Best Practices 1

Title of the Practice: Student Support and Progression at SRIHER

Objectives of the Practice:

- To provide a suitable and enabling environment for students to excel in all perspectives
- To facilitate the holistic development of students in SRIHER
- To facilitate their smooth transition from studentship to alumni, extending full support to alumni, across the globe.

The Context:

With increasing number of student admissions, each year it was deemed necessary to extend the student support system, through introduction of the Student Council and Dean of Students office. What started in 2014, as a small group of 12 students in the student council and two associate deans, this system of administration has become a strong pillar of support for handling student affairs. With gradual increase in the student strength, we now have 43 students in the Council along with Dean of Students, an Associate Dean and seven Assistant Deans. These Assistant Deans take care of various student issues, across faculties, in perfect harmony with the course Principals and other administrators of the university.

Practice:

Student council Selection Process:

This is a very fair process where all interested students can apply by filling a form. They also attach proof of their leadership skills and talents. There is a strict selection criteria based on academic performance, attendance, overall leadership skills, disciplinary actions taken, feedback from mentors and peer. There is also an interview round, if required. The executive committee has representatives from all constituent colleges, holding important posts like vice president, cultural secretary, sports secretary and library secretary.

Role played by student council:

The student council play a major role in orientation programmes, when new students join the campus. They arrange for campus visits, interact with parents and make the new students comfortable in their new environment.

They are part of the organising committee of various university activities like convocation, graduation day and Founders day. They also volunteer for various events and conferences organised by the university.

They are part of various university committees, like library committee, mess committee, anti-ragging committee, IQAC, Education units, Sports committee to name a few. Most of the students are selected from the ones who have applied for student council roles, but

could not get selected (due to limited number of positions in the council) that way we ensure that willing and capable students are representing these roles.

SRIHER student clubs:

There are 17 student clubs in the campus, which help the students to bring out the talents, in extracurricular activities. These clubs are autonomous and each club has elected representatives, who coordinate the club activities. Two student council members are part of each club along with one assistant dean. Few clubs have like-minded faculty members too. There is a whatspp group for each club and all relevant information and events are passed on in each of the club groups. For events, which are held outside SRIHER, proper selection is done after auditions.

These clubs are involved actively in fund raising for social causes, like treatment of children suffering from cancer. They also involve in campaigns for raising awareness for a social cause through events like the SRIHER Triathlon, which is an annual event where approximately 1000 to 1200 people register and participate.

These students also visit old age homes and provide food and other necessary items. They also spend time with inmates and spread cheer to them through their performances .The YOGA club is involved in teaching yoga to students in Govt schools and also to people attending OPDs in our hospital.

The various units NCC are also actively involved in various university activates

The Clubs also coordinate with NSS and get involved in many social causes. The Green Friends Organisation and Medhope club conducts many blood donation camps. All these activities are closely monitored and facilitated by faculty members and assistant deans.

Student Counsellors role-There is a very robust student counselling services provided for students in SRIHER. The student counsellors do multiple sessions on personality development and self-improvement, with all students in the campus. They have scheduled time during the curriculum hours, where they do small group and large group interactions with students .This has enhanced their bonding with the students, who are reaching out to them, for various issues .There is a feedback taken for all these sessions too.

Student communications Channels- We have whatapp groups to communicate with all the students across the campus, through the student council. This is in addition to the official communication that is being sent through E mail. There is yet another group with all the class representatives of all classes across the university. This also enables a stronger and foolproof mode of communication, through which all events are communicated to them. Various feedbacks are also collected from students through these groups, analysed and corrective actions are taken.

Regular interactive sessions- The Associate Dean and Assistant Deans regularly meet students and interact with them, to understand the student needs and also enhance the confidence of students .This has improved the students trust in the system and they reach out in times of difficulty. These officials then connect the students, to the student counsellors and follow up, whenever needed.

Evidence of Success:

This organizational matrix and its implementation have made student life in SRIHER more comfortable, with easy access to solutions for the problems faced by students.

Problems Encountered and Resources required:

The main problem was to bring in all students together and to ensure that they actively participate in various university activities, so that they benefit from all facilities, provided in the campus. The diverse group of students, from various states and differing cultural backgrounds, was another challenge.

Remedial Measures taken:

We used social media to connect to them, through whatspp groups, thus ensuring that the faculty members are connected with all student groups. This facilitated the dissemination of all information, to all student groups, which further improved student participation.

