

Minutes

Online Special Academic Council Meeting

of

KLE Technological University,

Hubballi, Karnataka.

June 20, 2020



KLE Technological University

(Established under Karnataka Act No.22, 2013)

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1	<p>To review the progress of the academic delivery during lockdown period</p> <p>COVID 19 pandemic has challenged our way of life and also Higher education. Even though Government announced lockdown on 23rd March but schools & colleges were closed since 14th March. It took us some time to understand the gravity of the situation and respond to it in an effective manner.</p> <p>KLE Tech Core team had a series of meetings on Zoom platform in the beginning and later moved to MS Teams. These meetings used to last almost 2 to 2 ½ hours at a stretch. Honorable VC sir led the team from the front.</p> <p>The deliberations that took place during these meetings could be grouped under following categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Selection of platform that is easy to use, cost effective, reliable and meet our expectations Identifying faculty for delivery of online courses and providing training for them Ensuring identified faculty have the necessary resources to effectively deliver the online courses Conduct of Mock delivery to understand the technology challenges Getting ready for the second challenge to deliver all courses of all programs on online mode when it became evident that schools & colleges will not open till June Challenges faced in delivery of Mathematics course and other courses with mathematical content Getting ready for the third challenge when some industries expressed their inability to continue internship training and project work Getting ready for the fourth challenge of conducting online minor exams Finally, converting lockdown period into an opportunity by asking faculty members to enroll for MOOC courses to develop deeper knowledge in their focus area of research <p>No doubt COVID-19 has permanently changed the teaching & learning, KLE Tech has demonstrated its capability not only to adapt quickly and gain control over the situation but also become future ready. A brief presentation will be made on above points during the meeting.</p>
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Action Requested: To review the progress of the academic delivery during lockdown period.

Discussion: Dr. Tewari, Dean Academics presented the academic activities conducted by the University during the lockdown period. Participating in the discussions honorable members made the following suggestions/observations with reference to online delivery, industry internship & project work, selection of online platform, faculty members doing Coursera/MOOC courses and training of faculty on pedagogy:

- Prof. Manjunath wanted to know about internet connectivity problem faced by the students and their behavior. In reply Prof. Ashok Shettar, VC informed that nearly 10 to 15% of the students had internet connectivity problem and some students reported about the limitation of data pack availability per day. However, final year students did not report any internet connectivity problem.
- Dr. Lokesh wanted to know about the students' feedback on online course delivery and its effectiveness. In reply VC sir replied that we have not collected course-wise feedback but we tried to collect the overall comfort level of the system. Since everything happened so suddenly, faculty members had very little time to learn e-pedagogy. They just delivered in a way they used to deliver in offline mode. Now we have plans to train our faculty members in e-pedagogy in a systematic manner. Dr. Lokesh suggested to evolve method of regular feedback for online classes.
- Dr. KNS Acharya said that a lot of positivity that has come out during this COVID 19. He added that things are not going to change. Referring to faculty members doing nearly 1200 courses during this lockdown period he commented that this should not become one time action. It should become their goal post. The table that has been presented need to be tracked in next 2 to 3 academic council meetings. Replying to this Prof. Shettar mentioned going forward this will be part of faculty appraisal and it is going to be a strategic approach. He also mentioned that these online platforms are pretty costly, and we are talking to Coursera for a campus license, and these courses are also are part of our performance appraisal. Availability of advanced courses has helped many faculty to make study in interdisciplinary areas.
- Dr. Mujumdar said that no doubt how you design online delivery is essential but also the curriculum design for online delivery is also necessary. The teaching strategy for online mode is essential. He wanted to know whether it will be attractive to the faculty to do some kind of whitepaper things to do some futuristic study and students' projects for futuristic technology. He suggested that it is not necessary to deliver long lectures in online mode.
- Dr. KNS Acharya wanted to know steps being taken to ensure quality of projects when some of the industries expressed their inability to continue industry internship. Prof. Nalini, Prof. Meena and Prof. Kotturshettar explained the strategies adopted by them in ensuring quality and completion of project work. Intervening in the discussion Prof. Shettar informed that the project outcomes are much better this time in EC and CS programmes, however challenges persists in traditional programmes like mechanical and civil engineering where prototypes and hardware work is involved. When Mr. KNS Acharya asked specific question about mechanical engineering projects, Prof. Kotturshettar explained that all mechanical engineering projects are based on

simulations. Project guides are monitoring the progress of projects through a series of reviews and we have a fair sense of how they are doing. The emphasis this time is more on design, analysis, simulation, and FEA Analysis. The project expectations have been changed based on the situations. Physical prototypes have been converted into virtual prototypes. Mr. Balaji shared his experience as a reviewer for one of the projects and said the project quality was excellent. Further he enquired whether KLE Tech has considered the industry experts or outside experts to review the projects. Both Prof. Meena and Prof. Nalini replied that they have invited industry experts to review students' projects in their schools.

