise is interactive. But even with its sense of commitment in the faculty and management, and nitty-gritty support from the parent society, it will have to go a long way. Its resources are not meagre. Physical space is its asset that fosters active sports. Its library holdings are substantial for a college library. Being under 2f and 12B right from the beginning it has been getting development grants from the UGC and properly utilizing them. Its faculty is doing more than giving class lectures alone, equipping itself better by attending seminars, conferences, Refresher courses and workshops, writing and speaking in public, though yet to generate a research culture as such.

Its students come from a strained economic background and a very low level of education and exposure. Collegiate education itself may seem a tall order. The parent society's motto is indeed worthy, everything can be attained by perseverance, and the society has been showing that. The College too has been showing that. And the students are not only studying and taking examinations, often with credit bringing a good name to their *alma mater*, but are also doing their duty by the community through extension activities and thereby as well bringing a good name to their *alma mater*.

In view of all this, its location and immediate mandate, its strengths and its weaknesses, the Peer Team makes the following recommendations:

- That the College should delink its junior section that is presently eating up its teaching hours, and work out an adequate weekly schedule.
- That the management see to it that local and clock hour basis appointments without going through the selection process as per norms be minimized.



- That the faculty develop a research culture and attain a more sustained scholarly exposure by way of seminar participation and publication.
- That the library develop internet facilities open to the students, rearrange its reading room by doing away with its present classroom look, and acquire a greater number of textbooks, as well as improve its book bank facilities.
- That the College improve its physical facilities by setting up ceiling fan in classroom, giving ladies' room adequate furniture and by providing filter to the drinking water in canteen and elsewhere.
- That the College apply to the UGC for grants under its various schemes including one for rural girls' hostels.
- That the College again let the students have their annual social celebration.

That the College apply to UGC for grants under its various schemes including one for rural girls' hostel. The Peer Team is of the opinion that this exercise will be useful to enhance the quality process initiated by the College towards further growth and development.

The Team takes this opportunity to thank all concerned, especially the College authorities for their warm hospitality.

Name and signature of the Peer Team:



Prof Amiya Kumar Dev

(Chairman)



Prof B A Prajapati 22-1-04

(Member - Convener)

I have gone through the report and agree with the evaluative remarks made there in.

Date: January - 22, 2004



I agree


22/1/04
Shri U. N. Garad

**Acting Principal,
Arts & Commerce College,
ASHTA, Dist. Sangli.**