Best Practices 2

Title: Clean and Green campus

Objectives:

To provide a clean and green environment for the inhabitants

To comply with statutory requirements laid by State and National governmental agencies for environmental protection

To inculcate the importance of clean environment among the staff of the Institution by involving them

To increase the Bio diversity of the campus

To make the campus "single use plastic free" campus

To promote alternate source of energy for reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions

To update University policies on the above to engage in sustainable practice

To effectively implement energy saving programs, "save water" and "Save electricity"

The Context:

Contribution to the climate actions is not new to SRIHER, as it has committed by developing a dense green plantation since the establishment in 1985. Over years, the institution has been developing policies and has constituted several committees to deliver their duties for maintaining Environment, Health and Safety standards within the campus.

SRIHER has been implementing good practices for over a decade on energy conservation, green belt and biodiversity management, waste management, water management, sanitation and hygiene within the campus. The existing policy will strengthen the on-going initiatives in a more focused and targeted manner.

The strategies:

The main objectives are to adopt and implement policy in two phases, first phase (2021-2026) reducing emissions and the second phase (2026-2031) steering SRIHER towards achieving carbon neutral campus.

The mitigation strategies will include:

1. Inventory of carbon footprint and management
2. Building, energy systems and infrastructure
3. Equipment purchasing
4. Transport and commuting

5. Waste management
6. Water management
7. Greenbelt management
8. Air pollution control
9. Education, Research and Community outreach

1. Inventory of Carbon footprint and Management:

The plan in the first phase of emission reduction is to make a complete inventory and footprint of greenhouse gases emissions from direct and indirect sources within the campus. Emission reduction plan will target controlling the emissions in parallel from both the direct and indirect sources.

2. Building, Energy systems and Infrastructure:

As outlined in the phase I plan, immediate focus will be on the building and energy system. Use of energy efficient cooling systems such as VRV/VRF will be installed in upcoming new buildings and phasing out of the obsolete and inefficient systems. Installation of VRV systems are intended to reduce energy consumption between 10 and 40percent depending upon the application. The new building design would be planned to allow natural light thus reducing the need for purchased energy. The on-going efforts on focussing lighting retrofits will continue and in phased manner, energy efficient lighting system such as LED will be used to replace the worn out ones to decrease the consumption of electricity through old lighting systems. The blacktop road inside the campus will be maintained in good condition to reduce the fugitive emissions that contribute to the air pollution.

3. Equipment Purchasing:

Energy star policy has been followed for purchase of equipment with energy star rating for ensuring low electricity consumption. The on-going use of energy efficiency pumps in the waste water treatment plant will be scaled up when the existing motors elsewhere in the campus are worn out. Improper maintenance of equipment will consume high electricity. The institution in conducting planned preventive maintenance of equipment and this will continue for all types of equipment that use energy and will be rectified early to prevent high energy consumption.

4. Transport and Commuting:

The inventory of greenhouse gas emission includes the emission through commuting by staffs and students. SRIHER has transportation system in place for facilitating pooled travel, thus reducing the individual level carbon footprint. Whenever possible, online programs are conducted to minimize the travel, and training associated footprints. As the public transportation will cover bus and train services, it is anticipated that there

will be a minimal scope of increasing the institute transportation. SRIHER is encouring car-pooling among the students and faculties in addition to the existing system.

5. Waste management:

Biomedical Wastes, Electrical and Electronic Wastes, Solid Wastes, Waste Water and Hazardous Wastes are disposed and discharged adhering to local regulations. The treated waste water from the combined effluent treatment system meets the waste water quality standards. Biogas plant is installed to generate the gas from food wastes distributes energy to Canteens for boiling water. A feasibility assessment for expanding the capacity will be initiated for scaling up in future. The institute has a policy on segregating waste at the source and handled at the dedicated solid waste management facility. The recyclable wastes are handed over to the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board authorized recyclers.