- Dr. Lokesh wanted to know how individual contributions of the students were assessed. In reply Prof. Meena mentioned that questions were asked to individual students in one-to-one mode and his/her contributions were assessed. Dr. Lokesh suggested to divide the task into sub-tasks and assign sub-task to each team members to assess individual contribution of the students'.
- Mr. Vivek Pawar suggested to make minor changes and check how much time they take to complete the task.
- Dr. Lokesh suggested to evolve methods to assess the individual contributions.
- Dr. KNS Achary wanted to know the process of selection of courses by the faculty. In reply VC sir replied that the selection was based on the research group or thread and the course or courses were chosen in consultation with their respective HoD and senior faculty or head of research group. Further he mentioned that the faculty were given the option to choose the course from Coursera, Udemy, NPTEL etc and the selected courses were reviewed. Option was also given to register for a set of course under a theme.
- Dr. KNS Achary said that the faculty chosen for a particular track should upgrade continuously, and they should increase their level. It is a good way of utilizing time.
- Dr. Lokesh asked whether University is trying to replace the academic course with Coursera courses. In reply VC sir informed that students' are given option of doing a Coursera course as part of an academic course. Students learned part of the educational curriculum from Coursera courses and the remaining part was handled by the faculty in online mode. Thus with both asynchronous and synchronous delivery we ensured students learning.
- Mr. Balaji expressed that there is a lot of stress on faculty members due to sudden shift to online delivery. Are there any measures the University has taken to address this? He suggested to arrange for counselors and check the stressful condition of the faculty.

- Dr. KNS Achary said that the corporate educators are going through a lot of stressful situations and they have gone through some stressful days. Since University action plan is not yet prepared and you are putting faculty members in front of camera and that may cause lot of stress. In reply Prof. Shettar said only a part of selected total faculty will be trained.
- Dr. Manjunath opined that it is important to look at how much the students receive. The student side is also essential. Extremely important to collect the data. It's essential to collect demographic data. In IIT Bombay, only 20% are from rural areas. How many students think that they have difficulty? Students want some financial support. It requires approximately 6 GB per day to attend online courses.

Resolution: The Academic Council members were satisfied with the fast actions taken by the University to tide over the COVID- 19 pandemic.

2	<p>To consider and approve the proposed changes regarding conduct of End Semester Examination (ESA) in view of COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>In view of the unexpected COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdown, which has caused a lot of restrictions related to travel, quarantine on inter-state travel, colleges have remain closed since March 14, 2020. The requirement of maintaining social distancing, restrictions on students stay on campus & operations of college canteen, the entire academic activities are under severe strain. Taking into considerations the student grievances regarding poor net connectivity, limited data pack of 1.5 GB per day, and some students missing online classes & minor-2 assessment conducted by the University, following changes have been proposed with reference to conduct of ESA for the current semester:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To conduct online proctored examination instead of regular offline examination To limit the duration of ESA to 90 minutes instead of 180 minutes To set question papers for 50 marks instead of 100 marks in view of (b) To evaluate project work through video conference To issue soft copies of 'Provisional Degree Certificates' To consider the lockdown period as 'deemed to be present' for the purpose of attendance requirement of students. To consider not to put any restriction with regard to minimum credit requirements, for the promotion of students to higher semesters during 2020.
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Action Requested: To approve the proposed changes regarding conduct of End Semester Examination (ESA) in view of COVID-19 pandemic.

Discussion: Dr. Tewari, Dean Academics presented the proposed changes regarding conduct of ESA and also explained the need for the same. Participating in the discussions honorable members sought clarifications, suggested few best practices and also made comments.

- Dr. Lokesh, wanted to know whether the examinations are descriptive type and expressed that the online examinations are not foolproof. There will be problems with network being unreliable, and power may go. He suggested, if possible, allow a small fraction of students to come to college to take the examinations. He

also suggested to document the backup plans. In reply VC sir explained how the online exams are planned using MS Teams for proctoring and Exam.Net for conduct of exams. He also added that the Karnataka Government is not permitting the student to go to the campus as a precautionary measures and there is an urgency as companies are asking for joining dates for the campus selected students. In view of this we have to conduct exams. He explained the backup plans; (i) conduct of online make-up exams for the students facing the technical problem during the first exam and (ii) conduct of makeup exams once the lockdown period is over and students start coming to the college. In both cases the examinations taken by the students will be treated as 'First Attempt' only.

