# ACHARYA & BM REDDY COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

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## BEST PRACTICES 2021-22

### ACHARYA ALIVE

### ALIVE

#### a. Objectives of the Practice

Class room teaching is the core of any educational system. This has to be facilitated even in the challenging times to accomplish the academic requirements of time bound courses. The extraordinary circumstances of Corona pandemic threatened the very existence of class room teaching. Therefore, the Acharya Group of Institutions created the necessary IT infrastructure to enable class room teaching in the virtual mode. The same facility also enabled conducting online tests and recording of attendances. This IT infrastructure supported the entire group of institutions and received the name of 'ALIVE'. It is available in a fully managed and hosted manner. It is a house-installed deployment which enables even students in remote areas to access online classes and take tests.

#### b. The Context

The Corona pandemic affected the whole world. The Government of India and the Karnataka state government imposed several tough measures to curb man movement and arrest of spread of the infection. Educational institutions were shut down for more than an year. However, disruption of academic schedules would jeopardise the future aspirations of next generation and spoil the ecosystem of education. A virtual system of teaching and evaluation to reach out to the vast and diverse demography of the student community was the need of the hour. The Acharya Group rose to the occasion and created a powerful and efficient virtual teaching platform called ACHARYA ALIVE. This IT infrastructure addressed the needs of virtual class room teaching and online assessment of students in accordance with the Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences.

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## c. The Practice

The ALIVE is deployed at one of Acharya's data centres and managed fully by them. The virtual classes were taken as per time tables provided by the academic council of Acharya & BM Reddy College of Pharmacy. Login IDs were provided to all the teaching faculty and the students of the college. The teachers prepared power point presentations as per the scheduled classes in accordance with the syllabus of Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences. They also prepared the study material wherever necessary as soft copy and shared online with the students. The students logged in from home and attended the virtual classes.

The ALIVE has tools to record online attendance of classes and enabled live interactions during the classes. The teachers could also create online tests and conduct online too with camera of students focusing on them which ensured a proper invigilation. Students and teachers have access to the recordings for their use.

The ALIVE has been reviewed by several faculty members as being more advanced and user friendly compared to many online webinar platforms and e-learning services. This virtual classroom can also be used to conduct live webinars and for social learning and meetings, Making Alive the best solution to the modern-day education problems. One of the key features of Alive is the audit of live classes. Auditing takes place across various levels. Alive can be used to give special privileges as required by the institution. The platform is designed to

• Work on all operating systems seamlessly unlike most of the conventional webinar platforms.
• Alive can be integrated with any existing ERP and attendance is taken in real-time making the learning experience more user friendly.

• Designed for interactive sessions rather than one-way delivery

• From teaching to assignments & assessments on one platform

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• Clearly defined roles give appropriate access and control of the platform from students to the Principal.

• A provision is provided for the students to register their feedback after every session.

### d. Evidence of Success

The Acharya Alive virtual classroom platform has enabled an easy transition during the time of Corona as it has helped not just in setting up an online infrastructure for classes but also to effectively track the progress made by each individual. It enabled to share learning materials, conduct training programs, create courses and deliver, engage in social learning and do much more. This facility has enabled students living in remote areas also to access the online classes through mobile phone if they do not have access to a desktop or a laptop.

The statistics of exam performance of the students has revealed that the teachers and the students could cope up with the online LMS since the college secured about 55 ranks across all the programs in the Corona affected academic years.

### e. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

To come up with relevant modules that would work seamlessly across all platforms for a campus of 15,000 was the first challenge. A team of experts were given the problem and assigned to develop a method to make the entry/retrieval of data easy, with emphasis on conveying information relevant to each user. It also was important to ensure that access was given need based and hence division of privileges had to be made according to each department within the campus. The next problem was the potential risk of having a surge of users, this was dealt with upgrading to a to a more stable server. For students it was important to create an application as the number of mobile users are on the higher end.

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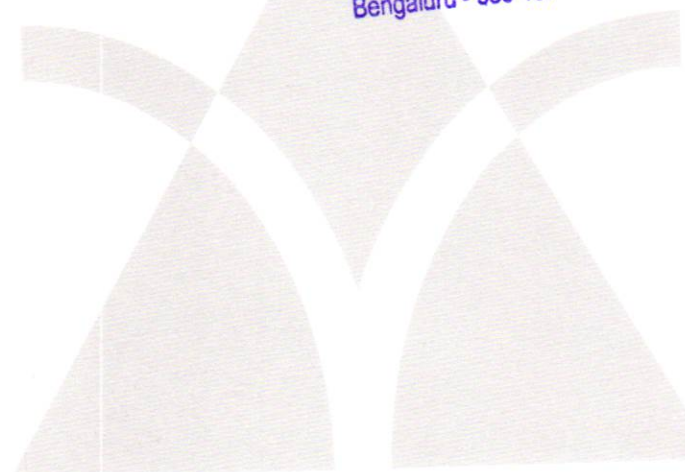
The biggest challenge was to give a real class room experience to the teachers and the students through a virtual platform. The ALIVE LMS had enough bandwidth to ensure live stream of classes with camera ON mode from both teachers and students. It ensured an efficient online assessment tool. The camera mode ensured proper invigilation by the teachers. The attendance also could be recorded and archived. The facilitation through the mobile phone helped the students who were not having access to the laptops or desktops.