6. Water Management:

SRIHER has a conventional waste water treatment plant with a capacity to treat 2500KL per day, which aims to conserve the quality of the treated water as per the TNPCB guidelines on a consistent manner. The conventionally treated waste water is filtered using the sand and carbon filters which is then chlorinated and treated using UV radiation before reuse. Around 1100KL per day of the treated water is used for the cooling towers of the AC chiller plant and toilet flushing operations in the hostel buildings. Balance treated water is stored in the artificial pond, with a total area of approximately 12.5acres from where the pumping is done for the irrigation requirements. The pond also serves as ground water recharge system. The established rain water harvesting system, storm water collection, bore well recharge areas, tank, bunds and water distribution systems are maintained at periodical intervals throughout the year for effective water management. The water quality is monitored at periodical intervals to provide safe water for drinking and utility purposes also for trees and plantations.

7. Greenbelt Management:

SRIHER is renowned for having 53.7% of green belt area in the campus. The green belt will substantially sequester the carbon dioxide with increasing levels every year. The green belt area will be increased every year through the tree plantation done on the Campus Environment day celebrated by Sri Ramachandra Centre for Women's Advancement every year the on 30th March to mark the Birth Anniversary of Smt. Kamalam Ramaswamy Udayar, wife of founder Chancellor and on 5th June. SRIHER is known for its beautiful biodiversity park which is bustling with fauna and flora including habitation of native plants. Biodiversity within the campus is strengthened to conserve habitation for local and migratory birds that aids more pollination and seed dispersal, scavenging and nutrient cycling, soil formation.

8. Air pollution control:

The developed green belts not only sequester carbon dioxide, but also reduce air pollution inside the campus. Nearly 20-30 percentage of air pollution (from the nearby State and National highways) reduction could be achieved within the campus. Green belt development along the periphery of campus will be strengthened to mitigate the air pollution inside the camps. The existing Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Station operated in collaboration In Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune, and Ministry of Earth Sciences within the campus will be continued for monitoring the air quality together with use of these data for undertaking research activities by the faculties and students.

9. Education, Research and Community outreach:

SRIEHR had made the Environmental Science as a mandatory course for all paramedical programs. Through Local, National and International collaborative efforts, new short term training programs on climate change and actions with experiential learning will be introduced to build the capacity of students in this discipline therefore allowing them to integrate in their core competency and actively participate in climate related matters and socially be responsible. It also allows exploring the opportunities for the students to engage them in learning process related to climate change, research and leadership in the institution and rural development initiatives. Through the National and International collaborations established over two decades, the Institute continuously engages in climate and health research in tune with the need of the Nation and International agencies.

The World Health Organization Collaborating Centre (for Research and Training in Occupational and Environmental Health) and Indian Council of Medical Research Centre for Advance Research (In Air Quality, Climate and Health) at the Faculty of public Health of the institution not only continues the research and training efforts in the country, but also extends the services to South East Asian Countries towards capacity building in Occupational and Environment Health.

The on-going effort of the Institute in Swachhta initiatives which indirectly targets at climate action has fetched the laurel of "Green Champion Award" from the Ministry of Education. The institution has been a mentor for Higher Education Institution to share the good practices in Swachhta action plan. Involving the NSS students to conduct awareness programs and competitions on energy saving, water conservation, infection control, sanitation and hygiene will be continued both within the campus and institute adopted villages and will be extended to other community locations. The field visits of Environmental Science Students educates them on organic farming, afforestation and rooftop gardening, thus preparing the young force for future climate actions.

Barriers and Gaps: Being a healthcare University, there are special needs and gaps that are diverse from a non- healthcare institution. Rapid student enrolment, patients inflow,

offsetting other emissions in lieu of price of carbon offset, rising fuel costs, non-availability appropriated technology at local scale for waste management and energy efficiency equipment, high capital cost and inefficient use of resources will push towards increased emissions. SRIHER will assess the barriers and risks while implementing the climate action plans.

Finance:

There is an on-going mechanism available in the institution for raising purchases and managing the institution budget. The capital needs and operation investment towards the climate action and the resulting savings will be reviewed by the finance department and the management for prioritizing the investment where the payback period is quite quick and strategies will be developed for climate actions where the payback period is very long. The barriers and the gaps will be considered during the investment for mitigation initiatives.

Monitoring, Implementation and Reporting:

SRIHER has instituted various committees to maintain the quality of education, research, services, and environment, health and safety standards. The objectives of these committees are to monitor, implement and report to the institution and related stakeholders. SRIHER continue in reducing net emissions of greenhouse gases with more focus on energy system and energy efficiency as this would largely attribute to emission profile. The institute will review the energy options. As and when the renewable energy technologies are available they will be assessed and the institute will commit switch over in various stages depending on the payback period.