- In response the VC sir's reply Mr. KNS Acharya expressed it as fair point. He suggested to categorize the subjects and decide the assessment methodology; Problem solving type questions in a limited time scope and Programming exercises can be done in different way. He emphasized on alternative arrangements of assessment without undue dependence on only pen and paper kind of assessment. In reply VC sir said even though the suggestions are well taken but we cannot implement them during this semester as we have the practice of sharing assessment methods in the beginning of the semester through our lesson plans.
- Dr. KNS Achary said Online proctoring by faculty members is a waste of time rather use technology for the proctoring. He asked University to watch job market. Industries are watching how colleges/universities adapt to COVID 19. Document your initiatives to impress upon the industries.

Resolution: Resolved to approve the proposed changes regarding conduct of End Semester Assessment (ESA).

3	To review the preparedness for the academic delivery during the ensuing semester.
	<p>Covid 19 posed an unprecedented challenge to curriculum delivery during the second half of academic year 2019-2020. It called for urgent efforts to equip ourselves to continue to deliver courses and complete assessments. This was done using technology. There was a good learning to all the stakeholders including students, faculty members and leadership. However, uncertainty continues.</p> <p>KLE Tech sees an opportunity in these challenging times and wishes to prepare itself to become future ready in terms of continuing to offer quality learning experiences to its students. Using the experiences of the previous semester and the aspirations of the leadership, a technology enabled learning environment is being envisioned. This environment blends in-person and virtual modes of curriculum delivery. Both asynchronous and synchronous modes of virtual delivery are part of the system being planned. The system design is influenced by available eLearning architectures, best practices of eLearning pedagogies and state of art technology and tools.</p> <p>Preparedness in terms of training of faculty members, addition of new resources and facilities are planned to be ready for the forthcoming semester. A brief presentation on our strategy to get ready for the ensuing semester will be made during the meeting.</p>

Action Requested: To review the preparedness for the academic delivery during the ensuing semester.

Discussion: Dr. Joshi, Dean CI&PA presented the preparedness of the University regarding academic delivery. Dr. KNS Acharya wanted to know proportions of synchronous and asynchronous learning. Dr. Lokesh asked about the practice of flipped classroom that KLE Tech was doing. In reply to both VC sir said we are panning for any combination of synchronous and asynchronous modes of delivery starting from zero to 100. The flipped classroom is also part of this approach. When asked whether KLE Tech has plans to create its own videos, VC sir said yes, it is our approach.

Participating in the discussions honorable members made following comments:

- Dr. KNS Acharya asked to understand the faculty psychology. They may feel that if I give my best then I will become disposable to the University. In reply VC sir said that being good in online delivery could become an important selling point for the faculty members as it will become part of his appraisal process.
- Prof. Shettar informed that in the first phase only about 120 faculty members will be trained in online delivery. Each department will have the review committee to check the content and quality of the videos.
- Mr. Balaji mentioned that video content creation and how to connect with the audiences is a huge effort. Quality and infrastructure that is going to come up is important. He wondered whether there is a need to take the help of a 3rd party. Prof. Shettar asked about the modalities for the review process. In reply, Mr. Balaji suggested that Mr. Amit Chaudhary could be of help as he is an expert. He can help in creating e-content, build the user story and support in using the content. Mr. Balaji took this action item upon himself for connecting Mr. Amit Chaudhary with KLE Tech.
- Dr. KNS Acharya cautioned regarding recording of faculty lectures and putting the videos on LMS immediately.
- Dr. Manjunath mentioned the need for intelligence gathering from what other Universities are doing.
- When Prof. Shettar explained about 'Light Board' technology, Dr. KNS enquired whether it is possible to project 'PPT' on it and also suggested that videos be cloud based. Dr. Manjunath raised the issues related to storage and its management.
- Mr. Vivek Pawar commented upon challenges faced by teachers and students. Teachers are missing face-to-face environment and students are missing peer learning.
- Dr. KNS Acharya suggested to explore LMS from TEDx. He said features of TEDx are far better than those in Moodle. He suggested to use the Microsoft products as we have alliance with Microsoft already. He also volunteered to send a presentation on MS Stream, which is very user friendly. He also agreed to arrange for a demo. He also suggested 'Solid Professor' platform for online learning, which has campus –wide license provision.

Resolution: The Academic Council members expressed their satisfaction over steps taken by the University in getting ready for the ensuing semester in view of uncertainty prevailing.

4	Any other matter with the permission of the Chair
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Table Agenda: To consider and discuss about NIRF ranking.

Discussion: Members wanted to know the NIRF ranking for the year 2020. Prof. Tewari informed that the NIRF ranking this year has improved by 23 places. It was 159 last year and for this year it is 136. Members congratulated the University leadership, faculty and staff.

Mr Balaji suggested to raise the NIRF ranking to below first 50 in the next two years. In reply Prof. Shettar informed that we are focusing on improving research output of faculty members, however in 'perception' criterion we are lagging and we need a strategy to improve its score.