### Conclusion (notes)

Acharya ALIVE has proved to be a transformational achievement for ABMRCP to cope up with situations like Corona pandemic which disrupt traditional class room teaching. ALIVE has reached the entire Acharyans during the pandemic and avoided disruptions to the academic eco system as well as future aspirations of students.

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## BEST PRACTICES 2021-22

### PROBLEM BASED LEARNING

#### a. Objectives of the Practice

Problem Based Learning (PBL) is a student-centered, self-directed teaching method where students learn the course or concept by solving an open-ended problem. It does not focus on getting defined solution. On the other hand, it allows students to develop skills like, working independently as well as with a team with ease, oral and written communication skills, managing projects, inculcating leadership skills, critical thinking skills, both oral and written communication skills along with knowledge acquisition which are required to work efficiently in the industry and meet modern corporate prospects.

#### b. The Context

The interdisciplinary nature of current challenges, work culture necessitates one to develop transferable attributes and skills alongside getting respective discipline-specific knowledge. PBL, which is a concept based on problem of real world in which students are not taught before. Therefore, the problem given to them triggers doubt and confusion which activates individual knowledge and further leading to exploration of resources, peer learning and group discussions. It is an interactive process of three phases, initial problem analysis phase, phase of self-directed learning and then reporting phase. *This process* inspires the students to understand the relevance of underlying scientific knowledge and principles, develop learning outcomes, finding of solution, preparing report during which students get equipped with other desirable attributes. This approach is tailor made for any professional degree course and holds good for pharmacy programs.

#### c. The Practice

Teachers should prepare a set of interdisciplinary problems and develop learning outcomes based on which students are expected to learn and develop. After vetting of learning outcomes successfully at different levels, PBL sessions to be planned and facilitators to be assigned. PBL involves three sessions,

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brainstorming and identification of student based learning objectives, discussion with write ups, sharing materials and finally, presentation to whole group and assessment.

In the first session, students are divided into small groups of 6 to 8 persons, requesting to identify a Leader and a Scribe, further preparing a list for the group members and other details. Around 10 minutes time to be given for all these activities. Students should be made familiar with the respective roles of leader and scribe. After commencement of the session, everyone is allowed to express opinions in an orderly manner, writing important points in this brainstorming session, hypothesis, and learning objectives are prepared for the next session and shared with team members.

In the second session, each member has to come up with the write up regarding the same and each one to be discussed, summarized and the solution to be finalized. This session involves extensive discussions amongst the students. The process of finalizing the solution requires them to understand the importance of prioritisation.

In the last session, the solution should be presented in presence of team members and facilitators. Each student's involvement is evaluated by facilitator in all the sessions and final assessment results are made available. The sessions need to be time bound so that the students get accustomed to meeting the time lines when they are on the job. The roles assigned to the students can be interchanged or rolled over to other students and thereby allow role playing chances to all of them.

### d. Evidence of Success

PBL is found suitable for the healthcare industry as it focuses on healthcare management and addressing the problems associated with health. Students expressed satisfaction of learning as it made them develop reflective, critical and collaborative skills along with positive attitudes. It helped them in long term retention of knowledge. Students are progressively given more and more responsibility for their education and become independent of the teacher for their learning. Those who participated in PBL have become

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more active and successful lifelong learners. The students also expressed that the PBL system has given them the confidence to face real time scenarios at work place be it a hospital environment where a collective decision and team working is required to address the health issues of patients or crack business negotiations to win projects from clients amidst stiff competition.

### e. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

Major challenge is time required in defining problem statement and developing and vetting of specific learning outcomes. Its implementation needs enough infrastructure in terms of class rooms/PBL rooms to accommodate 10 to 12 members, furniture, and ICT tools. Teachers in terms of facilitators are required in more number to implement effectively. Apart from these, staffing for each group if it is planned for whole program, their workload, time allocation needs exhaustive managerial skills. Inclusion of PBL as one of the pedagogies in curriculum, allotting part of the curriculum to be taught in the form of PBL, assessment, award of credit points, and grades to students is difficult in current educational scenario of the country and are still in infantile stage in India which needs involvement of administrators, curriculum committees of universities.

### Conclusion (Notes)

PBL, as a pedagogy, promotes active participation and learning in students, fosters self-motivation, enhances student's knowledge base, helps to develop reasoning and problem-solving skills, and finally facilitates students to work as efficient members of team. PBL is a part of curriculum in all healthcare related academic institutions in most of the developed countries. India, is on the verge of revolutionizing education system employing National Education Policy, and at this juncture, incorporating PBL, one of the effective pedagogies, as part of curriculum is the need of the time. Organising workshops for teachers on implementation of PBL as a pedagogy goes a long way in exploiting its full benefits.

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